

**Networking Course Syllabus In Accredited Library And Information Science Programs: A Comparative Analysis Study / By Dr. Hossam Eldin Mohamed Refaat Abouserie. Department Of Library And Information Science, Faculty Of Arts, Helwan University, Egypt, 2009. Email: Hossam\_usa@yahoo.com**

**Abstract**

The study investigated networking courses offered in accredited Library and Information Science schools in the United States in 2009. The study analyzed and compared network syllabi according to Course Syllabus Evaluation Rubric to obtain in-depth understanding of basic features and characteristics of networking courses taught. The study embraced qualitative methodology focusing on top accredited Library and Information Schools in the United States. Data were collected via schools websites and communications with faculty members. Schools websites were navigated and analyzed. Communications with faculty members were performed. Sample of the study included top ten ranks of accredited Library and Information Science Schools, thirteen schools. The study found four schools offer network courses. Three schools did not offer such courses in their programs, and the rest of the populations, six schools, did not participate in the study. The study found networking courses having different titles and were offered for graduate students at all schools of the study. Networking courses were three credits in some schools and four credits in others. Networking courses were considered elective courses. Topics taught in networking courses focused basically on the networking and computer science and with little focus on cooperation and networking among Library and Information Centers. Schools varied in teaching networking courses, in that the study found various assessed tasks, various grading schemes, various topics, etc. Faculty members used various teaching techniques in teaching to deliver information, while some focused on lecturing methods only, others focused on lecturing methods and labs, while a third group focused on lecturing, labs and community projects. Each school divided the total grade among various activities to be done during course schedule, such as assignments, projects, class participation, etc. Faculty members used various grading policy and different weighting schemes for assignments and projects. No rules were indicated for attendance or missing an exam. However, late submissions rules were indicated. Three schools out of four clearly stated a late work policy statement. Final exams were not considered much in evaluating students' performance, in that only one school, University of Michigan, out of four used final exams to assess students. Assessed tasks varied from one school to another in name, type, and

grades in that while they were concept papers in one school, they were homework at another school, and assignments at a third school, and resource reviews at the last school. Students had the choice to work independently in some schools and in groups in other schools. Class participation was considered in the total grades at three schools out of four. Only one school had used students-student evaluation, where student can evaluate group project partners and was given a 5 % range. The reminder of proper classroom behavior, code of student conduct, was identified only at the University of Wisconsin where a reference to academic integrity was made. The Statement of plagiarism was clearly identified at the University of Michigan, while The University of Wisconsin submitted a reference to the academic integrity. The other two schools left did not submit any information regarding this matter.

### **Background**

A long time ago Library and Information Science professionals have paid attention to the importance of cooperation and networking among libraries and information centers of all types and kinds. Since then, professionals have been considering offering networking courses in Library and Information Science programs for both graduates and undergraduates levels. Networking provides essential benefits, as it allows advanced kind of cooperation and resource sharing in various areas; such as collection developments, technical operations, library services, etc.

This study focused on network courses offered in Accredited Library and Information Science Schools in the United States. The study tried to investigate the state of network courses to obtain in-depth understanding and analysis of basic features and characteristics of networking courses taught. The study mainly depended on networking course syllabus, as it described at its best the main and detailed points in teaching courses. The study chosen top ten ranks of Library and Information Science schools in the United States, thirteen schools. The ranks selected ranged from 3.5/5 to 4.5/5 in 2009, as it was assumed that these high rank schools were going to be offering accredited syllabi with strong contents.

### **Literature Review**

Although numerous articles from various disciplines discuss general syllabus content, studies of syllabus components in Library and Information Science Field in general and Networking Syllabus in specific are a generally unexplored area. In a search of the literature, studies of syllabus components were identified as follow.

1- Syllabus evaluation by the job-analysis technique. Rina Doron, Shlomo Marco. *European Journal of Engineering Education*. Abingdon: Jun 1999. Vol. 24, Iss. 2; pg. 163, 10 pgs

The survey demonstrated the job-analysis technique for evaluating and updating syllabuses. The survey examined the correspondence between the training syllabus of BTech and practical engineers in the area of biotechnology and the demands of industrial plants and the economy, similarities and dissimilarities in job definition and assignments, and job demands in the present and future and their implications for training syllabuses. The survey findings were based on 37 questionnaires completed by directors and engineers in 13 industrial plants. In general, the job of the practical engineer was perceived in terms of the production-floor level with importance attached to skills such as competence in running and maintaining equipment, conducting experiments according to a pre-set protocol, and personal characteristics such as technical skill and precision. The main expectations of BTech engineers were the capacity for originality and initiative, comprehension and analysis, precision, oral and written articulacy, and teamwork. The findings also suggest that most of the subject areas in the syllabuses evaluated were important both for the practical and for the BTech engineers.

2- Demographic Factors And Student Preferences On The Syllabus In The Principles Of Accounting Course. Carl E Keller Jr, John G Marcis, Alan B Deck. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*. Cullowhee: 2008. Vol.12, Iss. 2; pg. 11, 23 pgs

This paper presented the results of a survey of 1,726 students from 31 universities in 19 states regarding the course syllabus. The survey instrument was administered during the spring 2002 term and contained 28 items that previous research indicates were likely to appear on a course syllabus. The primary purpose of this study was to assess the relative importance students in the Principles of Accounting course place on different items that frequently appeared on a course syllabus. The results were analyzed by the following demographic characteristics: gender, age, years of college experience, and grade point average. The findings of the study indicated that students did not attach the same amount of importance to all syllabus components and that the level of perceived importance varied by the demographic factors. Faculty members might use the findings of this study to adjust their syllabi to improve communication to different types of students.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=42599581&sid=15&Fmt=4&clientId=45596&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

3- Collaborative course syllabus construction: Impact on consultative competency of graduate students in school psychology by Camilli, Andrea Lauren, Psy.D., St. John's University (New York), 2009, 109 pages<sup>2</sup>.

The goal of the study was to implement collaborative course syllabus construction with school psychology graduate students enrolled in a consultation course, and assessed the impact of this approach on learning in and out of the classroom and on one's professional consultancy practice as compared to traditional methods of instruction. Thirty four graduate students (PsyD and MS) in their second or third full year in the graduate program in school psychology participated in this study. Students were exposed to either the Traditional Consultation Course (TCC) condition or the Collaborative Course Syllabus Construction (CCSC) condition. Following completion of the course, information on participants' course evaluations, academic achievement, performance on the graduate comprehensive examination, perceived self-efficacy, consultee satisfaction ratings, and internship supervisor evaluation ratings was collected. The results of this study did not support any of the hypotheses that a collaborative learning approach would demonstrate more positive outcomes than a traditional approach to instruction. The implications of these findings were discussed, and study limitations and suggestions for future research were reviewed.

