17 October 2016

To: Advising Directors, Office of the University Counsel, Office of the Ombudsperson for Students, Access & Diversity, Deans and Department Heads, Enrolment Services, Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology, Office of the Vice-President Academic, Office of the VP Students, Student Health Service, Counselling Services, the AMS, Chairs of Vancouver Senate Curriculum, Teaching and Learning and Ad Hoc Committees, Student Senate Caucus

From: The Senate Secretariat on behalf of the Academic Policy Committee

Re: Proposal for new Policy V-130: Requirements for the Production, Distribution, and Content of Course Syllabi

The Senate Academic Policy Committee is drafting a policy that would set and describe the minimum requirements for the production, distribution and content of course syllabi. The Committee is seeking feedback from the community on the attached draft. Responses from individuals and groups are welcome; we would ask that you forward this consultation package to anyone you feel should be aware of it and/or circulate it among your constituency.

Key questions for overall consideration are as follows:

- What, if any, relationship should there be between the sample syllabus provided to Senate with the approval for a new course and the information required to be set out in the syllabus for the delivered instance of that course?
- Are the items required under Section 3 appropriate when considered against those recommended under Section 4? Should any items be moved between the required and recommended lists? Are there additional items that should be added to either of those lists?
- Is the date limit set for changes to syllabi outlined in Section 6 appropriate?
- Beyond the information set out in the syllabus, what information might be useful for inclusion in a resource page linked to in every syllabus?
- Would a template be helpful for course instructors in the development of individual syllabi?

The Academic Policy Committee will be accepting feedback and questions until November 15th at the end of the day. Comments should be submitted via email to Stephanie.oldford@ubc.ca

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Harrison, Chair, Academic Policy Committee
SENATE POLICY: V-130

DRAFT VERSION 1.5

Number & Title

V-130: Requirements for the Production, Distribution, and Content of Course Syllabi

Effective Date:

01 January 2017 (anticipated)

Approval Date:

December 2017 (anticipated)

Review Date:

This policy shall be reviewed two (2) years after approval and thereafter as deemed necessary by the responsible committee.

Responsible Committee:

Vancouver Senate Academic Policy Committee

Authority:

University Act, S. 37(1)

“The academic governance of the university is vested in the senate and it has the following powers:

(f) to consider, approve and recommend to the board the revision of courses of study, instruction and education in all faculties and departments of the university.”

Purpose and Goals:

This policy is designed to:
Establish minimum requirements for the production, distribution, and content of course syllabi.

**Applicability:**

All credit-bearing courses offered by the University of British Columbia including directed studies, special topics, fieldwork, and practicum courses.

**Exclusions:**

Graduate-level theses and dissertations are excluded from this policy.

**Definitions:**

For the purposes of this policy and in all other policies in which they are not otherwise defined:
- *Course* shall mean course of instruction.
- *Course instructor* shall mean the member of the teaching staff who has primary responsibility for the organization and operation of the course.
- *Syllabus* shall mean the document provided by the course instructor which communicates the course instructor’s course design to students including the organization, policies, expectations, and requirements.

**Policy:**

1) *Course instructors* are required to provide a *course syllabus* to students within the first week of class in paper or digital format. In the case where the syllabus will be created in consultation with the student(s) at the beginning of a course (e.g., directed studies), the syllabus must be finalized prior to the last date by which the student is able drop the course without receiving a “W” on the transcript.

2) The syllabus shall set out the specific requirements and expectations for the course.

3) The syllabus must include the following:
   a. The contact information for any teaching staff associated with the course;
   b. A description of the course structure (e.g., delivery methods (e.g., online, flipped classroom) number of contact hours per week; day, time, and location of classes; instructors’ office hours);
   c. The current course description from the Academic Calendar, including any prerequisites and/or co-requisites;
   d. Assessment methods including:
i. a list of graded and assessed activities including, but not limited to, discussions, tests, and assignments, and their due dates;
ii. a brief description of each assignment or test including general evaluation criteria;
iii. the weight of each assignment and test in the final course grade; and
iv. late penalty policy (if late assignments will be accepted, the rules must be outlined in the syllabus);
e. A detailed list of topics to be addressed in the course;
f. Required readings and textbooks;
g. A statement on academic integrity (noting that students are expected to be familiar with the hyperlinked policies in the Academic Calendar on Academic Honesty and Standards and the policy on Student Conduct and Discipline);
h. A link to the Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities policy in the Academic Calendar;
i. A link to the Religious Accommodations provisions; and,
j. A statement that nothing in the syllabus can contravene any Academic Calendar regulation or University policy. In resolving any discrepancy, Academic Calendar regulations and University policy take precedence.

4) It is recommended that the syllabus also include the following:

a. A clear statement of learning objectives/learning outcomes;
b. Recommended readings (if applicable);
c. Additional notes required for students to understand Academic Integrity requirements in a specific course’s pedagogy or instance (not to supersede or conflict with any statement in the Academic Calendar);
d. A link to the course withdrawal dates in the Academic Calendar;
e. A link to the Syllabi Resource List (see Appendix), including resources for student mental health and wellbeing; and,
f. Any other applicable or related policies.

5) Nothing in the syllabus can contravene any Academic Calendar regulation or University policy. In resolving any discrepancy, Academic Calendar regulations and University policy take precedence.

6) The course instructor may not change the method, weight, or due dates of assessments after the date for withdrawal without a W on the student transcript. Should the details on the syllabus change, the course instructor must provide an updated copy to all students registered in the course in a timely manner in paper or digital
Calendar Statement:

As above.

Consultations

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy:

Advising Directors, Office of the University Counsel, Office of the Ombudsperson for Students, Access & Diversity, Deans, Enrolment Services, Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology, Office of the Vice-President Academic, Office of the VP Students, Student Health Service, Counselling Services, the AMS

History:

This is the first version of this policy.

Related Policies:

Academic Concession
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,48,0,0

Academic Honesty and Standards
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/?tree=3,286,0,0

Attendance
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,36,0,0

Grading Practices
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,42,0,0

Student Conduct and Discipline
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,0,0

Religious Accommodations and Exams
http://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/exams/exam-policies/religious-accommodations

Use of the Formal Examination Periods
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,41,89,0

Viewing Marked Work
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,41,93,0
Appendix:

Syllabi Resource List (webpage content to be developed)