

Syllabus Elements

To be complete and most useful to students, you might consider the following language:

1. Name and contact information
 - a. Include co-instructors, Teaching Assistants, Writing Fellows (along with contact information)
2. Office hours
3. Preferred mode of communication (e.g. email, phone, cell, office hours) and any limitations/ time boundaries
4. Description of the course, including any prerequisites
5. Learning outcomes
6. Required texts/materials--be sure to distinguish required from recommended materials
7. Information about electronic materials (course web page, Moodle page, google drive etc.)
8. How you will calculate final grades. Be as specific as possible, including percentage allocations.
9. Dates of major examinations and course assignments (e.g., papers, presentations etc.)
10. Dates and times of any lectures, events, trips, etc. that will occur outside of regularly-scheduled course meeting time
 - a. Remember “the Zone” from 4:00-7:00pm M-F is time reserved for athletic and arts practices. Faculty are allowed up to 4 “incursions” into the zone, per course, and the dates and times should be listed on the syllabus.
11. Course policies around (see pg. 2-3 for sample paragraphs you could use):
 - a. Academic accommodations
 - b. Academic integrity and consequences for academic dishonesty
 - c. Athletic participation
 - d. Attendance
 - e. Electronic devices in classrooms
 - f. Late submission of work / missing work
 - g. Religious holidays
 - h. Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement

[OVER for examples of policy language for your syllabus]

Suggested Policy Language

Academic Accommodations [Thanks to the Department of Anthropology, and in particular Britt Halvorson, for the original draft of the “mental health” section that was revised for college-wide use]

I am available to discuss academic accommodations that any student with a documented disability may require. Please note that you'll need to provide a letter from the Dean of Studies Office documenting your approved accommodations. *Please meet with me within two weeks of the start of the semester to make a request for accommodations* so that we can work together with the College to make the appropriate arrangements for you. Kate McLaughlin, Associate Director of Access and Disability Services (kmclaugh@colby.edu) is the primary contact for accommodations and any questions related to educational testing and documentation.

Mental health: I care about my students' well-being and understand they may face mental health challenges. Students are encouraged to seek support from the College's available resources, including your advising dean and Counseling Services. (For immediate care, please call 207-859-4490 and press “0” to reach the on-call counselor.) I am willing to discuss reasonable accommodations during a crisis, but to fulfill our educational mission, students are expected to adhere to the attendance policy. Failure to do so because of mental health challenges may require consultation with the Dean of Studies Office.

Respect for Diversity [Note to faculty: I encourage you to reach out to Carol Hurney, Director for the Center for Teaching and Learning, if you would like assistance in creating a more inclusive syllabus]

It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. I expect you to feel challenged and sometimes outside of your comfort zone in this course, but it is my intent to present materials and activities that are inclusive and respectful of all persons, no matter their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics.

I have attempted to avoid scheduling exams during major religious holidays. If, however, I have inadvertently scheduled an exam or major deadline that creates a conflict with your religious observances, please let me know within two weeks of the start of classes so that we can make other arrangements. Colby College is supportive of the religious practices of its students, faculty, and staff. The College is committed to ensuring that all students are able to observe their religious beliefs without academic penalty.

Class rosters are provided to each instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Academic Integrity & Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the [Colby Affirmation](#) and are central to this course. You are expected to

demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you understand our course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing homework; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words); claiming another’s work or a modification of another’s work as one’s own; buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty; misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course; and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. **Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include:** failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see: libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism. For resources and information on academic integrity, see: www.colby.edu/academicintegrity

Athletic Participation

While Colby College is supportive of athletic participation by its students, academics takes priority over athletics. Both NCAA and Colby rules prohibit missing class for practices. In the case of overlapping commitments between class and athletic competitions, the student must meet with the professor as soon as possible to discuss these overlaps. The student may request permission to miss class and make up the missed work; the instructor has final authority either to grant or to withhold permission.

[NOTE to faculty: The “Zone” from 4-7PM each day is reserved for students’ extracurricular involvements, including but not limited to athletic practices. Courses are not ordinarily scheduled during this time. An instructor may schedule up to 4 required class sessions within the Zone, but these events MUST be listed on the syllabus at the beginning of the term. See the 2017 Faculty Handbook, pg. 118.]

