



Instructions for Creating a Course Syllabus Using the UC Irvine Extension Syllabus Template

UC Irvine Extension (UNEX) has developed a syllabus template for all courses (classroom and online) in an effort to standardize the appearance of the syllabi and ensure that the syllabi include information needed by students (and by university administrators for course approval purposes). This document provides guidelines for using the template to prepare your syllabus. The following documents accompany these instructions:

- Syllabus Template (SyllabusTemplateWord.doc)
- Syllabus Example for Classroom Courses (SyllabusExampleClassroom.pdf)
- Syllabus Example for Online Courses (SyllabusExampleOnline.pdf)

The Syllabus Template is essentially blank except for section headings. To use the template, simply type your course information in the appropriate places, overwriting items in **red**. Please do not change items in black. The directions and suggestions that follow will help you develop your syllabus content. Please refer to the example syllabi as you read the rest of these instructions.

COURSE TITLE

The course title is usually determined by your UNEX academic planning department unless you are creating a new course and proposing to teach it. Your program planner may modify the title as needed for marketing purposes and for academic appropriateness.

COURSE CATALOG NUMBER AND NUMBER OF UNITS

Your academic planning department will determine your course's catalog number. This number is usually expressed as an academic department or subject area abbreviation (for example "MGMT" for a management course) followed by a number. Continuing education courses usually have an "X" in the catalog number to indicate that they are Extension courses. The catalog number for the example course is MGMT X442.28 indicating that it is a management course. Courses for which grades are not assigned or which carry only "continuing education units" ("CEUs") do not have an "X" before the course number, and usually are numbered in the 800s rather than the 400s.

Regarding the number of academic units, UC Irvine operates on the quarter system (four quarters per year) and each academic unit ("quarter" unit) corresponds to ten hours of time spent in a classroom. For online courses, we define an academic unit as corresponding to the amount of content that would be covered in ten hours if the course were offered in a classroom. If your course already exists, your planning department will specify the number of units. If you are proposing a new course that does not exist in a classroom format, you may wish to discuss the appropriate number of units with your program planner.

CLASS MEETING INFORMATION

For **classroom courses**, specify the dates, day of the week, and times of your course. For an **online course**, specify the date on which your course will become visible to students (almost always a Monday) and the date on which the course ends (almost always a Sunday).

For **online courses only**, please remember that the first week is set aside for orientation during which your students will be able to verify that they can access the course, contact UNEX's Distance Learning Center to resolve any technical problems, and post a welcome message to the course's first discussion forum. Any "real" work (reading assignments, discussion forums, and homework exercises) should begin during the *second* week. Some instructors like to post a "Lesson 0" in the orientation week, in which they give a brief overview of the course and/or describe how they will conduct the course.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

This section is self-explanatory. Very often we find that the qualifications and job title of an instructor can help sell a course! Students like to know they are learning from a qualified professional who has real-world industry experience that goes beyond what is available in textbooks or on the Internet. Please keep your biographical statement short and focused on specific elements that show you to be the "expert" on the topic you are teaching.

It is important to let students know how to contact you in case they have questions about grading, expect to miss a class session, or have another item to discuss with you that is of a personal nature. You want to use the discussion forums for academic communications as much as possible since responses to individual student questions might benefit everyone in the class and use personal email only for private matters.

PREREQUISITES

List previous courses or knowledge that students should have in order to be successful in your course.

COURSE SEQUENCING

Some programs require students to take courses in a certain sequence, such as taking introductory courses before more advanced courses. Your program planner will work with you to determine if such sequencing exists in the program for which you are teaching.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the official, UNEX-approved description of your course as it appears in the course catalog. If you are proposing a new course for which a description does not yet exist, you might read through several existing descriptions to gain a sense of the style we prefer. Your program planner may edit or revise your description before the course goes through the academic approval process.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

List what students should be able to **do** after completing your course. Remember, the objectives listed at this point in the syllabus should reflect course-level outcomes – later you will write lesson-level objectives. Each objective should be expressed in measurable terms – that is, in terms of some action that students can perform and that you can evaluate. Examples of good action-oriented verbs include:

- Describe
- Explain
- Calculate
- Write
- Evaluate
- Analyze
- Develop
- Create

Note that each of these can be paired to an activity students can carry out on an exam, in an exercise, or in a project. They lead to measurable activities to which you can assign a grade.