4- Comparison of Syllabi Expectations Between Faculty and Students in a Baccalaureate Nursing Program Shoni Davis, Vivian Schrader. *Journal of Nursing Education*. Thorofare: Mar 2009. Vol. 48, Iss. 3; pg. 125, 7 pgs<sup>3</sup>

This study aimed to explore and compare expectations of syllabi between students and faculty in a university baccalaureate nursing department. Knowing what students expected from syllabi could lead to improved student success and might reduce faculty time in clarifying class policies. Faculty and nursing students from eight semesters volunteered to complete a survey exploring syllabi definitions, pertinent content, and the importance of student involvement in syllabi development. The findings suggest there were differences between faculty and student perceptions regarding important syllabi content. Students wanted syllabi that provided the nuts and bolts of how to accomplish each assignment and course requirement most efficiently. Faculty

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<sup>2</sup> Proquest, Available at

<<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=5&did=1905599141&SrchMode=1&sid=4&Fmt=2&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1271225714&clientId=45596>>

<sup>3</sup> <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1652583351&sid=2&Fmt=3&clientId=45596&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

preferred information about student behavior, such as student conduct, participation, and attendance rules. Adult Learning Theory was used to explain these differences. This article pointed out that faculty may not be as in touch with the needs of adult learners as they claimed to be.

5- An automated syllabus digital library system for higher education in Ireland. Arash Joorabchi, Abdulhussain E. Mahdi, *The Electronic Library*, 2009, Volume: 27 Issue: 4 Page: 640 - 658<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this paper was to report on the work to develop a national repository for course syllabi in Ireland. The paper described a prototype syllabus repository system for higher education in Ireland, which had been developed by utilizing a number of information extraction and document classification techniques, including a new fully unsupervised document classification method that used a web search engine for automatic collection of training set for the classification algorithm. Preliminary experimental results for evaluating the performance of the system and its various units, particularly the information extractor and the classifier, were presented and discussed.

6- What Is an "Interesting Curriculum" for Biotechnology Education? Students and Teachers Opposing Views. Kidman, Gillian. *Research in Science Education*, v40 n3 p353-373 May 2010. 21 pp.<sup>5</sup>

This paper presented an exploration of what biotechnology key ideas students and teachers consider to be interesting. A survey was constructed and completed by 500 Australian students and their 35 teachers. Interviews were conducted with a sample of students and teachers. The Chi-square statistics revealed a significant difference between the student and teacher survey responses in four of the six a priori factors. The results suggested the key ideas teachers were interested in and incorporate into their curriculum, were not the key ideas students were interested in learning about. This mismatch was particularly prevalent and problematic in situations where curriculum choice was available within a mandated framework or syllabus, which is the case for these teachers and students. The study also found students withdrawing from biology courses in post compulsory settings due to lack of interest and perceived lack of relevance of the course.

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<sup>4</sup> Ebscohost, Available at <<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=8&hid=10&sid=b060bc00-fde5-4871-950d-34180cb0652e%40sessionmgr13>>

<sup>5</sup> Ebscohost, Available at <<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&hid=10&sid=b060bc00-fde5-4871-950d-34180cb0652e%40sessionmgr13&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW9vc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=eric&AN=EJ877889>>

## Introduction

At the beginning of each semester, faculty members used to submit accurate course syllabi to students either in the traditional format or untraditional format. Items to be covered in the course syllabus include: prerequisites, course description, objectives, topics covered during the semester, attendance policy, the planned number and timing of major examinations and assignments, grading policy, required texts and other course material, information about the instructor, evaluation standards, etc.<sup>6</sup> Some syllabi may include more detailed information on certain issues like, opportunities to earn extra credit, course mailing lists, course policies in case of significant flu outbreak, etc. America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse has determined that basic components of course syllabus include the following:<sup>7</sup> 1. Title of the project; 2. Course description; 3. Grading policy; 4. Subject area; 5. Semester schedule; 6. Description of service-learning coursework; 7. Brief course introduction: a brief summary of the class service-learning project, its implementation, and goal.; 8. Contact information: name, position, institution, address, email, phone number, fax

Students on the other hand used to read the course syllabus and check its contents, topics, objectives, assignments, research papers, final projects, lectures schedule and then decide either to continue or to withdraw the course at the right time. Faculty members do not only distribute syllabi to students, but also submit them to department chairperson. The chairperson has to ensure that the main description, contents and objectives of syllabi agree with the school and university objectives and policies.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the instructor prepares the course syllabus for several stakeholders: students, colleagues, administrators, and accrediting agencies.<sup>9</sup>

The following part presents information about syllabus, basic components, significance of course syllabus, quality standards, purpose of the study, methodology, analyses the four course syllabi, and finally conclusions and discussions

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6 Syllabus construction: A guide for faculty, The University of Alabama: Office for Academic Affairs.  
<http://www.cis.ua.edu/cstudies/documents/UAsyllabusconstruction.pdf>

7 Guidelines for high quality syllabi: source: campus compact (2008), syllabi criteria, April 2008 learn and serve America's national service-learning clearinghouse  
[http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/slice/guidelines\\_syllabi.pdf](http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/slice/guidelines_syllabi.pdf)

8 Syllabus construction: A guide for faculty, The University of Alabama: Office for Academic Affairs.  
<http://www.cis.ua.edu/cstudies/documents/UAsyllabusconstruction.pdf>

9 Demographic factors and student preferences on the syllabus in the principles of accounting course. Carl E Keller Jr, John G Marcis, Alan B Deck. Academy of Educational Leadership Journal. Cullowhee: 2008. Vol. 12, Iss. 2; pg. 11, 23 pgs

## Definition

Etymologically the word syllabus means a "label" or "table of contents." The American Heritage Dictionary defines syllabus as outline of a course of study.<sup>10</sup> Another approach, however, designates it as an "informal contract between the instructor and the student, giving both members of the team a definite idea of what is expected"<sup>11</sup> A third approach defines it as a plan that states exactly what students at a school or college should learn in a particular subject. It is not only about the knowledge to be gained, but also it helps the students to meet the desired expectations which make them feel secure although it seems that the syllabus is a piece of written document of the assignments, readings, activities.<sup>12</sup> A fourth approach defines a syllabus as the outcome of curriculum development. It contains an instructional plan and the process of instruction to be used within the course. The desired behavioral objectives are outlined and defined within the syllabus.<sup>13</sup>

There also tends to be confusion among faculty regarding whether syllabi are contracts or learning tools. As a result, syllabi often vary within departments and may lack important components. Failure to develop consistent and clear syllabi may result in confusion and ambiguity regarding student expectations, which may lower student success (Marcis & Carr, 2003).

Based on the four definitions mentioned above, a syllabus can be considered, simply, a detailed contract determining tasks and responsibilities of both sides; students and instructors. It includes the basic tasks of the instructor, such as teaching main topics, explaining difficulties, and evaluating students, etc. It also includes main responsibilities of students, such as assignments, projects, homework, etc.