Attendance

[NOTE: Attendance policies and wording vary widely. These are examples to use as a starting point.]

Example 1- Attendance: You should come to every class, especially in-class draft workshop days. If you miss more than 3 classes, I reserve the right to lower your grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the assignments and complete the work; check in with a classmate and our online course schedule before coming to me. If you know you will have to miss class when an assignment is due, either hand in your work before class or make arrangements to submit work online or with a classmate.

Example 2- Attendance, Absence and Deadline Policy: The department abides by the following policy as stated in the *Colby College Catalogue*: “Students are expected to attend all of their classes and scheduled course events in any semester or January term and are responsible for any work missed.

Failure to attend can lead to a warning, grading penalties, and/or dismissal from the course by the instructor with a failing grade.”

The department also adheres to the College's Policies for Missed Class Time Due to Athletic Contests. Only valid medical excuses, documented personal catastrophes (such as a death in the family), and religious observances will be accepted as reasons not to attend class, take an exam, or turn in a paper or other assignment as scheduled. If you are, for legitimate reasons, unable to take an exam or turn in an assignment when it is scheduled, you should notify me in advance. Having a lot of work, several exams/papers due, being unprepared, or having conflicting travel arrangements are not acceptable excuses.

Example 3- Students are expected to attend all of their classes and scheduled course events in any semester or January term and are responsible for any work missed. Failure to attend can lead to a warning, grading penalties, and/or dismissal from the course by the instructor with a failing grade.

Individual instructors determine whether students can be excused from classes or scheduled course events, whether exams can be postponed, or deadlines extended. Instructors also determine whether options are available for completing work when College-sponsored activities or events (e.g., musical performances or athletic competitions) conflict with a class, lab or exam. Instructors may require work to be completed during the regularly scheduled time. It is the responsibility of students to communicate promptly and directly with instructors concerning these matters.

Excuses may be granted at the instructor’s discretion for the following reasons: critical emergencies (normally verified by the Office of the Dean of the College), athletic or organizational trips, or illness (normally verified by the College Health Center). Students on academic probation should know that they cannot be excused from any class because of extracurricular or athletic activities.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

[NOTE: These policies also vary, depending on class size, course structure, and instructor tolerance.]

Example 1: Cell Phones - Do not check your cellphone in class, text, or otherwise distract yourself and your peers with your phone. I reserve the right to confiscate (temporarily) cellphones that are creating a distraction in class.

Example 2: Use of electronics in class: Please make sure your cell phones are off. I discourage the use of smartphones and laptops unless used as a mandated accommodation. It is distracting for those around you (Sana et al., 2013), for lecturers, and can be distracting for you. There is also empirical evidence that students learn better and remember more by taking notes by hand (Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). Please see me if you have concerns about this and I will work with you to support your learning needs.

Late Work / Missing Work

[NOTE: Late or missing work policies are sometimes part of grading standards or attendance policies. Consult your colleagues and consider these examples to get started.]

Example 1: Late Work Policy: I will deduct ½ letter grade (e.g. B to a B-) for each day a major writing assignment is turned in late. The only exceptions are if you come to speak to me in advance to request

an extension. Speaking to me is not a guarantee; I reserve extensions for unusual situations involving medical, family, or emergency situations.

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement

Colby College prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. Colby is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to, sexual assault and sexual harassment) and other specific forms of behavior that violate federal and state laws (Title IX and Title VII, and the Maine Human Rights Act). Such behavior also requires the College to fulfill certain obligations under two other federal laws, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Statistics Act (Clery Act).

To learn more about what constitutes sexual misconduct or to report an incident, see:

www.colby.edu/studentlife/handbook-section/f-sexualmisconduct/.

If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, you may contact:

- Counseling Center: 207-859-4490
- Emily Schusterbauer, Director Gender and Sexual Diversity Program (eeschust@colby.edu; 207-859-4093)
- Office of Religious & Spiritual Life: 207-859-4272
 - Dean of Religious & Spiritual Life, Kurt Nelson (kdnelson@colby.edu)
 - Jewish Chaplain, Erica Asch (elsasch@colby.edu)
 - Catholic Campus Minister, Charles Demm (cademm@colby.edu)

Students should be aware that faculty members are considered "responsible employees"; as such, if you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to Melvin Adams, Colby's Title IX Coordinator. "Disclosure" may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text, or through class assignments.