

Organization

Using Your Syllabus

Every semester you get syllabi for your courses. Do you know how to make them work for you to set yourself up for success? You do now. Follow the directions below to fill out the form on the back.

Step 1: The Basics

Locate the following information:

- Course days, times, locations – know these and attend them all
- Professor's info: name & email, office hours, office location
- Calendar or overview of the semester. It might be weekly, by class day, or by unit

Step 2: Course Policies

Take a look at and read:

- Grade type: weighted grades or total points? Put the answer in the Grade Type box.
 - Weighted place an emphasis on specific items
 - Ex) Assessments worth 70%, 1 test grade will have a big overall impact
 - Ex) Assignments together are 10%, missing 1 will have a low impact
 - Total points place emphasis on certain items if they're worth more; however, a low test score can be mitigated with great scores in other areas
- Attendance policy: is there a missed class limit, does it impact your grade, does it matter if it's excused or not?
- Participation grade: does it exist? How is it graded?
- Any other unique policies?

Step 3: Graded Assignments/Discussions/Quizzes/Projects

Look through the course calendar or overview to get a sense of the course's workload

- Readings: Are there any required?
 - How frequent and from where?
 - About how long are they? It might be more useful to estimate the time it will take to read them.
 - Are there reading quizzes that you'll want to prep for?
- Smaller Assignments: Are there smaller, graded assignments?
 - How frequent - daily, weekly, each chapter?
 - What are they and how long will they take you?
- Assessment Types: How is your professor assessing you?
 - Weekly quizzes?
 - Chapter or unit tests?
 - Midterm & final only?
 - Is there a final? Is it cumulative (from the whole semester) or is it just another chapter/unit test or is it something else like a presentation or essay?
- Larger Assignments: Are there larger assignments and what are they?
 - Projects? Individual or group?
 - Presentations?
 - Essays?

Step 4: Write Down the Graded Assignments & Assessments

- Writing them will help you recall them
- Having them listed and easy to see will make it easier to keep track of completing them
- Set reminders, put up post-it notes, add them to Google calendar, put this document up on your wall, etc. Do whatever will help you remember and get the work done on time.

