COURSE SYLLABUS

At the first class meeting, the instructor is expected to give each student in attendance a syllabus setting forth course objectives and/or learning outcomes, major topics to be covered, a schedule of assignments, and an explanation of grading procedures including, but not necessarily limited to, the weight to be given quizzes, reports, class participation, examinations scheduled throughout the semester, and any final examination.

PLEASE NOTE: At its December 3, 2004 meeting, the Faculty Senate confirmed that the syllabus should be distributed in hard copy even if it is also available on a website or Blackboard site.

While some academic units have additional requirements, at a minimum, the syllabus should include the following components.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The syllabus should clearly state the content knowledge students will be expected to acquire, the skills students will be expected to master, and the kinds of ideas that will be developed in class. The instructor should also review these objectives and/or learning outcomes with students at one of the first class meetings. Through realization of course objectives, an instructor should convey the significance and perspectives of his/her subject area to students, organize and present course materials and conduct the course in ways that stimulate students’ intellectual development.

Textbook(s) and Other Materials

The syllabus should specify the textbook(s) and other materials needed for the course, and should indicate whether such materials are required or optional. Instructor generated materials that do not require copyright permission (such as quizzes, exercises or informational handouts) may be distributed in class but may not be sold directly to students. The USM Bookstores should be contacted regarding the sale of instructor generated materials.

Attendance Policy

Course attendance policies are left to the instructor’s discretion. The instructor should state his/her policy in the syllabus and inform students of the attendance requirements for the class. University Health Services requests that faculty members not require students to provide written excuses from health providers when they miss a class, a class assignment, or an examination.

Contact information and Office Hours

The syllabus should include the instructor’s name, office location, office phone number
and e-mail address. Part-time faculty members may obtain USM voicemail numbers and e-mail addresses. Please contact your department chair/program director for information.

Faculty members are expected to hold office hours for consultation with students. These should be listed in the course syllabus. Office hours should be regarded as an integral part of the teaching workload. At a minimum, part-time faculty members should offer the opportunity for student consultation before and after each class.

Assignments

The syllabus should clearly explain all required assignments, e.g., presentations, papers or reports. It should include information on grading criteria, due dates and penalties (if any) for late submissions. Except in unusual circumstances, faculty members should NOT add assignments beyond those outlined in the course syllabus or substantially modify the content, the grading criteria or the due dates of any assignments listed in the syllabus.

Assessment of Performance

All assessments should be designed to measure attainment of course learning objectives. The instructor can decide how best to accomplish this. Dates for exams and other forms of assessment should be listed in the syllabus. Students with timely and legitimate excuses for missing a scheduled examination should have the opportunity to make it up. The syllabus should state the instructor’s policies regarding make-up exams.

PLEASE NOTE: No quiz, test or examination may be scheduled during the last week of classes. A final examination, if used, must be given during the regularly scheduled USM final examination period.

Many instructors assess students’ ability to formulate, organize and articulate ideas. When this is part of the assessment of a student’s performance, and is in addition to assessing the student's comprehension of the subject matter, the syllabus should include a statement to this effect.

Disability Accommodations

The syllabus should also include information for those students needing accommodations due to a disability. For example,

If you need course accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with me or with the Office of Support for Students with Disabilities (780-4706) as soon as possible.
Cell Phones and Other Distractions

Instructors are encouraged to include brief statements in their course syllabi regarding student use of cell phones, laptop computers, and other similar devices in the classroom.

Academic Integrity

Instructors are also encouraged to include a statement in course syllabi advising students of the penalties that can be imposed for violating academic integrity. For example:

Plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of information are violations of academic integrity that will not be tolerated in this class.