Syllabus Requirements and Recommended Template for
Undergraduate Courses Taught in the Fall 2020 Semester

[Converting seat time and out-of-class learning to total learning time]
The U.S. Department of Education has NOT relaxed the requirements for credit hour equivalency during the COVID-19 pandemic. The credit model is based on a 15-week semester: 14 weeks of instruction and one week of examination/assessment. It assumes a traditional learning experience in which students will be expected to receive 50 minutes of instruction (seat) time and spend a minimum of 100 minutes of independent learning (reading, completing assignments, solving homework problems, totaling 37.5 hours per credit over the semester. For more information see Assignment of Credit Hour Policy at provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines

During the fall 2020 semester, it is expected that all courses will meet at their regularly scheduled time and will include the minimum 37.5 hours/credit for the semester in instruction and independent learning, regardless of course modality (face-to-face, remote, online, hybrid) or type of learning activity (independent study, internship, independent research).

Syllabus Requirements

In accordance with the regulations laid out in the GW Faculty Handbook, updated April 2015, Section 2.7.3.4,* the syllabus for all proposed courses should include the following:

1. Course prerequisites, if any.
2. Learning outcomes that state descriptions of behaviors or skills that students will be able to demonstrate at the end of the course or unit. See assessment.gwu.edu/course-assessment
3. Average amount of direct instruction or guided interaction with the instructor and average minimum amount of independent (out-of-class) learning expected per week.
4. Required textbooks and/or other materials and recommended readings.
5. Week-by-week schedule of topics to be presented.
6. Description of assignments and other course assessments that delineate how student performance will be evaluated.
7. Statement on University policy on observance of religious holidays (see text, below).
8. Statement regarding accommodations for student with disabilities (see text, below).
9. Reference to the GW Academic Integrity Code (see suggested text, below).
10. Reference to the Security and Safety Policy (see text, below).

Remote, online, and hybrid course syllabi should include the following additional information:

1. Instructions for getting started and where to find various course components.
2. Minimum technology requirements for participation in the course.
3. Provide link to student support (e.g., technical requirements and support, student services, obtaining a
GWorld card, and state contact information). url: online.gwu.edu/student-support

4. Information about the accessibility of all technologies required in the course.

5. Requirements for accessing and participating in the course (e.g., requisite skills for using technology tools and software applications, and computer equipment requirements such as webcam, microphone, and software).

*The Faculty Handbook is available from the Office of the Provost at provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines
Recommended Syllabus Template

Course and contact information:
- Course: [department, course number, and title]
- Semester: [semester, year]
- Meeting time: [day(s) of the week and class start and finish times]
- Location: [building, room] (if relevant)

Instructor:
- Name:
- Campus address:
- Phone:
- GW E-mail:
- Remote office hours:

Course prerequisites, if any:
[List all prerequisite courses using departmental code and course number. In addition, list specific skills, knowledge, credits completed, and the like, if applicable.]

Learning outcomes that state descriptions of behaviors or skills that students will be able to demonstrate at the end of the course or unit:
[Please ensure that the learning outcomes are appropriate to the level for which the course is designed. Avoid verbs like “understand” or “know;” instead, use verbs such as analyze, synthesize, apply, and evaluate. See assessment.gwu.edu/course-assessment]

“As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:
1.
2.
3. [etc.]”

Average amount of direct instruction or guided interaction with the instructor and average minimum amount of independent (out-of-class) learning expected per week:

[The following guidance pertains to courses taught in a traditional 15-week semester, regardless of modality. For all course delivery types (on-campus, remote, online, and hybrid) taught on different schedules, the number of minutes per week of direct instruction and independent learning should be adjusted to ensure that the total combined effort fulfills the same minimum total requirements for direct instruction and estimated independent (out-of-class) learning.

Note that the amount of both direct instruction and independent learning should be included in this statement.]
**On-campus courses**—Use the following formula to calculate the average minimum amount of independent learning expected per week for inclusion on the syllabus: for each credit, students are expected to spend a minimum of 100 minutes in independent learning for every 50 minutes of direct instruction for a minimum total of 2.5 hours per week or 37.5 hours for the semester. A 3-credit course, for example, would include 2.5 hours of direct instruction and a minimum of 5 hours of independent learning per week for a combined minimum total of 7.5 hours per week or 112.5 hours per semester.

See the [Assignment of Credit Hour Policy](#) for more information at

**Remote and hybrid courses**—For remote, online, and hybrid courses, the distribution of direct and independent learning minutes may vary; however, it is expected that courses will include significant synchronous elements, whereby students are engaging with the faculty member either through course discussions or lectures. For each course credit, students are expected to spend a minimum total of 2.5 hours per week of combined direct instruction and independent learning for a total of 37.5 hours in a 15-week semester.