## Components of syllabi

Syllabi have been defined as both contracts and learning tools.<sup>14</sup> According to Habanek, syllabi as contracts include course rules and guidelines.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, syllabi as learning tools

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10 Writing a syllabus By Howard B. Altman, University of Louisville and William E. Cashin, Kansas State University

<http://www.euromphili.org/protect/media/Writing%20a%20syllabus.pdf>

11 The syllabus re-evaluation: creating a tool for effective teaching / By Judy Greene and Kathleen Therrien.- revised with permission from about teaching, No. 44 (April 1993), Available at <<http://cte.udel.edu/publications/handbook-graduate-assistants/getting-started/syllabus-re-evaluation-creating-tool-effec>>

12 Matejka K., and L. Kurke.1994.Designing a great syllabus. College Teaching 4(3):115-117.

13 J. Gifford, The Syllabus/E-Syllabus for the 21st century, University Press of America, Lanham, MD (2003)

14 Parks, J., & Harris, M.B. (2002). The purpose of a syllabus. College Teaching, 50, 55-61.

15 Habanek, D.V. (2005). An examination of the integrity of the syllabus. College Teaching, 53, 62-65.

include preparation for course assignments, monitoring one's progress, and explanations for how the course fits with real-life experiences.<sup>16</sup> Studies suggest there is no standardized consensus among faculty as to which syllabi components are the most critical or how to most efficiently organize the components.<sup>17</sup>

Critical components of syllabi most often have been determined by faculty and include learning objectives, expected course outcomes, and course topics.<sup>18</sup> Other documented critical syllabi components include policies regarding class and assignment schedules, necessary course materials, assigned readings, participation expectations, attendance, late assignment policies, and statements pertaining to student honesty and mutual respect.<sup>19</sup> Both faculty and students in this study agreed on which basic items syllabi should contain, including:<sup>20</sup>

- \* Grading criteria.
- \* Grading scales.
- \* Assignment information.
- \* Required reading.
- \* Participation requirements.
- \* Late assignment policies.
- \* Faculty contact information.

### **Significance of course syllabus**

The primary purpose of a syllabus is to communicate to one's students what the course is about, why the course is taught, where it is going, and what will be required of the students for them to complete the course with a passing grade<sup>21</sup>

A well-designed course syllabus can serve a variety of purposes: such as

**1- An agreement between teacher and student;**<sup>22</sup> where it can be used as a contract showing rules and responsibilities of both instructors and learners.

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16 Parks, J., & Harris, M.B. (2002). The purpose of a syllabus. *College Teaching*, 50, 55-61.

17 Habanek, D.V. (2005). An examination of the integrity of the syllabus. *College Teaching*, 53, 62-65.

18 Habanek, D.V. (2005). An examination of the integrity of the syllabus. *College Teaching*, 53, 62-65.

19 Habanek, D.V. (2005). An examination of the integrity of the syllabus. *College Teaching*, 53, 62-65.

20 Comparison of Syllabi Expectations Between Faculty and Students in a Baccalaureate Nursing Program

Shoni Davis, Vivian Schrader. *Journal of Nursing Education*. Thorofare: Mar 2009. Vol. 48, Iss. 3; pg. 125, 7 pgs

21 WRITING A SYLLABUS By Howard B. Altman, University of Louisville and William E. Cashin, Kansas State University <http://www.europhamili.org/protect/media/Writing%20a%20syllabus.pdf>

**2- A device for communicating, seriousness, and expectations;**<sup>23</sup> in that a course syllabus provides valuable information which enables meaningful communication between the students and the instructors.<sup>24</sup> It reflects seriousness and final expectations and outcomes.

**3- An overall plan of action**<sup>25</sup> it can serve as plan or a map for the course determining details about course goals and objectives, assessment and evaluation standards, activities, etc. Therefore, it will prevent the misunderstandings.<sup>26</sup>

The success of the course is determined by how well the objectives and the outline are designed. A carefully planned, clearly written, comprehensive syllabus is one of the most important and valuable resources which can be provided to the students.

Littlefield suggests certain purposes for a syllabus to be an effective one such as a setting tone for a course, a type of motivation for students to reach their academic goals, a planning tool for faculty, a structuring tool of the students' work, a contract between faculty and students about the expectations.<sup>27</sup>

Sharon Rubin, Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies at the University of Maryland, points out that both professors and students have similar worries on the first day of class. She cites a 1982-83 study by Lee Knefelkamp of the University of Maryland, who found that faculty members' primary first-day concerns include getting students involved and being liked, while students are anxious about being able to do the work required and liking the professor. A well-designed syllabus can help address these concerns and get the relationship between student and teacher off to a good start.<sup>28</sup>

### **Quality Standards**

A high-quality syllabus would manifest clear engagement with the four Campus Compact's criteria for quality: 1. Engagement where service component meet a public good 2. Reflection to encourage students to link their service experience to course content 3. Reciprocity

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22 Matejka K., and L. Kurke.1994.Designing a great syllabus. College Teaching 4(3):115-117.

23 Matejka K., and L. Kurke.1994.Designing a great syllabus. College Teaching 4(3):115-117.

24 Matejka K., and L. Kurke.1994.Designing a great syllabus. College Teaching 4(3):115-117.

25 Matejka K., and L. Kurke.1994.Designing a great syllabus. College Teaching 4(3):115-117.

26 Slattery, J.M.& Carlson, J.F.(2005). Preparing an effective syllabus: Current best practices. College Teaching, 53,pp. 159-165.

27 Littlefield,V. M. 1991. My syllabus? It's fine. Why do you ask? Or the syllabus: A tool for improving teaching and learning. Paper presented at the society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Calgary,Canada.

28 The Syllabus Re-Evaluation: Creating a Tool for Effective Teaching / By Judy Greene and Kathleen Therrien.- Revised with permission from About Teaching, No. 44 (April 1993)

<<http://cte.udel.edu/publications/handbook-graduate-assistants/getting-started/syllabus-re-evaluation-creating-tool-effec>>

where reciprocity evident is included in the service component 4. Public Dissemination where service work is presented to the public.<sup>29</sup>

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the current state of networking courses offered in accredited Library and Information Science Schools in the United States. The study aimed to analyze networking courses offered in Library and Information Science programs. This study, basically, concentrated on network course syllabi. The study compared course syllabi among various accredited Library and Information Schools in order to obtain the main trends and in-depth understanding of basic features and characteristics of networking courses taught.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted qualitative research methodology, as it was a method of inquiry appropriated in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences. Qualitative researchers aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior.<sup>30</sup> The embraced methodology allowed good and in-depth understanding of any phenomena. The study investigated networking courses offered in accredited Library and Information Science schools in the United States in 2009. The study analyzed and compared network syllabi according to Course Syllabus Evaluation Rubric to obtain in-depth understanding of basic features and characteristics of networking courses taught.

