



## Syllabus Preparation Guidelines and Checklists

(Updated 2025)

The following pages contain a set of **checklists** for the preparation of course syllabi. The preparation of a course syllabus is one of the most significant aspects of course management. A strong syllabus provides for your students a written agreement between the instructor, the student, and the entire classroom community with regard to the learning outcomes, expectations, and course policies that will shape the learning experience. Clarity in your syllabi is of utmost importance and is a significant means by which you can serve the learning experience of your students.

The checklists on the following pages are comprehensive. The amount of data required is indicative of the centrality of the syllabus for clearly articulating course learning outcomes and the means by which those outcomes will be accomplished. As you work to incorporate all of the *Required Course Syllabus Components*, I encourage you also to ensure your syllabus clearly describes the overarching narrative of the course in ways that cultivate anticipation for the learning that is ahead, along with the meaning and significance of that learning.

It may be useful to keep in mind some of the following as you prepare your syllabus and proceed through the checklists on the pages that follow:

### 1. What is a course syllabus?

- o A course syllabus is a written plan to guide and direct the learning experiences of students.
- o A course syllabus is a detailed description of the way the instructor intends to teach the course.
- o A course syllabus is a planned arrangement of materials and activities to be used in teaching the course.

### 2. Why is a course syllabus important?

- o A course syllabus requires instructors to think through the overarching structures and goals of the course and to consider about the needs of students in relationship to those goals.
- o A course syllabus facilitates learning by ensuring that both the learners and professor are familiar with the goals of the course and how they are to be achieved.
- o A course syllabus allows the provost to ensure the quality of instructional programs.

### 3. What does a properly prepared syllabus accomplish?

- o A course syllabus communicates appropriate goals and learning outcomes for the course, linking ongoing instruction with established learning outcomes.
- o A course syllabus ensures that the course has been properly organized by providing a road map to guide teaching, assessment, and learning activities and to give priority to those things students need in order to learn well.
- o A course syllabus provides for proper use of time and resources while ensuring that instructional aids and resources (e.g., DVDs, field trips, service learning, resource people from the community) will be used when appropriate.
- o When scheduling problems or other opportunities or detours in student learning occur, the syllabus serves as a base which can help in making course adjustments.
- o A course syllabus establishes the course in the context of the mission of Trinity, especially by indicating which of the six general education learning outcomes are addressed in that course.
- o A course syllabus establishes the course in the context of departmental learning outcomes, indicating which department learning outcomes are particular to the course.



## Syllabus Preparation Checklists

(Updated 2025)

Checklist 1: College Policies for Syllabus Preparation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each course syllabus must contain all of the <i>Required Course Syllabus Components</i>, described in the table below.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each course syllabus must be revised every time the course is offered, even if that is every semester.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Syllabus revisions should include adjustments to (1) course content, structure, and assignments in an effort to continuously improve the relationship between the course and its learning outcomes and (2) logistical details, including office hours, course calendar, assignment details and due dates, etc.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An electronic copy of every syllabus must be sent to the Provost's Office for archiving prior to the first class day of every academic semester.</li> </ul>	