**Courses with irregular class meetings**—For courses that might not meet on a weekly basis, such as research and independent study courses and internships, the distribution of direct and independent learning minutes may vary. For each credit, students are expected to spend an average total of 2.5 hours per week of combined direct and independent learning for a total of 37.5 hours in a 15-week semester.

**Course workload estimator**: Faculty may wish to use the “course workload estimator” developed by Rice University. This tool allows the user to estimate how much time to allot for different types of reading assignments.

**Required textbooks and/or other materials and recommended readings**:  
[List all required textbooks, workbooks, websites, etc.  
List all recommended or supplemental course learning materials  
Clearly identify which materials are required, recommended, or supplemental]

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
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<tbody>
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Week-by-week schedule of topics to be presented and scheduling of final examinations

The class schedule should be a detailed breakdown of topics to be covered, course assignments and due dates, and required and recommended reading by class session or module.

GW’s regular fall and spring semesters are 15 weeks in length. All 15 weeks must be accounted for on the class schedule. The class schedule should include 14 weeks of instruction with the 15th week dedicated to the final. No student break day or period that appears on the academic calendar may be used or counted as a class session. See bulletin.gwu.edu/academic-calendar/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic(s) and readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s) due</th>
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**Scheduling of final examinations:** Final examinations, which include any type of end-of-semester examination, are to be administered as week 15 of a 15-week semester and only during the regularly scheduled examination period. In order to provide students maximum opportunity to study and review material covered during the semester, and to ensure 15 weeks of instruction, final examinations may not be administered during regularly scheduled class sessions, on class make-up days, or during the reading period.

Any type of end-of-semester paper, report, or take-home examination submitted in lieu of a final examination is acceptable and should be due during the examination period.

If no final examination is scheduled, faculty should make a reasonable determination of whether their course conforms to GW’s assignment of credit hour policy, which assumes that students spend, over the course of 15 weeks, a minimum of 37.5 hours of direct learning and out-of-class work for each credit.

For more information see Administration of Final Examinations During the Examination Period.

**Assignments**

[A detailed breakdown of course assignments and due dates by lesson module. Include assignment descriptions, method of assessment/evaluation, and point value.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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Total Possible Points
Grading
List what will be counted and percentages. [For example:

- midterm exam (__%)
- paper (__%)
- final exam (__%)
- class participation/attendance (__%)

University policies

University policy on observance of religious holidays
In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see:
provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines

Academic Integrity Code
Academic Integrity is an integral part of the educational process, and GW takes these matters very seriously. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and in other ways outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students accused of academic integrity violations should contact the Office of Academic Integrity to learn more about their rights and options in the process. Outcomes can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the University, including a transcript notation. The Office of Academic Integrity maintains a permanent record of the violation.

More information is available from the Office of Academic Integrity at studentconduct.gwu.edu/academic-integrity. The University’s “Guide of Academic Integrity in Online Learning Environments” is available at studentconduct.gwu.edu/guide-academic-integrity-online-learning-environments. Contact information: rights@gwu.edu or 202-994-6757.

Support for students outside the classroom

Virtual academic support
A full range of academic support is offered virtually in fall 2020. See coronavirus.gwu.edu/top-FAQs for updates.

Tutoring and course review sessions are offered through Academic Commons in an online format. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/tutoring

Writing and research consultations are available online. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/writing-research-help.

Coaching, offered through the Office of Student Success, is available in a virtual format. See studentsuccess.gwu.edu/academic-program-support
Academic Commons offers several short videos addressing different virtual learning strategies for the unique circumstances of the fall 2020 semester. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/study-skills. They also offer a variety of live virtual workshops to equip students with the tools they need to succeed in a virtual environment. See tinyurl.com/gw-virtual-learning

Writing Center
GW’s Writing Center cultivates confident writers in the University community by facilitating collaborative, critical, and inclusive conversations at all stages of the writing process. Working alongside peer mentors, writers develop strategies to write independently in academic and public settings. Appointments can be booked online. See gw.mywconline.

Academic Commons
Academic Commons provides tutoring and other academic support resources to students in many courses. Students can schedule virtual one-on-one appointments or attend virtual drop-in sessions. Students may schedule an appointment, review the tutoring schedule, or access other academic support resources at academiccommons.gwu.edu. For assistance contact academiccommons@gwu.edu.

Disability Support Services (DSS) 202-994-8250
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. disabilitysupport.gwu.edu

Counseling and Psychological Services 202-994-5300
GW’s Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services

Safety and security
• In an emergency: call GWPD 202-994-6111 or 911
• For situation-specific actions: review the Emergency Response Handbook at safety.gwu.edu/emergency-response-handbook
• In an active violence situation: Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out. See go.gwu.edu/shooterprep
• Stay informed: safety.gwu.edu/stay-informed