

Essential Academic Information

Information about the Course, You and the Texts

- ❑ The name and number (including section) of the course
- ❑ The semester, year, and time it is being taught
- ❑ Your name, office number and office hours, office telephone number, and e-mail address
- ❑ Author, title, (publisher), and edition number for all the texts

Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Course goals** include what you want the student to know (information), to be able to do (skill) or to understand (feelings, attitudes, values) at the end of the course
- ❑ **Student learning objectives** represent the concrete behaviors students will demonstrate if they have successfully met course goals (knowledge, skill, values)

In order to help yourself write this part of the syllabus, think about the following questions?

- What do students need to know in order to take the next course?
- What do GE students need to know?
- What do they already know that you will build on?
- What do they need to unlearn?
- ❑ You may also wish to mention how you plan to help students achieve course goals and objectives (e.g. careful study of the texts, classroom lecture, classroom discussion, small group work, papers, individual research, etc.)
- ❑ If the course is a general education requirement, include the catalog goals for that section of general education (see appendix)

Optional Items

- ❑ You may wish to include the catalog description of the course.
- ❑ You may want to connect your goals and objectives to any of the following:
 - The 3 theological virtues of PLNU's seal: *grace, truth, holiness*
 - A PLNU instructor's overall mission: *to teach, to shape, to send*
 - PLNU's 3 academic virtues: *hospitality, conversation, covenantal community*

Means of Assessment and Grades

- ❑ The **tools** (tests, papers, projects, exams) you will be using in order to assess a student's progress towards the goals of the course.
- ❑ **Criteria** for the grading of specific assignments
- ❑ **Weight** of various items in assigning a final grade
- ❑ **Correlation** of numerical scores and letter grades. You should indicate whether you grade on the curve or not and if so, how that adjustment is made.

Expectations for Student Work

- ❑ Regular assignments
 - When is work considered late?
 - Is poor work ever refused?
- ❑ Participation

- Will this count in the student's grade?
- How will you keep track of and assess participation?
- Extra credit
- Tests and quizzes
 - Announced on the syllabus, announced in class, or unannounced?
 - Multiple choice, short-answer, take-home or essay?
 - Do you drop any low grades?
- Papers and projects
 - Topic selection method (professor assigned or chosen by the student)
 - Recommended style form
 - Your late paper policy

Classroom Climate and Pace

Class Rules

As the major contractual part of the document, class rules should be very clear. Every course will have some rules and expectations specific to that course alone, but a syllabus often touches on the following issues:

- Attendance
 - What constitutes excessive absence and what consequences will it have?
 - What absences are excused, how quickly must students inform you of an excused absence? Can there be too many such absences?
 - What happens to assignments, tests, and papers when there is an unexcused absence?
 - Is the student responsible for knowing material handled in a class the student has missed, whether for good reason or not?
 - What about coming in late or leaving early? Does this equate with absence or with some percentage thereof?
- Academic accommodations
 - This statement has been recommended for inclusion in a PLNU syllabus. "All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggested classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester."
- Cheating and plagiarism
 - If your department has a specific policy, include it in your syllabus. Or ...
 - Provide a specific definition of unacceptable behaviors and their consequences. Note that university policy allows sanctions from failing the assignment to failing the course.

Schedule of Assignments

- A schedule can be general or specific, but you should indicate week by week where you anticipate the class to be so that students can plan in advance.

- Even if you do not include it in your syllabus, you should map out what you think you will be covering for each day of class. Doing so in advance forces you to check that you have established reasonable goals and are assigning reasonable amounts of work.¹ A detailed course schedule, if it is included in the syllabus, will help your students learn to plan ahead and will help you keep them accountable even if they have been absent.
- The tone of a syllabus should be warm but professional, devoid of sarcasm or ridicule, defensiveness or anger.
- A good syllabus needs to be formatted for easy scanning. Use (but do not overuse) spacing, indentation, underlining, bold type, italics, type size, capitals, icons, tables and boxes to set off information so that the eye will easily scan to the material needed.
 - Always have clear, easily visible headings.
 - Devise some consistent system that you will use for specific items.
- And always tell students, on the first day, that this syllabus represents a contract and that they should read it carefully, like any other contract.
- A good way to save paper and still provide a very thorough syllabus is to post the rules and regulations of the class on the web and provide the students with a written schedule of daily events. You can include, on that written schedule, a clear explanation of the path to follow in order to get to your syllabus on the PLNU e-class site.

Appendix: Official University Policy Statements

Statement on Academic Accommodations

All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with documented learning disabilities who need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of the course. The ASC will contact professors with suggestions related to classroom strategies and necessary accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester.

General Education Statements

Responding to the Sacred

The following statement must be placed in the course syllabus for these courses of the General Education Program: BIB 101 and 102, CHU 395, and THE 306.

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of “Responding to the Sacred.” By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the

¹ If you find yourself routinely unable to cover the amount of material you thought you could cover in a day, you will know that you need to revise your goals or find more efficient ways to work with the material. Having a semester’s course outlined day to day also will help you in pacing yourself. Finally,

faculty supports the study of Scripture and Christian heritage as foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of personal values.

Developing Cognitive Abilities

The following statement must be placed in the course syllabus for these courses of the General Education Program: PSY 101 and 103; WRI 110, 115, 116, and 120; COM 100; and MTH 144, 164, and 303.

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of “Developing Cognitive Abilities.” By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the pursuit of personal awareness and skill development, focusing on the analytical, communication, and quantitative skills necessary for successful living in modern society.

Exploring an Interdependent World

The following statement must be placed in the course syllabus for these courses of the General Education Program: BIO 101-105, 110 and 130; CHE 101, 103, and 152; PHY 103, 141, and 241; PSC 110 (Physical Science); PED 100, 102-184, and 300; FCS 315
ECO 101 and 102; POL 101 and 190; SOC 101 and 201.

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of “Exploring an Interdependent World.” By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports an introduction to the natural and social sciences as tools for exploring the world, with emphasis on collecting and interpreting empirical data for both theoretical and practical purposes.

Seeking Cultural Perspectives

The following statement must be placed in the course syllabus for these courses of the General Education Program: HIS 110 and 111; ART 100 and 102; MUH 100 and 101; TRE 101; PHL 201 and 211; LIT 201-203, 205-208, 254 and 255, 356 and 357; SPA 101 and 102; FRE 101 and 102; GER 101 and 102; BLA 205-208 and BLA 337.

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of “Seeking Cultural Perspectives.” By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports a survey of human endeavors from a historical, cultural, linguistic, and philosophical perspective, including developing critical appreciation of human expression--both artistic and literary.