Checklist 2: Required Course Syllabus Components	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Basic Course Information</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Please be certain this is updated each semester.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course title, department, course number, and number of credits</li> <li>Course description, including any prerequisites (copied from college catalog)</li> <li>Course meeting times, classroom location, and semester/year</li> <li>Instructor name, office location, email address, and telephone number</li> <li>Instructor office hours</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Foundations Learning Outcomes</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Include all outcomes in every course syllabus; it is recommended that instructors highlight those outcomes which are particularly addressed in the course.</b> <i>Outcomes are attached as an appendix to this checklist.</i></p> <p><b>A note about structure:</b> <i>Some instructors have taken to creating a standalone page with Foundations and Departmental outcomes listed as part of a "larger educational context." A sample of such a structure is also included as an appendix.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Departmental Learning Outcomes</b></li> </ul>	<p>Indicate which department learning outcomes are addressed in the course. Instructors may wish to include all departmental learning outcomes and highlight those which the course addresses. (Department chairs have a list of department learning outcomes.)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Course Learning Outcomes</b></li> </ul>	<p>Outcomes should be written from the students' point of view. What will students learn to do or how is student learning affected as a result of taking this course? These statements should be learner-centered and should focus on students actively engaging with course material.</p> <p>Please note that all new course proposals include a list of learning outcomes. Especially for relatively new courses, instructors should use these as a starting point for the learning outcomes in their syllabus.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Include the following, noting whether the materials are required or optional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Instructional Materials/Bibliography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbooks, workbooks, study guides, computer programs, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>You may also choose to include list of recommended references other than the instructional materials noted above for course reference and outside reading.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Course Assignments</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>List the following for each assignment in the course:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment description</li> <li>• Grading expectations (including the weight of each course requirement)</li> <li>• Due date</li> </ul> <p><i>If any changes occur to these elements during the course of the semester, the instructor must communicate such details to students in writing either through an updated syllabus or through Moodle.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Attendance and Withdrawal Policies</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Include the following statements from College policy (Handbook 3.3.1), as well as any additional policy (as established by department and/or instructor):</b></p> <p><i>Students are expected to attend all class and laboratory sessions for which they are registered. Any anticipated absence on the part of the student must be cleared with the instructor.</i></p> <p><i>Students must withdraw officially from a course in <b>their student portal</b> if they wish to drop the class. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade. Timelines for withdrawal are publicized each semester by the registrar.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Incomplete Statement</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Include the following statement:</b></p> <p><i>Students who have significant extenuating circumstances that impact coursework may apply for an Incomplete. Incompletes must be requested by the student before the final regularly scheduled (non-final exam date) of the course. Please refer to the College Catalog for the Incomplete policy and process.</i></p>
<p><b>Accommodation Statement and Tutoring Services</b></p>	<p><b>All syllabi should include the following statements, verbatim:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Accommodation Statement and Academic Support Services</b></p> <p>Trinity Christian College will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented barriers to success through the Office for Accessibility and Accommodations (OAA) located on the second floor of the Library in the Student Life suite. To request an individualized accommodation plan, a student should complete a request through their student portal and make an appointment for a confidential meeting by emailing OAA@trnty.edu or calling</p>

	<p>708-239-4765. Students who are dissatisfied with their academic progress or who wonder if they qualify for accommodations are also encouraged to schedule an appointment.</p> <p>Peer tutoring for most college courses and academic coaching services are available for all Trinity students through the Office for Student Academic Success Services (SASS). Peer tutor and peer coaching request forms are available electronically through the student portal. For more information regarding peer tutoring, peer coaching, or academic coaching session with a staff or faculty member, please email SASS@trnty.edu. You may also call 708-293-4587. Completion of an instructor approval request is not required for students to schedule academic coaching sessions.</p> <p>Students who may need assistance in an emergency should register their need for assistance in the Personal Information/Emergency Contact section of the student portal at the start of each fall semester.</p>
• <b>Outline of the Course</b>	<p>This is completed most often by topics, but should not be a reprinting of the Table of Contents from a textbook. This outline represents how the course is organized to meet the needs of students and the learning outcomes. It is helpful to include assignment due dates in this outline.</p>
• <b>Course-Specific Policies</b>	<p>Include any additional policies specific to your course. Please be as clear as possible in communicating your course-specific policies. Such policies may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom etiquette</li> <li>• Assignment submission procedures</li> <li>• Class tardy/absence policies</li> <li>• Participation expectations/grading</li> <li>• Grading scale (including letter/number equivalency, use of plusses and minuses, etc.)</li> <li>• Late work</li> <li>• Use of technology</li> <li>• Presentation attire</li> <li>• Formatting/citation requirements for written work</li> </ul> <p><i>If any changes occur to these policies during the course of the semester, the instructor must communicate such details to students in writing either through an updated syllabus or through Moodle.</i></p>
• <b>Academic Integrity Policy</b>	<p><b>All syllabi should include the following College policy, verbatim:</b></p> <p><i>Trinity holds every member of the college community to the highest standard of academic integrity in principle and spirit. Students who compromise standards of academic integrity are held accountable for their actions. For Trinity's policy regarding expectations for academic integrity and procedures for responding to violations of this policy, see the college catalog under "Academic Policies."</i></p>

<p>• <b>Online Attendance Policy</b> [approved by Faculty Association, 9/16/2014]</p>	<p><b>Include the following statement in <u>online courses only</u>:</b></p> <p><i>Weekly attendance is mandatory in all online courses. Satisfactory completion of weekly assignments is expected. Lack of satisfactory assignment completion will jeopardize attendance and financial aid.</i></p>
<p>• <b>Hybrid Attendance Policy</b></p>	<p><b>Because many of our courses this fall will be hybrid in nature in order to accommodate public health-related physical distancing guidelines, please include the online attendance policy in this modified format for hybrid courses:</b></p> <p><i>Attendance is mandatory in all online (synchronous or asynchronous) components of hybrid courses. Satisfactory completion of weekly assignments is expected. Lack of satisfactory assignment completion or participation will jeopardize attendance and financial aid.</i></p>
<p>• <b>Audio/Video Recording Policy</b> [approved by Faculty Association, 1/27/2015]</p>	<p>Faculty are required to refer students to the Audio/Video Recording Policy in the college catalog. Suggested language follows; alternate language may be used at the discretion of the professor.</p> <p><i>Suggested Statement: Audio or video recording of any portion of course-related activity must follow Trinity's policy for Audio/Video Recording as stated in the current Trinity Catalog.</i></p>



