Academic Senate Recommendations for Storage of Syllabi and Syllabus Elements

BACKGROUND

In the [2014 Comprehensive Institutional Self Evaluation for Accreditation](#), the following Actionable Improvement Plan was created:

> *In order to ensure that every student receives clear and accurate information with specific learning outcomes, consistent with the College's officially approved course outline of records, the College will implement a system for reviewing* and storing accurate syllabi for every class.*

To help address this Actionable Improvement Plan and in consideration of ACCJC 2014 Accreditation Standard II.A.3, the Academic Senate appointed a small group of faculty to an *Ad Hoc* Standards and Practices Committee.

> Standard II.A.3.
> *The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures. The institution has officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes. In every class section students receive a course syllabus that includes learning outcomes from the institution's officially approved course outline*.

Their task was to develop recommendations for the storage of syllabi and to identify elements of syllabi that should be standard for the institution. The *Ad Hoc* Standards and Practices Committee reviewed nationwide practices, peer-reviewed research journals, and enlisted the help of our Institutional Research Office to conduct two surveys:

1. [Syllabus Survey of Faculty Spring 2016](#) Research Brief #119
2. [Syllabus Survey of Students Fall 2016](#) Research Brief #128

*Note: The committee recommends that "reviewing" is to be done only in the context to identify evidence as needed to support assertions for required reports for accreditation. It is not to be construed as relate to examining individual faculty syllabi outside of the normal evaluation process as defined in the COCFA and AFT contracts.

SYLLABUS STORAGE

From discussions in Academic Senate, it appears there are inconsistencies with how course syllabi are being collected. Currently, Academic Affairs collects course syllabi with the assistance of the Instructional Deans who vary in their collection method. It is expected and understood from Standard II.A.3, that syllabi are given to students the first day of each term, however in order to address the Actionable Improvement Plan, the Academic Senate recommends the following:

1. Syllabi be collected in a consistent manner across all Academic Schools.
2. Syllabi be stored in a readily accessible and searchable repository.
3. The deadline for submission to the repository is the Census date (for both regular length and short-term offerings).

SYLLABUS ELEMENTS

Ideally, the syllabus is a description and plan for a course and should facilitate student learning. Thus, the course syllabus forms the backbone of a course offering:

> "The syllabus functions as a major communication device that provides details of how student learning will be assessed and about the roles of both student and instructors in the learning and assessment process." (Habanek, DV. *An Examination of the Integrity of the Syllabus*, College Teaching, 2005; 53:62–4)

As such, the Academic Senate recommends the following elements for all course syllabi:

Required:	Strongly Recommended	Recommended	Optional**
College Name	Instructor(s) Name	Course Description	Academic Integrity
Official Course Title	Office Hours and Location	Missed Exam Policy	Course Objectives
Course Prefix and Number	Instructor(s)' Contact Information	Grade Scale to Determine Final Grade	Department Grading Policies
Term	Schedule and Location(s) of Class Meeting(s)	List of Graded Assignments and Value in Relation to Final Grade	Units
Section Number(s)		Late Policy for Assignments	Outline of all Content covered in course
SLO(s)		Absence/Tardy Policy	Prerequisites
		List of Class Meetings & Relevant Assignments	Submission Policy
		Schedule Change Policy	Revision of Assignments Policy
			Classroom Courtesy
			Add/Drop Deadlines

*** There may be additional Optional items to consider, such as lab safety or information about field trips.*

The Academic Senate further recommends that common Addendum of Services be created and accessible on the Academic Affairs webpage.

Approved by the Academic Senate, March 23, 2017