

Checklist: Top 10 Syllabus Errors to Avoid

Please check that your syllabus contains the following items:

1. Basic course information on syllabus should be updated to match the 301 form: Course ID, units, title, preparation needed by students (prerequisites, recommended preparation, etc.).
2. Course objectives should relate to department or program objectives.
3. Grading should add to 100% or total points possible and the value of each assignment should be clearly indicated.
4. Participation and Attendance:
 - a. Participation should not exceed 15% of the total grade for the course. If participation exceeds 15%, the syllabus should clearly indicate to students what is expected to earn the full credit.
 - b. No portion of the grade should be awarded solely for class attendance.
5. Contact hours consistent with policy: each unit should reflect 15 50-minute hours of faculty-student interaction and at least two hours of out-of-class work per week; if a 4-unit class meets for 3 hours, extra work should be assigned.
6. Weekly schedule of topics, assignments, and exams: 15 weeks (or equivalent, for courses taught in shorter time period).*
7. Enough information about assignment components so students and UCCO reviewer can tell how work should be completed.
8. Undergraduate courses:
 - a. Due by week 8, adequate graded work on which midterm standing can be based
 - b. Graded work due on the scheduled date of the final exam (exam, paper, project, etc.)
9. Most recent statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems as found in the *Syllabus Template* (http://www.usc.edu/dept/ARR/private/forms/curriculum/Syllabus_Template_CCO.docx)
10. Any statements about incompletes and grading should be consistent with the *Grading and Correction of Grades Handbook* (http://www.usc.edu/dept/ARR/private/forms/Handbooks/Grade_Handbook_rev082010.pdf).

*If one of the scheduled classes falls on a university holiday, the syllabus should address how the units and material that would have been scheduled for that class will be made up—for example, an extra class meeting, additional reading or projects, online activities, etc. (Especially important for Monday-only classes in the spring.)