**Foundations Learning Outcomes**  
**(Approved by Faculty Association, 21 February 2017)**

The Foundations Program of Trinity Christian College is rooted in its Mission Statement, which states that “those who teach and learn are called to be coworkers with Christ in subjecting all cultural activities to the reign of God, and that genuine education must involve the whole person as a thinking, feeling, and believing creature.” Through the Foundations curriculum, Trinity students will be grounded, engaged, and called for service to Christ and His Kingdom.

**Be Grounded**

The pursuit of academic learning is a gift from God. Christians pursue learning simultaneously as an act of love for God, whose glory is revealed in all creation, and an act of love for the world, for whose sake God has called his people into being. Learning is also always done in community; education cannot be done properly without the support of friends, the challenge of classmates, and the leadership of teachers. But all of that support, challenge, and leadership has worship as its fuel. We worship as we study and we study as we worship. We do all of it together.

Students will:

1. cultivate a livelier faith in the triune God, a stronger hope for the kingdom of God, and a deeper love for the world, self, neighbor, and God.
2. undertake, in community, academic practices that form the whole person in response to God.
3. grow in understanding of the biblical narrative of God’s work in the world.
4. weigh historical and contemporary worldviews in light of a Reformed Christian worldview.

**Be Engaged**

Meaningful work is a gift from God. The fast-paced, global, interconnected, knowledge economy requires that students master skills that are broadly applicable across many occupations. Trinity’s Foundations curriculum provides students with multiple opportunities to practice and develop these vital skills. At the same time, this practice and development cultivates student discernment of skills’ appropriate use, faithful and holistic living, and service to Christ and society.

Students will:

5. evaluate and apply different disciplinary ways of knowing and make cross-disciplinary connections.
6. communicate effectively in written, oral, and digital formats.
7. construct and critique arguments rigorously.
8. integrate, synthesize, and apply knowledge and information creatively.
9. work collaboratively with peers, mentors, and the broader community.

**Be Called**

The world in which we live is a gift from God. While the goodness of creation is evident, so are the wide-ranging effects of selfishness, injustice, and violence that result from human sin. God calls His people to serve their neighbors, including those in their family, church, neighborhood, civic, and even global communities. Students at Trinity learn how to participate in God’s calling in pursuit of shalom. This participation will be primarily, but not exclusively, acted out in the city and suburbs of Chicago.

Students will:

10. build relationships and understanding with people of racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and religious identities other than their own.
11. celebrate gifts and address challenges within a local and global context.

12. engage the created world and human culture with curiosity and creativity.
13. develop vocations that include and extend beyond career or work.

Broader Contexts for the Learning in this Course	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Foundations Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>This course will especially help you achieve outcomes 4, 6, 7, and 12.</p> <p><b>Be Grounded</b> – Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) cultivate a livelier faith in the triune God, a stronger hope for the kingdom of God, and a deeper love for the world, self, neighbor, and God.</li> <li>2) undertake, in community, academic practices that form the whole person in response to God.</li> <li>3) grow in understanding of the biblical narrative of God’s work in the world.</li> <li>4) weigh historical and contemporary worldviews in light of a Reformed Christian worldview.</li> </ol> <p><b>Be Engaged</b> – Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) evaluate and apply different disciplinary ways of knowing and make cross-disciplinary connections.</li> <li>6) communicate effectively in written, oral, and digital formats.</li> <li>7) construct and critique arguments rigorously. 8) integrate, synthesize, and apply knowledge and information creatively.</li> <li>9) work collaboratively with peers, mentors, and the broader community.</li> </ol> <p><b>Be Called</b> – Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10) build relationships and understanding with people of racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and religious identities other than their own.</li> <li>11) celebrate gifts and address challenges within a local and global context.</li> <li>12) engage the created world and human culture with curiosity and creativity.</li> <li>13) develop vocations that include and extend beyond career or work.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>[Dept. Name] Department Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>This course will especially help you achieve outcomes X, X, X, and X.</p> <p>Insert departmental outcomes here.</p>