The study found four Library and Information Science schools provided networking courses, three schools didn't offer such courses, and the six schools left of the sample selected didn't participate in the study. The study focused on networking courses offered either on the graduate level or the undergraduate level. The study focused on Networked courses related to networking telecommunications and computers sciences and didn't focus on courses related to social networks or social groups networks. The study focused on Accredited Library and Information Science Schools in the year 2009, as it was assumed that accredited Library and Information Science programs would provide accredited and peer reviewed courses.

The study used two methods to collect data. The first tool is the School's websites and the second tool is communication with faculty members via email. Sample of the study included top

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29 Guidelines for high quality syllabi: Source: campus compact (2008), syllabi criteria, April 2008 Learn and Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, Available at <[http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/slice/guidelines\\_syllabi.pdf](http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/slice/guidelines_syllabi.pdf)>

<sup>30</sup> Qualitative research, From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Available at <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qualitative\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qualitative_research)>

ten ranks of accredited Library and Information Science Schools, thirteen schools. Four networking courses syllabi offered in Library and Information Sciences schools were collected. See table (1) and table (2) for details.

**Table (1) Library and Information Studies schools participating in the study and Ranked in 2009<sup>31</sup>**

Serial	College name	Rank	Score
1	The Graduate School of Library and Information Science <b>University of Illinois</b>	1	4.5/5
2	School of Information <b>University of Michigan</b>	5	4.1/5
3	College of Information Science and Technology <b>Drexel University</b>	9	3.7/5
4	School of Library and Information Studies <b>University of Wisconsin—Madison,</b>	10	3.6/5

**Sample response rate**

**Table (2) Sample Response Rate**

Number	Respondents		None Respondents	Total
	Schools offering Networking Courses	Schools not offering Networking Courses		
<b>Total</b>	4	3	6	13
<b>Percentage</b>	30.67 %	23.07 %	46.15 %	100 %
	53.74 %			

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<sup>31</sup> Ranking, Library and Information Studies, Rankings Library and Information Studies Ranked in 2009, Available at <<http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-library-information-science-programs/rankings/>>

## Course Description<sup>32</sup>

**Broad Aims:** The study found that faculty at each school provided directly and clearly the target aims, as follow:

Faculty at **University of Illinois** indicated that the overall objective of the course is to both provide a clear conceptual understanding of the computer hardware, operating systems, and networks that make up networked information systems and also to prepare students to take a lead as information technology managers.

Faculty at **The University of Michigan** indicated that the purpose of this course is to provide incoming Students with an understanding of the kinds of technology that students will encounter during their time as student as well as in their employment once they graduate.

Faculty at **Drexel University** indicated that the purpose of course (**INFO- 330**) is to present the fundamentals of data communications and networking technologies; focuses on the broad foundational coverage of key technologies and key concepts in network planning, design, and management. And indicated that course (**INFO- 331**) focuses on design, construction and use of modern networks and internetworks. It prepares students to successfully create and operate modern secure networks. Major topics include LAN design and construction, internetwork architecture, WAN connectivity, security, virtual private networks and network operation in real-world environments.

Faculty at **University of Wisconsin** indicated that Upon completion of the course, students should acquire:

- A broad knowledge of ICT, digital media, and standards that are affecting the operation and development of information agencies;
- Experience in utilizing some of the major digital tools and information standards
- Skills in evaluating and using ICT, and in maintaining current awareness of their developments in the context of information agencies;
- Awareness of the controversies surrounding ICT development, use and modification, and of the impacts these developments may have on information agencies, information flow, and on different groups and individuals.

### Topics covered in networking courses

The study found that each school teaches network course from a different prospective. It also found that three schools out of four focused on the networking side rather than the use of networking library and information science. This variance of the topics taught in the networking

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<sup>32</sup> Academic Handbook, Exam, Course Outlines – Undergrad, Issued: 2008 10, Course Outlines – Undergraduate, Course outline (Syllabi I) for undergraduate courses, Available at <<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/crsout.pdf>> Check the appendix for more information.

courses may represent the academic freedom of higher education system from one point; and it may also represent different dimensions in understanding the term networking and the subdivisions included within. To avoid such variations, the demand of having a unified understanding of the network term is essential. See table (4) for details.

**Table (4) Topics Taught in Network Courses**

University of Illinois	University of Michigan	Drexel University	University of Wisconsin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Hardware</li> <li>-Operating systems</li> <li>-Networking</li> <li>-Issues in implementation and managing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Programming and computers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Simple programs</li> <li>-Decisions and Loops</li> <li>-Internet history</li> <li>-Collections and types</li> <li>-Internet Structure</li> </ul> </li> <li>-The Web: HTML and CSS</li> <li>-The Web: HTTP</li> <li>-Web Services and Data formats</li> <li>-Searching and Organizing the Web</li> <li>-Databases</li> <li>-Security and Cryptography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Computer Networks and the Internet               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application Layer</li> <li>- Transport Layer</li> <li>- Network Layer</li> <li>- Link Layer</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Wireless and Mobile Networks</li> <li>- Multimedia Networking</li> <li>- Security in Computer Networks</li> <li>- Network Management</li> <li>- Network Design or TBD</li> <li>- Research Presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introduction: Overview: Digital vs. Analog; ICT trends &amp; information agency developments</li> <li>-The Internet: Computer networks; Information equity</li> <li>-Web 2.0 applications. Part 1: Reference services; library programs; outreach</li> <li>-Information representation, organization, and retrieval. Part 1: Database; metadata schemas; controlled vocabulary; folksonomy</li> <li>-Information representation, organization, &amp; retrieval. Part 2: Markup languages; interoperability; authentication</li> <li>-Information Systems; Open source software in Libraries; Information retrieval mechanisms               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Collection management</li> <li>-Digitization; Preservation</li> <li>-Privacy; Information control; Security</li> </ul> </li> <li>-Web 2.0 applications. Part 2: Recent developments</li> </ul>

**Place within program: required vs. elective, prerequisite for other courses**

**Prerequisites for this course:**

The study showed that all network courses were elective courses and three schools did not determine any prerequisite course for other courses, University of Illinois, University of Michigan and University of Wisconsin. However, the school at Drexel University taught this course on two levels and the first level is a prerequisite for the second level.

**Duration and frequency of classes**

The following table indicates Duration and frequency of classes.

School	Lecture Schedule	Lab Schedule
University of Illinois	F: 9:00 - 11:50 a.m.	F: 12:30 - 2:30 pm
University of Michigan	Section 1 M 8:30 - 11:30 , Section 2 W 5-8	No labs
Drexel University	INFO-330 : MWF 9:00 – 9:50 am	F 10:00 - 11:50 am
	INFO-331: Wed 6:00 - 8:50 am	Thu 6:00 - 7:50 pm
University of Wisconsin	Lecture: Wed 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.	No Labs

**Table (5) Duration and frequency of classes**

The study also showed a variation in teaching such courses among the four schools. At the time one course focuses on the practical part in a certain organization. The second one mainly focuses lectures and labs. The third one divided the network course into two levels.

