

2A: Syllabus Reconnaissance

Lori Ogden, PhD, Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, West Virginia University [00:00:00] Go ahead and raise your hand if you need a copy of the syllabus.

Chad Bauman, PhD, Associate Professor of Religion, Chair of the Dept. of Philosophy, Religion & Classics, Butler University [00:00:03] So let me pass out some copies for the class.

David Beach, PhD, Associate Undergraduate Writing Coordinator, Department of English, West Virginia University [00:00:07] So let's take a look at the syllabus.

Brittany, Student, West Virginia University [00:00:18] When the instructor reads through a syllabus, it's easy to tune out. So when there's an activity, then it gets you to actually look at it, to think about the information on the syllabus, and to ask questions.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:00:30] Okay, does everybody have a syllabus? Okay, so we're going to do an exercise that's called a syllabus reconnaissance exercise, and basically it's an exercise to help you become more familiar with the syllabus.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:00:41] We're going to do what's called a syllabus reconnaissance. So I want you to take a look at the syllabus. I brought copies. I also emailed you a copy last night.

David Beach, PhD [00:00:52] The syllabus reconnaissance activity, it's where the students will look at the syllabus and mark five things which they think are important in the syllabus that everyone should know.

David Beach, PhD [00:01:00] Read through the syllabus in its entirety and put a star by the five top things that you think are important in the syllabus.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:09] I want you to choose five important points, and particularly I want you to focus on the five points that indicate something of the course expectations.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:01:18] And then I'm going to give you an opportunity to discuss those five key points with the person sitting next to you, and then we'll talk about those as a class. This is something that you really are going to be referring to throughout the semester. So it's important that we take the time to really look at it and understand the expectations of the course.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:01:37] So I like to do the syllabus reconnaissance because they aren't just reading it or I'm not just reading it to them, but they're actually interacting with it.

David Beach, PhD [00:01:45] And what I want you to do is share and compare your list of the five important things on the syllabus.

David Beach, PhD [00:01:51] By putting them into small groups, they can share the information because if you have a group of four, there might be 20 things that are note, that are marked as important things in the syllabus.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:02:02] All right, let's bring it back together. So we're just going to talk now together about some of the, some of the points you found, some of the things that you found that were significant in terms of expectations.

Student [00:02:12] So there's two different options we have, 20 hours interacting with the Muslim community in Indianapolis and an encounter journal. And then it looks like option two is the research paper.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:02:26] So you've got a couple of assignments that are due early. You've got a quiz early, you have some journaling that's due early. And a little bit later on, you have a paper due.

Kristen, Butler University [00:02:35] As long as I know what is coming, then I'm better able to prepare for it. So if I know the assignments and their due dates, then I start the very first day. Write it out all in my planner and know what to do.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:02:48] Okay, so now that you've had an opportunity to discuss these points with those around you, I'd like to give you an opportunity to ask some questions. So who would like to start?

Student [00:02:57] We were wondering how our homework and exams will be graded.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:03:01] Okay, so, there are three exams and a final exam. The three exams you'll take electronically in the lab. Those contribute to 20% of your grade. And then the final exam, that'll be a two-hour exam. It will be cumulative and it will also contribute to 20% of your grade.

David Beach, PhD [00:03:20] What is the important point that you all came up with?

Student [00:03:24] We picked, um, grading policy.

David Beach, PhD [00:03:26] So we work on a portfolio system. Your final portfolio will be your polished professional work of what you've done during the semester. And how much is that worth? Seventy percent of the grade. We'll have rubrics for each assignment, we have rubrics for the portfolio, for informal writing, participation.

Student [00:03:47] We noticed that participation is worth 15 percent of your grade.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:51] Your participation grade is, is important in this class because it's related to the learning objectives and in fact, something you may not have noticed in the syllabus, which is that on each of the assignments, there is an indication of which of the student learning objectives it helps serve or helps you develop.

Lori Odgen, PhD [00:04:07] I think establishing and discussing the learning outcomes is really important. It's also really important that they understand what they're going to learn and the work involved in learning those things. You should understand exactly what is expected of you, and if you don't, you should feel comfortable, you know, enough to ask those questions.