

Faculty Resources: In the Syllabus

Setting expectations in the syllabus is the first and most important step in setting a course up for success. While there are some expectations that would seem common sense to many of us, students and faculty benefit from making their expectations explicit. Students benefit because faculty throughout DePaul have different styles and expectations. It can be quite confusing for students to know what is expected from one course to the next. Clearly outlining expectations helps students feel secure in knowing how to conduct themselves. Additionally, faculty benefit from these expectations because, should an issue arise in the course relating to a student's behavior, the syllabus supports the faculty should the issue need to be referred to the Student Conduct or Academic Integrity Processes. The information below contains suggested topics to cover in your syllabi as appropriate. Below those notes is sample language that you may adopt for your syllabi.

Syllabus Topics

Attendance Expectations:

- Does being late constitute an absence?
- Does leaving early constitute an absence?
- What are the penalties for absence?
- Are there a maximum number of absences allowable, regardless of the reason, before a student fails?

Behavior Expectations

- What is the policy on cell phone usage/texting?
- What is the expectation of laptop use?
- How is talking in class managed?

Civil Discourse Expectations

- How do you encourage students to have a respectful dialogue?
- How do you manage conflict?
- What is the difference between debate and dialogue?

Sample Syllabus Language

The below is a suggestion of sample language to be used in the syllabus and should not be considered mandated university policies. Faculty have the discretion to include policies they believe will assist in classroom management. Please refer to your academic department for additional information on syllabus templates.

Dean of Students Syllabus Language:

The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students in navigating the university, particularly during difficult situations, such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. Absence Notifications to faculty, personal or medical Administrative Withdrawals, and Community Resource Referrals, support students both in and outside of the classroom. DOS is committed to your success as a DePaul student. Please visit DOS at go.depaul.edu/dos/.

OR

The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students navigate the college experience, particularly during difficulty situations such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. For a list of support services and advocacy information, please visit DOS at go.depaul.edu/dos/

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. Students who miss class due to illness or other significant personal circumstance in which documentation has been obtained, are encouraged to complete the Absence Notification Process through the Dean of Students Office (Student Center #307 & Lewis 1400). After the instructor receives notification from the Dean of Students office, or in instances where there is no documentation, it will be up to the instructor's discretion to excuse the absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course. Please see go.depaul.edu/dos for additional information.

Class Discussion:

Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

Attitude:

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse:

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be socially responsible leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Cell Phones/On Call:

If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an unobtrusive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

Additionally, there may be other required language for syllabus inclusion from the Center for Students with Disabilities. Please ensure you are working within the policies of mandated syllabus language.

These syllabus tips and examples, while providing a helpful framework, may not fit to your specific course. Please feel free to contact the Dean of Students Office at any point to discuss other options. Additionally, DePaul's Teaching Commons provides an array of resources for constructing a syllabus. Lastly, your academic college may have unique policies and procedures. Please consult with your Chair or Associate Dean for further clarification.

If you need any additional information regarding classroom expectations or syllabi language, please feel free to utilize the Dean of Students Office as a resource.

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