
Things You Need To Know To Plan Your Syllabus

- Try to keep in mind what you expect students to do with the content that you have chosen rather than thinking about the amount of content you expect to cover. Let the pace be determined by what you can reasonably expect from students as they work through the material.
- Be realistic about the amount of student work (reading, writing, oral, revisions, research, etc.) that can be accomplished in the course of a single semester. Map it out carefully on your syllabus draft before you decide how much content to cover, and especially before you decide on what books to cover.
- For each day's reading assignment, indicate what student work is expected (either as in-class activity or to be handed in). Try to draw up two syllabi in tandem—one for what will be covered, the other for how it will be covered.
- Try to remember what happens at certain times of the semester and take into account things like: time for individual conferences with students (on writing or oral work, for example, or for preregistration); peak times for mid-semester exams and papers, religious holidays, your absence for conferences, etc.
- Try to coordinate oral and written assignments (i.e., alternate or assign an oral report in advance of a written project). Help students to appreciate how a thesis statement works for both, as well as the importance of the introduction and conclusion, supporting evidence, and logical development of thought.
- Select assignments that move from the simple to the more complex, and place them at appropriate intervals. Be sure to allow enough time for progress to be made. Think about your own schedule in terms of time for grading of student work or meeting with students before the next assignment. Try to get a piece of writing from them in the first week and no later than the second week.
- If you think you would like to have one of the librarians talk during class about library resources either at the library or in your classroom, allow time for that in your syllabus.
- Allow time for your tutorial to discuss and do the honesty exercises. (See [academic honesty](#) section.)