**Expectations of student performance**

The study has found the following expectation for each school:

Expectations of student performance at University of Illinois

- (1) Insights into the strengths and weaknesses of computers. and networks as tools used to meet the needs of "the community" in which they find themselves;
- (2) A basic working knowledge, especially directed towards LIS professions, of computer hardware, operating systems, and networks through hands-on training;
- (3) Skills that will not only serve today's needs but setup an understanding for tomorrow's technologies.

Expectations of student performance at University of Michigan

- (1) Be comfortable in courses with a technical focus and be well prepared to extend your knowledge in the topic areas of the course,

(2) Be able to participate as a team member in the analysis, design, development, and deployment of software and technology for an organization, and

(3) Be able to act as a facilitator between technical and non—technical staff within an organization or project.

Expectation of student performance at Drexel University

(10 Students are expected to successfully create and operate modern secure networks.

Expectations of student performance at University of Wisconsin

Students are expected to obtain the following:

(1) A broad knowledge of ICT, digital media, and standards that are affecting the operation and development of information agencies

(2) Experience in utilizing some of the major digital tools and information standards

(3) Skills in evaluating and using ICT, and in maintaining current awareness of their developments in the context of information agencies

(4) Awareness of the controversies surrounding ICT development, use and modification, and of the impacts these developments may have on information agencies, information flow, and on different groups and individuals

### **How instruction will be delivered**

The study found that the four schools have basically depended on lecturing method as a main technique in delivering instructions; however, certain variations have been made at the practical part, as follows:

Faculty at **University of Illinois** indicated that daily course structure: during both the lecture and lab periods, there will be a continual flow between more formal presentations and semi-structured active-learning activities.

Faculty at **University of Michigan** indicated that the general pattern of the course will be to introduce new topics in lecture and give an assignment on that topic in a week and then discuss the topic and work on the homework assignment in the following week in the discussion section.

However, faculty at **Drexel University** divided the course topics into two levels, and indicated that Instructions are delivered mainly through lectures and labs Class Participation and Communication are essentials. **In-person Classes** After the first class, it is assumed that everyone will come to class prepared to discuss the material. The lectures should be a place to review and clarify the course material, and resolve questions. **Online Classes** It is assumed that everyone will

read the assigned reading material, and review the lecture notes before participating in the weekly discussions. If you have questions about the material, please bring them up during the discussions.

And finally, faculty at **University of Wisconsin** indicated that class attendance and participation is essential. If student wishes to share and discuss course related matters with his classmates, he can do so via the class mailing list or the course's Learn@UW page.

### **Schedule of course topics and class activities**

Three schools out of four provided detailed schedule showing the date and week of the topic to be taught and the required reading for each topic. The study found a variation in the topics selected for each course; it also showed a variation in the course schedule, in that, while University of Illinois didn't submit a course schedule for the syllabus. University of Michigan provided 15 lectures periods for the networking course offer and determining the topic for each week and the required reading for every week Drexel University provided the course in two levels as follows: INFO-330 includes 12 lectures periods and 7 labs sessions determining in each date the required readings and the topic and the due dates for the assignments. INFO – 331 includes 12 lectures periods and 7 labs sessions determining in each date the required readings and the topic and the due dates for the assignments. University of Wisconsin provided the networking course in 15 lectures with no labs included. The provided table included the topics and reading for each week and the due date of each assignment.

### **How students will work (independently and/or in teams)**

The study found that the four schools required independently assignments, and two schools only required group projects, as University of Illinois required independently assignments and group projects. University of Michigan required independently assignments. Drexel University required independently assignments and quizzes for INFO - 330, and independently assignments, quizzes and a research paper for INFO – 331. University of Wisconsin required independently assignments and group project.

The study showed a variation in students work, in that some courses required only independently assignments, while others required independently assignments and group projects. This variation may reflect the understanding of each instructor to the networking course teaching and assessments.

## **How the community will be used**

The study showed that networking course offered in University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin engage students with community through group projects. However, the other two schools don't offer such choices.

At the University of Illinois, each working group will be assigned to work with a community organization working within communities around Illinois. Students are tasked with building or upgrading a community technology center (CTC) for the community site, or providing technical and documentation support for those groups building the CTC. The work performed by students represents both action research and service learning directed towards meeting the immediate and long-term needs of some of the area's most marginalized communities / neighborhoods / populations.

However, students, at the University of Wisconsin, are tasked to conduct a research study in groups. The group will choose a type of information agency and/or an area of LIS (e.g., technical services, reference, etc.). The group will identify an ICT related issue/challenge as your topic and conduct empirical research. Students are encouraged to use an online collaboration tool (e.g., Google Docs, Zoho, a wiki, etc.) to work on the paper together and document the project's progress.

This may help students to put information taught in networking courses into practice. Therefore, student get theoretical information through classes and practical information through field group projects.

## **Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Goals and learning outcomes should cover disciplinary knowledge at a range of levels, discipline-related skills, generic skills and attitudes

## **Course Objectives**

Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain is a landmark text that has informed educational philosophies for decades. It was the end result of a project that identified three domains of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. It broke the cognitive learning process into six objectives: 1. Knowledge, 2. Comprehension, 3. Application, 4. Analysis, 5. Synthesis, 6. Evaluation. Others have expanded the taxonomy's other two domains: 1. Affective, 2. Psychomotor. Familiarity with Bloom's taxonomy is worthwhile because of its significant influence among educators, but, more importantly, it also points towards the need to

consider what is involved in student learning and how we are asking students to engage with the content of a course.<sup>33</sup>

**Table (6) Distribution of Course Objectives**

School	Course Objectives
University of Illinois	To provide practical detailed knowledge of the technology for all levels of competency
University of Michigan	To provide incoming SI Students with an understanding of the kinds of technology that students will encounter during their time as an SI student as well as in their employment once they graduate from SI.
Drexel University	To successfully create and operate modern secure networks.
University of Wisconsin	acquiring a broad knowledge of ICT, digital media, and standards that are affecting the operation and development of information agencies: • Experience in utilizing some of the major digital tools and information standards, • Skills in evaluating and using ICT, and in maintaining current awareness of their developments in the context of information agencies, • Awareness of the controversies surrounding ICT development, use and modification, and of the impacts these developments may have on information agencies, information flow, and on different groups and individuals

**Course Assessment Plan**

The study has found two schools out of four provided detail course assessment plans, the University of Illinois and the University of Wisconsin. The other two schools, the University of Michigan and the Drexel University, provided a summarized assessment plans. The following table shows the grading scale at each school.

**Grading Schemes**

School	Grading / Schemes / Scale
University of Illinois	90% (A), 80% (B), 70% (C), 60% (D)
University of Michigan	A+ 97%, A 95%, A 90%, B+ 85%, B 80%, B75%, C+70%, C 65%, D 60%, F 55%
Drexel University	Not mentioned
University of Wisconsin	A = 93 – 100; AB = 85 – 92.9; B = 77 – 84.9; BC = 69 – 76.9; C = 61 – 68.9; D = 53 – 60.9; F = Below 53.

