Helpful Ideas

Syllabus

Faculty of Applied Science
Centre for Instructional Support

You probably already have a syllabus and there are institutional templates to ensure we include all the right pieces. But, we want to add a few things to better support online delivery. Ensure your course Syllabus uses simple, straightforward language that makes your expectations clear and provides more comprehensive information about course logistics and assignments. A number of sections need to be added to an online syllabus to make expectations even more clear and provide advice and policy around the new types of online course interactions. Making things more clear at the course start can reduce student anxiety and pushback later in course.

- Describe Rhythm of Course Activities
- Convey Tech Requirements/Expectations
- Describe Supporting Technologies
- Reiterate Academic Integrity Expectations
- Provide Assessment/Examination Details
- Commitment to Student Well Being

Rhythm of Course

Provide a good description of the different types of teaching sessions, assignment progressions, and all major assessments. Try to have a consistent recurring pattern for out of class work, different kinds of weekly meetings, and progression of deliverables.

Supporting Technologies

Provide a good description of supporting technologies. Instruct students on how to access and use various academic systems. Highlight how they can get help when they are having trouble with supporting technologies. Make sure they know what to do when things don't work.

Tech Requirements

Be explicit about required technology to best experience the course. Be mindful that some students will not have adequate technology. They may have insufficient computing or internet access, no webcam, challenging family dynamics, time zone differences, or other difficulties - you need to make a plan B to take care of these students.

Assessment Details

For assignments provide greater detail so students are better able to complete work without too many clarifying questions. Describe the examination process and any tools that will be required to complete the exams - e.g. online proctoring, smartphones to take pictures of handwritten work. Better to let students know upfront.

Academic Integrity

Describe your expectations around professionalism and academic integrity (refer to APSC academic integrity pledge). Describe the software that will be used to monitor academic integrity like TurnItIn, Proctorio, etc. Make the case that this is important to provide a fair and level playing field for all students.

Student Well Being

Many students are new to the online course experience. We need to take care of them and help them keep learning and protect their well being. You should point your students to the keeplearning.ubc.ca website that has great advice for students on how to survive and thrive at UBC.

Access to Additional Resources

cis.apsc.ubc.ca/best-practices-2020/improve-your-syllabus/

Ask Centre for Instructional Support for Help - learning@apsc.ubc.ca