

Research shows that students view the syllabus as the first data-point about the social structure of the class as a whole (what they will be learning, what the social environment will be, the personality of the instructor, etc.). This is particularly important in an online class where students, on the first day of class, are experiencing the class void of its social context. This is topped with a situation where, a lot of times, the person teaching the class is not the person who developed the class. In these instances, the syllabus is a great place where the instructor can create the type of social context that they envision for the class. Some “best practices” that have shown to be impactful in creating this and impacting learning in the long term include:

- Avoiding instructor-centric and promoting student-centric language (what the instructor will do vs. what the student will do);
- Avoiding third person and promoting first person language;
- Establishing roles, responsibilities, and expectations;
- Wording learning outcomes as things that they should be able to do at the end of the class
- Including a section that motivates students by discussing ways in which the knowledge that they gain from this class is applied in the real world (examples, scenarios, etc); and
- Offering a well-grounded rationale for the class.

CATLR is happy to work with any instructor as they put together their own syllabi. The center email for consultation requests is learningresearch@neu.edu

Course Number & Title:

[Insert four-letter subject code, course number, and course title as it appears in the University Catalog; see URL: <http://www.northeastern.edu/registrar/catsugd.html>]

Online Course

Instructor Info:

Instructor’s Name: [List instructor’s full name, and how you’d like students to address you]

Phone: [Insert phone number including area code. Faculty should consider explicit information about alternatives such as cellphone, text messages, social media. Include availability hours (24/7 or specific hours). Consider your time zone and that of your students.]

Email: [Insert your Northeastern University email address, which is the email you should be using for all official correspondence in your role as a faculty member]

Office Hours: [List all days and times you are available including time zone, by what means (Skype, Collaborate, include user names as needed), how to make an appointment, and if students can make appointments outside those hours]

Course Info:

Academic Term: [Summer 1, Summer 2, Fall, or Spring and Year]

Credit Hours: [Insert credit hours; be explicit regarding credits for lecture, laboratory, and recitation]

Course Delivery: This course is delivered online via the Blackboard learning management system. To access your course, login to [choose either [Northeastern Blackboard](#) or [NUOnline Blackboard](#) – whichever houses your course] using your MyNEU credentials. From there, click the “Courses” tab and then select your course.

Course Geography: [Include information here that explains how the course “works.” What are the typical weekly activities? Is there a specific flow that should be followed? Are there multiple weekly deadlines? How do students interact? Where should students expect to find content, assignments, etc.? How should students expect to submit assignments?]

Course Meetings: [List all synchronous meetings for this course, including dates, times, and method with access instructions (Collaborate, Google Hangout, Skype, etc.). Be sure to include your attendance policy (mandatory, optional, or must attend x out of y meetings).]

Course Description: [Insert the exact course description from the University Catalog. Note that this should be considered only a starting point as since students never meet and hear clarifications from the faculty, a “best practice” is to provide more detailed information, including “why” this course matters.]

Course Prerequisites: [Insert subject code and course number for any course prerequisites]

Required Textbooks: [List all required textbooks including authors’ names, publisher, edition, and ISBN; be sure to advertise and utilize all available textbook and course material options]

Other Required Resources and Supplies: [List all other required resources including electronic homework, personal response systems aka clickers, websites]

Recommended supplemental Textbooks: [List all recommended textbooks including authors’ names, publisher, edition, and ISBN]

Technical and Software Requirements: [List all technical requirements and software used in the course; provide links to support (e.g., Viewing course videos requires that Adobe Flash Player is installed on your computer or device. Please visit their website (hyperlink to website) to download and access technical support.)]

Course Objectives: [List course learning objectives]

Learning Outcomes: [List course learning outcomes – new requirement for all new courses AY14-15ff; these should be aligned with the course objectives that appear above on this syllabus and with your academic program’s published learning outcomes as they appear on the college website at URL: <http://www.northeastern.edu/cos/academics-3/degree-program-learning-outcomes/>. See the handout “Writing Clear, Explicit, and Measurable Student Learning Outcome Statements” for guidance on how to write effective student learning outcomes: “At the end of this course, students will be able to…”]

Course Expectations: [What should students expect from you – email response times, participation, grading; what do you expect from the students – communication, interaction, etc. This is a good place to define what “attendance” means for this class. Are there expectations you have of yourself as an online instructor or students as online students that differ from expectations on campus? You also can provide expectations about how you will accept work (Word doc or Open doc or pdf or video – etc. Are there formatting and spelling expectations? Communication should be a two-way street. How open are you to communication? Are students encouraged to collaborate and answer each others’ questions? Any consideration for a social media alternative for communication, such as a class Facebook Group page?]

Statement of Time Commitment: [Example: students should allocate the same amount of time that they would typically spend both in and out of a face-to-face class.]

Course Calendar: [Schedule of lectures, assignments, readings, and examinations; schedule should cover all class sessions up to the end of classes. Be sure to specify time zone for due dates for all required assignments]

Example:

Week	Dates	Lecture Topic or Assessments	Required Readings	Required Assignments	Due Date

Final Examination: [Your policy regarding the final examination including day and date if known; **Example:** A comprehensive open-book, open note final exam will be completed via Blackboard during the last week of class (if a specific day, please indicated that). In terms of format, the final exam will consist of a series of open-ended quantitative problems like those we work together in class, homework, and quizzes. You must show all work to receive credit. *Do not purchase airplane tickets, etc. If you find that you have a scheduling conflict between the final for this course and another course, it is your responsibility to complete and submit the final exam conflict form available through the Registrar's Office online at URL: <http://www.northeastern.edu/registrar/form-finex-conflict.pdf>]*

Evaluation and Grading: [provide your evaluation criteria and how course grades will be computed based on assignments, quizzes, examinations, papers, etc.. If class participation is included as part the grade, explain clearly what different things can count as participation.]

Example:

Final course grades will be determined as follows:

- 20%** Participation
- 20%** OWL (Homework)
- 10%** Reflective Journals (6)
- 25%** Quizzes (lowest score of 3 quizzes will be dropped)
- 25%** Final examination

Grading Scale: [provide the grade scale for the course; Northeastern does not give A+ as a final course grade; students failing a course should receive a grade of F]

Course Letter Grade	Range
A	1000-950
A-	949-900
B+	875-899

Student Resources

Students with Disabilities

Students needing disability accommodations should visit the [Northeastern University Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#).

Student Privacy (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with

respect to their education records. For information about these rights, visit the [Northeastern University Office of the Registrar](#).

Blackboard and Technical Support

Northeastern students can get technical, computing, and Blackboard support through the [Northeastern University Information Technology Services Student Support site](#).

Financial Aid

Please visit the [Northeastern University Student Financial Services](#) for information about grants and scholarships and how to apply for aid.

Library

For Library services and support, please visit [Northeastern University Libraries](#).

Important Dates

Please review the appropriate [Academic Calendar](#) for important Graduate School dates for the current and upcoming semesters.

Diversity

Northeastern University is committed to providing equal opportunity to its students and employees, and to eliminating discrimination when it occurs. For more information, including grievance procedures, please visit the [Northeastern University Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Course Policies

Be sure to review the College of Science Academic Course Policies available at <http://www.northeastern.edu/cos/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Northeastern-COS-Policies-Template.pdf>.

These policies hold across all courses taught in the College of Science.