**Table (7) Distribution of Grading Schemes**

<sup>33</sup> Minnesota States Colleges and Universities. A E-Handbook for New Faculty. Office of Chancellor available at <[http://ctlnewfac.project.mnscu.edu/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC={ADD89646-7620-4445-BA1F-1C3D418A0698}](http://ctlnewfac.project.mnscu.edu/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={ADD89646-7620-4445-BA1F-1C3D418A0698})>

**Assessment tasks:** The following table shows the assessment tasks in each school.

School	Assignments	Instructor / Student Evaluation	Projects	Quizzes / Exams	Participation	Presentation	Total
University of Illinois	Concept Papers 45%,	Student Evaluations 5% , Instructor Evaluation 5%	Groups Project 45%,	-	-	-	100 %
University of Michigan	Homework: 40%,	-	-	Exams 50%,	Class participation & Staff discretion:10%	-	100 %
Drexel University	Assignments 45 % , Lab Assignments 25 %	-	-	Quizzes 30 % ,	-	-	100 %
	Assignments 45 % , Lab Assignments 20 %	-	-	Quizzes 30 % ,	-	Presentation 5 % ,	100 %
University of Wisconsin	Resource reviews 45%,	-	Group project 45%,	-	Discussion/participation 10%	-	100 %

**Table (8) Distribution of Assessment tasks**

Based on the information presented in the table, it may included that each school has different method and techniques in teaching and assessing as follows:

1- Each school divides the total grade among various activities to be done during course schedule, such as assignments, projects, class participation, etc.

2- Final exams are not considered much in evaluating students' performance, in that only one school out of four used final exams to assess students, University of Michigan.

3- Assessed tasks vary from one school to another in name and type, in that while it is concept papers in one school, it is homework at another school, and assignments at a third school, and resource reviews at the last one.

4- Students work independently and individually in some courses and in groups in other courses.

5- Class participation is considered in the total grades at three schools out of four, and was given a range from 5-10 %.

6- Only the University of Illinois included students- student evaluation, where student can evaluate his group project partner and was given a range 5 %

**University of Illinois**

The study has shown that only one school, the University of Illinois, grades paper according to the following rubric:

Grade	Paper Description
10	Exceptionally thoughtful and detailed
9	All questions were answered thoroughly and accurately
8	All questions were answered, although some points were left off or were inaccurate
6	All questions were answered, but significant errors were made in some answers
1-5	Questions were left unanswered and significant errors were made in those questions that were answered
0	Assignment was not turned in

**Table (9) Distribution of Grading Scale with Paper Description**

**Student Evaluations (5% of total grade)**

Each student should participate actively in both the final project execution and the final debriefing and paper. Students will be given a chance to anonymously rate the involvement of fellow final project group members on a 0-10 scale (10 being the top score assigned to those who provided significant help on all phases of the group work; 0 being the bottom score reserved for those who had no involvement at all in any phase of the group work).

**Instructor Evaluation (5% of total grade)**

The students' participation and overall progress throughout the course of the semester will be evaluated by the teaching assistant and the instructor. The following rubric will be used to assign a score mid-semester. Class activity is based on lecture and lab team work in total.

Grade	Paper Description
10	Student has been an active participant in class discussions and hands-on activities and is demonstrating an increasing grasp of the key concepts and skills covered in class.
8	Student has been an active participant some of the class discussions and hands-on activities and is demonstrating some gains in grasping key concepts and skills covered in class.
6	Student is occasionally active in class and is demonstrating some learning, but it is clear they are not performing to their full capabilities
4	Student has missed several classes and/or is not always active when attending class
2	Student has been absent frequently and/or rarely is active in class
0	Student has consistently missed class during the rated period

**Table (10) Distribution of Grading Scale with Paper Description**

On the other hand, The University of Wisconsin has submitted Written Assignment Evaluation Criteria for an excellent assignment, as follows

- be clear, complete, and well structured
- include critical analyses and constructive suggestions that demonstrate the writer’s original thinking and analytical skills
- support statements and arguments with evidence (such as examples or citations to professional/ scholarly sources)
- use a consistent citation style
- Types of formative and summative feedback on learning
- Identification of assessed vs. un-assessed tasks
- Range of assessments that cover the major learning outcomes
- Identification of the weighting of the assessments and the rationale for this

### Grading schemes/rubrics for key components of assessed tasks

The following table shows the basic grading schemes at the four syllabi

School	Grading schemes
University of Illinois	90% (A), 80% (B), 70% (C), 60% (D) scale.
University of Michigan	A+ 97%, A 95%, A- 90%, B+ 85%, B 80%, B -75%, C+70%, C 65%, D 60%, F 55%.
Drexel University	Not Mentioned
University of Wisconsin	A = 93 – 100; AB = 85 – 92.9; B = 77 – 84.9; BC = 69 – 76.9; C = 61 – 68.9; D = 53 – 60.9; F = Below 53.

**Table (11) Distribution of Schools Grading Schemes**

Based on the previous table, it was found that three schools out of four indicated the grading schemes. The study also found that there was a variance in grading schemes among various schools. At the time University of Illinois used A, B, C, D. The University used A+, A, A-, etc, and The University of Wisconsin used A, AB, B, BC, etc. The study also showed a variance in the grading points for grading letters among schools.

### Components of assessed tasks

School	Assignments	Instructor / Student Evaluation	Projects	Quizzes / Exams	Participation	Presentation
University of Illinois	Concept Papers	Student Evaluations, Instructor Evaluation	Groups Project	-	-	-
University of Michigan	Homework	-	-	Exams:	Class participation & Staff discretion:	-
Drexel University	Assignments Lab Assignments	-	-	Quizzes	-	-
	Assignments Lab Assignments	-	-	Quizzes	-	Presentation
University of Wisconsin	Resource reviews		Group project		Discussion / participation	

**Table (12) Distribution of Components of assessed tasks**

Based on the previous table it has been concluded that assessed tasks and evaluations methods vary from one school to another. It has also concluded different grades have been given to similar tasks such as projects and assignments.

#### **A list of major projects that students will complete during the course, with a brief description of each project including the key deliverables**

The study has shown two schools out of four require students to perform group projects, the University of Illinois and the University of Wisconsin as follows:

Faculty at **University of Illinois** indicated that Students will be divided into working groups of 3-5 students. Each working group will be assigned to work with a community organization working within communities around Illinois, Students are tasked with building or upgrading a community technology center (CTC) for the community site, or providing technical and documentation support for those groups building the CTC. However, faculty at **University of Wisconsin** indicated that a research study in groups of five or six is required. The deliverables will be a group paper and presentation. Your group will choose a type of information agency and/or an area of

LIS (e.g., technical services, reference, etc.). Your group will identify an ICT related issue/challenge as your topic and conduct empirical research.