Learning objectives that begin with the words “Learn about...,” “Know...,” “Understand...” are not acceptable because they are too vague. How do you *know* that a student understands something?

COURSE TEXT OR ONLINE RESOURCES

List any textbooks that you would like to use for the course (specify the author, title, date, publisher, and ISBN number) along with online resources such as websites, articles, etc. If there are no books and/or additional resources, write “none.”

EVALUATION AND GRADING

List the methods you plan to use to evaluate your students’ performance along with the percentage of the total grade corresponding to each method. Generally, we prefer to see at least three different kinds of evaluation methods. You can use the categories listed in the example or specify your own methods. Here are several examples:

- Exam
- Group project
- Group presentation
- Comprehensive essay
- Weekly writing assignments
- Homework problem sets

Please note that UNEX policy allows a maximum of 15 percent of a student’s grade to be comprised of “participation” or “classroom discussion” if a course is offered in a classroom and a maximum of 30 percent if the course is offered online. (The allowable percentage is greater for online courses because instructors can monitor discussion forums very closely and document student contributions more precisely, and most instructors’ online forum assignments require deeper thinking than general classroom discussions.)

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale is fixed. UNEX courses are not graded on any type of “curve” so the course letter grade you assign must be determined by using one of the tables below. It is important to use numerical scales for evaluating all gradable assignments and learning activities, and to assign a final letter grade only at the end of a course.

There are two options for assigning letter grades: “letter-only (without plusses/minuses)” and “letter *with* plusses/minuses.” The scales are shown below:

Without Plusses/Minuses

Letter	Range (Percent)	
A	90	100
B	80	89
C	70	79
D	60	69
F	0	59

With Plusses/Minuses

Letter	Range (Percent)	
A	93	100
A-	90	92
B+	87	89
B	83	86
B-	80	82
C+	77	79
C	73	76
C-	70	72
D+	67	69
D	63	66
D-	60	62
F	0	59

Please note that you must choose one scale, show the appropriate table in your course syllabus, and then assign letter grades at the end of the course according to the scale you chose. If you tell students that you will *not* be assigning plusses and minuses, then you must *not* do so when submitting final grades.

For example, if you choose the scale *Without Plusses/Minuses* and a student earns a total score of 91.3 percent, she earns an “A.” On the other hand, if you initially specified that you *will* be adding plusses and minuses, then that same student would receive an A-.

Also please note that an “A+” does not confer more grade points than an “A” for the purpose of calculating a student’s grade point average.

CODE OF CONDUCT

This is a standard statement that should appear in all syllabi.

NETIQUETTE

Delete this section if your course is offered in a classroom. For online courses, this paragraph describes several general principles of good behavior on the Internet. You may add additional principles, if you wish.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

These two paragraphs need to appear verbatim in all syllabi. They describe UC Irvine’s philosophy about academic honesty and integrity.

DISABILITY SERVICES

This paragraph describes services that UC Irvine can provide to students who need them. Please do not delete this paragraph.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course outline allows you to specify reading assignments, topics to be covered, learning objectives, assignments due, and the method of instruction for each lesson. Please note that the “orientation week” is **only** for online courses. Delete this if your course is to be offered in a classroom.

For **online courses**, please note that the orientation week is mandatory and built into the schedule of every course. For example, if your course has ten lessons the total duration will be 11 weeks to accommodate the orientation week. Instruction always begins during the **second** week with Lesson 1.

GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is composed in Calibri font, a readable and versatile typeface for both on-screen and printed documents. In addition, the UC Irvine Extension logo and university seal appear in the masthead and must not be altered. Finally, the copyright notice at the bottom of each syllabus page must be left intact. As a matter of policy, the University owns the copyright on all course syllabi. However, instructors own the copyright on the teaching materials they create for the course unless the University specifically contracts with them for course development services.

When creating your own syllabi for an Extension course, please ensure that your document looks **precisely** like the syllabi examples.