

Tips for Planning Course Syllabi and Other Course Information

1. The Course Plan.

State the course's objectives and indicate what teaching/learning strategies will be used to achieve them. Provide any other information that will help students understand how the course will be conducted and what will be expected of them. Include a description of how grades will be determined and what weights the various course components will have in the final grade.

2. Enrollment Adjustments.

a. Students may drop or add classes to their schedules during the first six class days using the on-line registration system. Faculty members must give permission for new enrollments which exceed the posted class size limit for the class. Special electronic codes (SPACs) are provided for each faculty member by the Registrar's Office and are available in the Class Information section of your faculty e-services. You may give these codes to students you approve above the class limit. You may also choose to wait list one or more of your courses. Once a course is wait listed, a student may not add the course without a SPAC, even if there is an opening. ([Academic Calendar](#))

b. The last day students may withdraw from a full-credit course is Friday, November 1. For those students who withdraw after the first six days and before November 1, the course is still listed on their transcript with a W. It would be best if you provide significant graded feedback before this date (via exams, papers, or other assignments). Students considering withdrawal from the course then have these measures of their performance before they must make their decisions about withdrawing. Students must get your signature on a withdrawal form they obtain from the registrar's office so that you will know of their decision. The deadline is strictly enforced unless the student arranges for an extension before the deadline with the Registrar's staff. (See # 11, Petitions, below.) Consider putting the November 1 date on your syllabi.

3. Attendance.

Under DePauw's [Class Absences and Attendance](#) policy, each faculty member has the authority and responsibility to set the attendance rules and penalties for absence course by course. Students are not necessarily allowed "free cuts" or unexcused absences. An exception is that students are to be given a chance to make up missed work if they wish to honor an obligation of religious faith. Complete details of the "Holy Days Policy" which stipulates dates students may miss for religious faith obligations are available in the General Policies section of the [Academic Handbook](#). Students may also request excused absences for University approved activities, such as, athletic events, and field trips, but the faculty member retains the authority to decide whether to excuse the student and whether missed work may be made up. Let students know your attendance policy and how they should reach you in advance if they are unable to fulfill an academic responsibility. We encourage keeping attendance records, particularly if you plan to penalize absences in determining final grades. Contact Academic Services (765-658-4027) if a student is absent excessively.

4. Breaks.

a. Fall break is October 19-27. No classes meet Monday-Friday during those days.

b. Thanksgiving Break is November 27-December 1. No classes meet Wednesday-Friday during those days. Tuesday evening classes do meet on November 26.

c. Classes on the days before and after breaks may not be cancelled. Faculty rules require that faculty members must meet their classes on the days before the start of breaks and immediately following breaks. Students have been advised to make their travel plans so that they can attend all of their scheduled classes.

5. Exams/Feedback.

a. Progress Reports (midterm grades) are due by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, October 14. These reports may be submitted on the web to the Registrar's office. They are required for all first year students and students on academic probation. The names of students for whom midterms are required will be highlighted on the midterm grade sheet in e-services. Faculty members should also submit midterm grades for any other students earning a C- or lower. If you send early alerts to [Kelley Hall](#), Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, before midterm reports are due, it may help us identify students even before midterm who might benefit from tutoring or study skills help. Be sure to have enough graded feedback before October 14 (tests, quizzes, papers, presentations) so that you can provide accurate information to students on their levels of mastery in the course.

b. If possible, include your schedule for assignments, exams and feedback in your syllabus so that students know when to expect these activities. Try to assign papers early in the semester so that students spread their preparatory work over the semester and so that you can check their intermediate work and provide feedback.

c. If you plan to give a final exam, refer to the final examination schedule (available on the [Academic Calendar](#) page). No work other than the final exam, or something in lieu of the exam, should be assigned for students to complete during the examination period. Substitutes for a final exam (such as take home exams or papers) are normally due at the scheduled exam time. Include the final exam date and time for your course in the syllabus, and on the first day of class inform students that you expect them to be there for the exam. Normally you should require that all other work for the course be submitted by the final exam time, but setting earlier deadlines will facilitate grading and final grade preparation. Students must take final exams at the scheduled time, though there are special procedures for granting exceptions if a student is scheduled for three final examinations in one day.

d. No hourly exams are permitted during the last five days of classes; laboratory "practicals" are permitted during this period.

e. Final Grades are due by **10:00 a.m., Friday, December 27**. Be sure to set deadlines for student work and plan your grading schedule so that you can meet that deadline for submitting your grades.