### **Course Administration**

Information about the instructor, office and phone number, office hours, e-mail address

The study found that three schools out of four submitted administration information that include the following Information about instructor, Office and phone number, Office hours and E-mail Address. However, the syllabus at the University of Illinois included only a copyright notice. The University of Wisconsin added a mailing list for group communication.

### **List of required and recommended readings**

University of Illinois required two books as primary reading for the course. The University of Michigan indicated that most of the course material will be from online sources and materials produced for the course. There is one book that covers the programming aspects of the course, Available for a free download. Drexel University required one book for the two levels INFO 330, INFO 331. University of Wisconsin required Textbook (in closed reserves), and submitted Required Readings (in e-reserves)

### **Recommended readings**

University of Illinois did not mention any recommended reading; The University of Michigan provided PDF versions of the chapters for optional book that students can use and/or print; Drexel University; has two courses for INFO- 330 Additional references and general course information (e.g. grading policies, etc.) are available online.

For INFO- 331 information on recommended book was provided and additional references and general course information (e.g. grading policies, etc.) are available online.

University of Wisconsin information on recommended texts was booked in open reserves

**Rules for attendance, late submissions, missing an exam, etc.** The study found the following:

University of Illinois: provided information only about late submissions indicating that one point will be deducted for each week the papers are turned in late.

University of Michigan provided information about late submission indicating that every assignment will have a due date. Assignments may be turned in up to one day late with a 30% reduction in points. Assignments turned in more than a day late will receive zero points

Drexel University provided no information regarding rules for attendance, late submissions, missing an exam, etc

University of Wisconsin provided detail information about rules for attendance late submissions, and provided useful link to Academic Integrity.

### **A reminder of proper classroom behavior, code of student conduct**

The study found that all schools did not provide directly any information about proper classroom behavior, and the school at the University of Wisconsin provided a useful link that includes detailed information About Academic Integrity.

### **Statement of plagiarism**

The study found one university syllabus mentioned clearly and directly the statement of plagiarism and its sequences, the University of Michigan. Another university syllabus referred students to the general topic including all university policies and academic Integrity, University of Wisconsin. On the other hand the other two universities didn't submit any information about plagiarism.

### **Findings**

Based on the previous analyses to the four syllabi, the following points were found:

#### **1- Courses Titles**

Networking courses had different titles; as follows 1) Introduction to Networked Information Systems; 2) Networked Computing: Storage, Communication, and Processing Syllabus; 3) Computer Networking Technology I & Computer Networking Technology II; 4) Digital Tools, Trends, and Debates

#### **2- Availability on Graduate Level**

Networking courses were offered for graduate students at all schools of the study, and were 3 credits in some schools and 4 credits in others.

#### **3- Elective Courses**

Networking courses were considered elective courses at all schools of the study, where students had the choice to take them or not.

#### **4- Topics Covered**

Topics taught in networking courses focused basically, on networking and computer science with little focus on cooperation and networking among Library and Information Sciences.

#### **6- Teaching Methods**

The study found that Library and Information Science Schools varied in teaching networking courses, in that the study found various assessed tasks, various grading schemes,

various topics, etc. Faculty members used various teaching techniques in teaching and delivering information, while some focus on lecturing methods, others focused on lecturing and labs, while a third group focused on lecturing, labs and community projects. Each school divided the total grade among various activities such as, assignments, projects, class participation, etc.

### **7- Missing Grading Scale**

The study found that faculty at one school didn't submit the grading scale in the networking course syllabus.

### **8- Grading Policy**

Faculty members used various grading policy and different weighting schemes for assignments, projects. While one faculty use 90% (A), 80% (B), 70% (C), 60% (D) scale, another one used A+ 97%, A 95%, A 90%, B+ 85%, B 80%, B 75%, C+70%, C 65%, D 60%, F 55%, while a third one use A = 93 – 100; AB = 85 – 92.9; B = 77 – 84.9; BC = 69 – 76.9; C = 61 – 68.9; D = 53 – 60.9; F = Below 53. The study also showed that one faculty did not submit the grading scheme.

### **9- Missing Basic Rules**

The study found no rules were mentioned for attendance or missing an exam. However, late submissions rules were indicated. The study showed that three schools out of four clearly had stated a late work policy statement.

### **10- Deducting Points Policy**

Deducting points for late submissions varied from once school to another. While faculty at University of Illinois deducted one point for each late submission week. Faculty at University of Michigan deducted 30% for assignments turned in up to one day late. Assignments turned in more than a day late would receive zero points. Faculty at University of Wisconsin deducted 5% for each day past the due date.

### **11- Final Exams**

Exams were not considered much in evaluating students' performance, in that only faculty at the University of Michigan used final exams to assess students.

### **12- Assignments and Tasks**

Assessed tasks varied from one school to another in name, type, and grades in that while tasks were concept papers in one school, they were homework at another school, and assignments at a third one, and resource reviews at the last one.

### **13- Group Projects**

The study found that students had the choice to work independently in some schools and in groups in other schools.

### **14- Class Participation**

The study found that while class participation was counted in the total grades at three schools out of four, and was given a range from 5-10 %, it was not considered at one school.

### **15- Student – Student Evaluation**

The study found that only faculty at the University of Illinois included students- student evaluation, where student could evaluate group project partners and was given a range 5 %.

### **16- Proper Classroom Behavior**

The study showed that the reminder of proper classroom behavior, code of student conduct was identified at the University of Wisconsin only where a reference to academic integrity was made.

### **17- Plagiarism**

The Statement of plagiarism was clearly identified by faculty at University of Michigan, while faculty at University of Wisconsin submitted a reference to the academic integrity. However, the other two faculty left did not submit any information regarding this matter.

### **Conclusion**

Based on previous analysis the study showed that accredited Library and Information Science programs had different understanding and various practices. Therefore, it might be important to establish a syllabus committee association that would have the authority to determine various elective courses offered in various Library and Information Science programs. This association might be a part of the American Library Association, ALA, in order to have the authority to impose rules and unify procedures. The main task of this association could be reviewing and evaluating core or elective courses offered in Library and Information Science schools. It might be important to arrange meeting and national conferences to determine, rules, regulations, policies, etc. The outcome of such meeting and conferences may include: (1) Determining core and elective courses in Library and Information Science Field; (2) Establishing a unified syllabus checklist that includes main points and basic topics to focus on. (See appendix 1for details)

In order to unify procedures and regulations, it is suggested that a syllabus checklist can be available online for faculty members to ensure wider distribution and to ensure quality control. To unifying procedure the following has to be made

- (1) Issuing a unified course syllabus evaluation rubric for all courses at all levels;
- (2) Determining peer review members and their roles and responsibilities;
- (3) Announcement about annual proceedings, publications, meetings and conferences;
- (4) Designing websites that include basic activities and practices;
- (5) Establishing a committee for syllabus review and evaluation in each Library and Information Science School to ensure that syllabi are not missing important data and to make sure that description of each syllabus offered is getting along with the school broad aims and objectives.

