

## Suggestions for Developing Your Online/Hybrid Course Syllabi

When reviewing proposals, the Distance and Blended Learning Committee (D&BLC) finds it helpful to “think like a student.” As a result, the committee often ask faculty to provide more detail in order to better understand how your majority online class is run. This also helps your students know what to expect from the course and what you expect from them. While developing your course and writing your syllabus, the committee suggests including the ideas listed below.

After your course has been approved by the D&BLC, you must complete the UMW Online Course Authorization form and obtain the necessary signatures. Submit this completed form to the Registrar’s Office.

D&BLC suggests including these ideas in your course/syllabus:

- **Course number and title**
- **Semester offered and length of course**
- **Instructor contact information**
  - Instructor name
  - Office location
  - Office hours (online and/or in person)
  - E-mail address
  - Phone number
  - Online chat username (if applicable)
- **Course website/Canvas Information**
  - Provide a link to the course webpage
  - Provide Canvas help information (<http://technology.umw.edu/canvas/>)
  - Explicitly provide information on course features (announcements, calendar, content area, communication area, assignments area, student project gallery, etc.) and how these features support the learning goals of your course.
  - If you are using a module approach to your course design, consider providing an overview on how your modules are organized and how to navigate within the module.
  - The committee finds it helpful if the faculty include a brief welcome or description that explains how your course will begin. You should include information that states how students should begin your course how they will be notified when a course has begun, and what students should do upon beginning your online course.
  - Explicitly identify the technology tools you are using in your course. How will you ensure that students are familiar and successful with these tools? You may want to create a task/introductory activity that students need to complete early in the course to ensure they are able to use the technology successfully.
- **Required materials and course resources**
  - If you assign an online textbook, provide a link(s) for students
  - Students have found it helpful when faculty provide a link to the UMW libraries homepage

- Provide links to other online resources or databases
- Identify which types of online technology you will be using. Also provide links to where students can access instructions/tutorials
- **Course overview**
  - Provide a clear course overview and course expectations.
  - Include a description of how communication, collaboration, community, and active involvement will be achieved in your online course.
- **Course purpose**
  - Why is this online environment relevant and appropriate for your course?
- **Course objective(s)/Learning Outcomes (as they apply to a majority online course format)**
  - How will students receive feedback?
  - What will you use for your summative course feedback?
  - How will you assess student learning?
  - How will you assess course features/processes/structured that hindered/supported student learning?
  - What information will you solicit and analyze to explore course impact on student learning.
- **Scope of course (if applicable).**
- **Course instructional methods**
  - Identify the ways in which students are expected to participate in your online course. If using a webinar, what does this mean? Are students accessing the webinar as a group at the same time (synchronously) or individually, at their own time (asynchronously)? What will the webinar contain? How will students access it? What information will be available to them in the webinar? Etc.
  - Describe your role as faculty in terms of course content delivery and role in the course. How will you interact with students in your majority online course? How will students interact with you, the instructor, and other students? Etc.
  - If students are expected to actively participate, explicitly and clearly convey those expectations.
- **Coursework/Class Schedule**
  - Include a course schedule that shows what material will be covered each week and due dates
  - Include assignment due dates. How will you handle late work? Be sure to convey this to students.
  - Include how assignments will be submitted.
- **Grading**
  - If you are going to grade online class participation, provide the specifics so students have a clear sense of how they will be assessed. What does online participation involve, require, etc.?
  - How will you address quality and quantity aspects to this work? It is helpful to provide students with examples.

- **Grading Scale**
- **Exam and Exam policies**
  - Provide information on where and how students will access exams
  - Convey to students whether the exams will be timed or not.
- **Honor System**
  - Reference or link to the UMW honor code.
- **Disability statement**
  - Your syllabus should include a link to UMW's Disability Resource website
  - With regard to accessibility/disability issues:
    - Consider caption for videos and/or OCR for pdf files
    - Seek out Disability Resources as a reference for help with video captions, OCR