6. [Academic Integrity](#) Policy.

You should say that you will uphold the DePauw policy. Suggested wording: "Cheating, plagiarism, submission of the work of others, etc. violates DePauw policy on academic integrity and may result in penalties ranging from a lowered grade to course failure or expulsion. The policy and discussion of each student's obligations and rights are in the Student Handbook." Discussing this issue in class is important; it may be useful to give written or verbal illustrations during the semester of appropriate and inappropriate uses of sources and others' work in the context of the projects students are working on at the time.

7. Providing and sharing information electronically to students.

You are encouraged to place your syllabus and other assignments on the Moodle site for the course (<https://moodle.depauw.edu/login/index.php>). Staff members in the [Faculty Instructional Technology Support \(FITS\)](#) program can provide you with additional support, such as setting up an electronic bulletin board/discussion group, a Moodle course web site or a shared class network folder. The staff in FITS (765-658-4389) will be happy to talk to you about other technology resources and services you can use in

your courses. Class lists are available in the Class Information section of your [faculty e-services](#), where there is also a utility for sending email to each member of the class.

8. How may students reach you?

a. You should list your office address, e-mail address and phone number on the syllabus.

b. Office hours should be posted; times should be varied so you are accessible when students are not in class. It is helpful to let students know how and when to reach you. Please also share this information with your department secretary. (Do you have a schedule on your door for students to sign up for appointments or leave messages? Is there a secretary who will know your schedule? Is it OK for students to call you at home?) Give students some idea of how much advance notice you need, for example: Evening e-mail is not sufficient notification that the student cannot give a presentation at 8:00 a.m. the next day.

9. Will you be away during the semester?

If so, include the dates in the syllabus (if known now). Consider having a colleague give a guest presentation, having assignments for students to work on in your absence and/or scheduling make-up class time after your return. Notify your department chair if you will miss classes. Notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs if you will be absent for a total equivalent to one week of classes or more ([Absence from Campus policy](#)).

10. Confidentiality.

Federal law places requirements on all of us with regard to privacy of students' academic information. Do not use names, student ID numbers, or social security numbers when you post test or other grade information. Don't put graded papers outside your office unless they are in individual envelopes to protect privacy. Be sure that there is adequate privacy when you talk with students and be sure to keep student confidences when talking with other faculty members, students and friends.

11. Petitions for course adjustments.

The Petitions Committee is very reluctant to grant permission for students to withdraw after the deadline in the eighth week. Similarly, they are reluctant to allow a student to enter a class after six class days have passed. There may be a late fee if a petition is granted to adjust a student's schedule after the deadline.

12. Library services.

Click here for a [welcome message](#) from the library. [Tiffany Hebb](#), Coordinator of Instruction Services (765-658-4409), will be happy to work with you to plan instruction and orientation sessions for your students on using the library facilities and electronic services. From past experience, we find that these sessions are most effective when they are linked to particular course assignments and projects. If you plan to assign library-based projects, please discuss these assignments with the reference librarians to better prepare them to assist your students. The reference librarians can also help you by suggesting specific resources that support your assignments. [Joyce Dixon-Fyle](#), Collection Development Librarian (765-658-4361), will work with you to acquire any library materials you may need for your classes. You can also put print and electronic media resources on reserve at any of the four libraries. Contact the Media and User Services Team (765-658-4790) for your instructional media equipment needs.