Finally, it is important to understand that syllabus design is a dynamic process that should not stop at a certain point. As new trends and topics appear everyday, the dynamic syllabus has to be up to date. Therefore, faculty member can ensure providing high quality teaching.

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## Appendixes

### **1-Basic Checklist for Effective Syllabus Construction**<sup>34</sup>

#### *Course Information:*

- Course title
- Course number
- Meeting times and location(s)
- Prerequisites (optional)

#### *Instructor Information:*

- Full name and title
- Office location, phone number, e-mail address, and office hours
- Home phone number (optional)
- TA information (if applicable)

#### *Texts and Materials:*

- Required textbook titles and authors and where available
- Supplementary readings and materials and where available

#### *Course Description/Objectives:*

- Course description
- Course goals
- Classroom format

#### *Course Policies:*

- Attendance and lateness
- Class participation
- Make-up policies
- Academic dishonesty
- Grading policies

#### *Course Calendar/Schedule:*

- Daily or weekly schedule of topics/readings
- Dates of exams and quizzes
- Due dates for papers and major assignments
- Dates of required special events

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<sup>34</sup> Judy Greene and Kathleen Therrien. The Syllabus Re-Evaluation: Creating a Tool for Effective Teaching, Available at <<http://cte.udel.edu/publications/handbook-graduate-assistants/getting-started/syllabus-re-evaluation-creating-tool-effec>>

**2-Course Syllabus Evaluation Rubric<sup>1</sup>**  
**Level of Performance**

	<b>Component Acceptable (Pass)</b>	<b>Satisfactory (Pass with Revisions)</b>	<b>Unacceptable (Fail)</b>
<p><b>Course Description</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad Aims</li> <li>• Topics covered</li> <li>• Place within program: required vs. elective, prerequisite for other courses</li> <li>• Prerequisites for this course: List any courses/content students must have for eligibility</li> <li>• Duration and frequency of classes</li> </ul>	<p>The course description clearly identifies the broad aims of the course and the topics to be covered. It shows how this course fits into the program and states any required pre-requisites (including courses) and assumptions about prior knowledge. The duration and frequency of classes are given.</p>	<p>The course description vaguely identifies the broad aims of the course and the topics to be covered. It does not clearly identify how the course fits into the program and may or may not outline required pre-requisites (including courses) and assumptions about prior knowledge. If these are included, they may not be completely outlined or fully explained. The duration and frequency of classes is inconsistently indicated.</p>	<p>The course description does not clearly identify the broad aims of the course and/or the topics to be covered. It does not show how this course fits into the program and/or does not state any required pre-requisites (including courses) and assumptions about prior knowledge. The duration and frequency of classes are not given.</p>
<p><b>Instructional Rationale and Delivery Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations of student performance</li> <li>• How instruction will be delivered</li> <li>• Schedule of course topics and class activities</li> <li>• How students will work (independently and/or in teams)</li> <li>• How the community will be used</li> </ul>	<p>The instructional strategy is clearly outlined and the expectations for both students and instructional staff that follow from this. A course schedule and student work modes (independently and/or in teams) are stated and the rationale for this is given. Any work with the outside community – geographic or industry sector is clearly articulated.</p>	<p>The instructional strategy is vaguely outlined and as a result, the expectations for students and instructional staff are not clear or do not fit the strategy. A course schedule is present but either the rationale for the work or the student work modes (independently and/or in teams) are not included. Any work with the outside community – geographic or industry sector is addressed but not clearly articulated.</p>	<p>The instructional strategy is not clearly outlined, nor the expectations for both students and instructional staff that follow from this. A course schedule exists but student work modes (independently and/or in teams) are not stated and no rationale for work modes is given. Any work with the outside community – geographic or industry sector is not articulated.</p>
<p><b>Course Goals and Learning Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and learning outcomes should cover disciplinary knowledge at a range of levels, discipline-related skills, generic skills and attitudes</li> <li>• Learning outcomes should be identified in terms of the combination of taught, practiced (opportunity for development) and assessed</li> <li>• The goals and learning outcomes should be integrated</li> </ul>	<p>Various types of goals and outcomes are listed and worded in a way that students can easily understand. There is clear logic for the integration of outcomes through the course.</p>	<p>Various types of goals and outcomes are listed, but may not be worded in a way that students can easily understand, or the logic for the integration of outcomes through the course is vague.</p>	<p>Only knowledge related goals are listed and these are not worded in a way that students can easily understand. The logic for the integration of outcomes through the course is not clear or is missing.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Course Syllabus Evaluation Rubric available at : <[http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/pdf/Course\\_Syllabus\\_Evaluation\\_Rubric.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/pdf/Course_Syllabus_Evaluation_Rubric.pdf)>

**Course Assessment Plan**

- Assessment Strategy with a description of each assessed task
- Types of formative and summative feedback on learning
- Identification of assessed vs. unassessed tasks
- Range of assessments that cover the major learning outcomes
- Identification of the weighting of the assessments and the rationale for this
- Grading schemes/rubrics for key components of assessed tasks
- A list of any major projects that students will complete during the course, with a brief description of each project including the key deliverables

**Course Administration**

- Information about the instructor, office and phone number, office hours, e-mail address
- List of required and recommended readings
- Rules for attendance, late submissions, missing an exam, etc.
- A reminder of proper classroom behavior, code of student conduct
- Statement of plagiarism. See

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/crsout.pdf>

The document clearly states the type and mix of assessment and grading system to be implemented (formative/summative, nature of feedback) and the learning tasks that will need to be submitted and which of these will form part of the assessment for grading. An overall weighting scheme for assessed tasks and its rationale are stated. Where appropriate, key components of the grading rubrics are included. If appropriate, a list of major course projects is included in the document.

Contact details and office hours are included for all teaching staff on the course (instructors and teaching assistants). List of required and recommended readings for the course are provided. Administrative policies for attendance, assignment submission are clearly stated. Proper classroom behavior is given in broad terms and, where possible, links to institutional policies re academic behavior and integrity are supplied.

The document states the type and mix of assessment and grading system to be implemented (formative/summative) but does not clearly relate them to specific course assignments. An overall weighting scheme for assessed tasks but no rationale is given. A list of major course projects is included, but there is no grading rubric.

Contact details are included but incomplete (e.g. email but no telephone extension). Office hours are 'TBA'. List of required and recommended readings are provided but do not appear to reflect the course curriculum. Administrative policies are not comprehensive (e.g. provides a statement on plagiarism, but does not outline late penalties, etc). Classroom behaviour is outlined, but no institutional policies are provided (or vice-versa).

The document does list some, but not all, of the assessments and there is no variety. There is no weighting scheme given or rationale.

Contact details are insufficient. Recommended and required readings are not provided. Course policies re attendance, assignment submission are not stated, nor is proper classroom behavior.