GSD COURSE SYLLABUS CHECKLIST

This checklist is designed to assist GSD faculty in creating their course syllabi. For the fall 2022 term, your syllabi need to be uploaded to Canvas by Friday, August 12.

To ensure compatibility with the Harvard Syllabus Explorer, please name your MS Word or PDF file following this convention: F22_[course number]_[course title]_syllabus

BASIC INFORMATION

- **Course title** (100 characters max.), **course number** (include all numbers for cross-listed courses), **semester**, **school name**.

- **Contact information**
  - Name and GSD email address for the instructor/s and TA/TFs.

- **Office hours**
  - All instructors are required to post office hours for a total of two hours per week. Include sign-up instructions and communicate your office hours to your department.

- **Meeting times and time commitment**
  - State the meeting days and times, duration, and overall time commitment required for your course, including preparation and assignments. Any irregular course schedules that were previously approved by your department chair should be mentioned.
  - Please note that class sessions ought to start and end promptly at the stated time to allow students a fifteen-minute transition between courses.

- **Required supplies** (incl. estimated cost), textbooks, and software or platforms used in your course.
  - Per the Federal Higher Education Act, instructors are required to share information about textbooks. The Harvard Coop is coordinating this effort on behalf of the university. In addition to listing textbooks on your syllabus, please contact the Coop at harvardtextbooks@bncollege.com to ensure compliance with federal law.
  - Please make every effort to provide the required readings and other materials on your Canvas site. Harvard Libraries offer services such as Scan & Deliver and the Library Reserves Tool, in addition to the resources available at our own Frances Loeb Library.

- **Grading**
  - The GSD uses a grading system that is different from most other schools—at Harvard and beyond. Refer students to the Office of the Registrar if they have questions about grading systems.
  - Your syllabus should list the components of your final course grade and their respective weighting.

- **Intended audience and prerequisites**
  - All non-studio GSD courses are open to all GSD students and open for cross-registration by default. Some courses are required for a given program and are therefore limited to students in that program. For other courses, state if students need a specific background, knowledge, or skillset to succeed in the course. A specific GSD course may be listed as a prerequisite but you may wish to allow students to provide evidence of equivalent knowledge garnered from other coursework or experience. You may also state if you will approve cross-registration petitions.
COURSE DESCRIPTION

The components of a course description are course content, structure and assessments, learning goals, and. While the abstract that you submit to post on the Harvard and GSD course catalogs is limited to 3,500 characters (incl. formatting), you may provide additional information on your syllabus.

- **Course Content**
  - Topics that will be covered, skills that will be trained, questions that will be tackled. You can also describe how the course fits into its academic field.

- **Course Structure and Assessments**
  - How is your course delivered and how are students assessed? Note primary teaching techniques utilized in your course (e.g., discussions, group work, project-based exercises, lectures, visitors, site visits, etc.) as well as assessments or deliverables (e.g., papers, presentations, drawings, models, discussion posts, etc.)

- **Course Learning Goals**
  - Learning goals can consist of a simple list of bullet points, e.g. “Students will challenge dominant historical narratives about architecture and urbanism by investigating omissions, exclusions, oppressions, and forms of resistance in existing discourse;” or “Students will gain competency in basic techniques of architectural representation, including rendering, orthographic drawing, and physical model photography.”
  - You are encouraged to address how the course meets accreditation requirements.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

- List all course meetings for the semester and include as much information as possible for each. As applicable, you could state the topic, assigned readings, visitors or guest lecturers, as well as information about public events at the GSD or elsewhere that are related to your course.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- **Academic Integrity and Conduct**
  - You may refer students to the GSD’s Academic Conduct Policy. It is also suggested that you communicate expectations for academic conduct, such as:
    - Basic expectations for papers and exams. Specify what resources are permitted (including internet resources).
    - If students are collaborating on projects, some general assumptions about group work.
    - Submission of coursework for one or more courses simultaneously.
    - Use of outside copy editing services (as opposed to content editing).
  - Refer to the Harvard Honor Code website for examples of academic integrity policies and collaboration policies for syllabi.
  - You may also refer students to Harvard Library’s Write and Cite website, or to the Resources & Services section of Frances Loeb Library.

- **Attendance, Etiquette, and Recordings**
  - Consider outlining your attendance and communication policy. You can state how you prefer to be addressed, how you can be best reached (email, MS Teams chat, etc.), and how quickly students can expect to receive a reply.
Teaching Philosophy

- The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard recommends including a teaching philosophy (amongst other tips on syllabus design). This constitutes an opportunity for you to share your pedagogical approach with your students. You can reflect on questions of collaboration, hierarchy, or expertise. Refer to the website of the Harvard Honor Code website for examples of teaching philosophies for syllabi.

Student Resources and Wellbeing

- Your syllabus can be a good place to remind students of the resources available at the GSD Office of Student Affairs. Encourage students to reach out to Student Affairs if they are experiencing personal challenges or hardship.

Commitment to a Safe Learning Environment

- You may state your commitment to the GSD Policy on Personal Conduct which includes the following language: "A free environment for academic pursuits requires reasonable conduct, both in academic and nonacademic affairs, by all members of the school. The faculty may impose discipline or penalties on individuals for acts that disrupt or endanger the university community's pursuit of teaching, learning, and research in an atmosphere of free inquiry and personal and psychological security. The faculty may consider sanctions whether or not civil or criminal penalties are imposed. Violation of specific domains considered here include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, sexual and racial harassment, the use of physical violence, and lying to an officer."

- The website also contains detailed information and contacts for relevant university resources.

Syllabus Change Policy

- While you should strive to confirm all information on your syllabus when you first post it on Canvas, it may be useful to include a policy as simple as “This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.”

Copyright

- It is recommended that you include a copyright notice on your syllabus. This language has been approved by Harvard’s Office of the General Counsel: “This course is the joint copyright of The President and Overseers of Harvard University and the Instructor of Record. No reproduction of any part of this course in any form is allowed without the express permission of the Instructor of Record.”

Other Resources

- For additional resources on planning, teaching or grading a course see teaching resources available through the Harvard Kennedy School, https://www.hks.harvard.edu/more/about/leadership-administration/academic-deans-office/slate/teaching-resources. Additional Harvard-wide resources for online course preparation can be found at https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/teaching-remotely and at https://teachremotely.harvard.edu.