

# Constructing a Syllabus:

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## What to Include and Why to Include It

Robert Vanderlan  
Teaching Support Specialist  
Center for Teaching  
Excellence  
255-3711  
rjv23@cornell.edu

**CENTER FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE**  
Ideas Today That You Can Use Next Week

# Agenda

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- ➔ Where do we start?
- ➔ A learning-centered syllabus
- ➔ What to include?

# Where do we start?

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→ Model ours on the work of others

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- ➔ Model ours on the work of others
- ➔ What do I want to teach?

# Where do we start?

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- ➔ Models ours on the work of others.
- ➔ What do I want to teach?
- ➔ What do I want students to learn?

# A Learning-Centered Syllabus

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## ➔ Content-driven model

- ➔ How much material can I fit into this course?
- ➔ How much time do I have to “cover” the material?

# A Learning-Centered Syllabus

- ➔ Process-driven model:
  - ➔ Focus on learning: what are the challenges to learning this subject or topic?
  - ➔ What do I want the students to say, do, think, or feel after experiencing this course?
  - ➔ What are appropriate teaching and learning strategies likely to achieve my goals?

# Learning Outcome Examples

At the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Describe the key characteristics of different classes of planets
- Explain the workings of economic institutions such as the Federal Reserve
- Apply basic pharmacokinetic principles to estimate drug concentration in a patient
- Collaborate in a team to create a research program



# Linking Assessment with Desired Outcome

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Course learning outcome:

- Evaluate competing historical arguments or interpretations

Course assignment:

- Critical book review

You will be assessed on your ability to:

- Fairly and critically evaluate the historian's interpretation

## ENGL 5369: Ethnographic Research and Methods

### Gain an overall understanding of Ethnographic Research

Define and describe concepts and procedures of ethnography and the approaches to qualitative research

- Oral Presentation on Assigned Readings

Define and describe cross-cultural and multi-cultural systems through ethnographic research

- Annotated Bibliography

### Display an understanding of Ethical Issues concerning Human Subjects and Data Collection

Complete IRB training and research protocol

- Complete IRB Training and Receive Approved Protocol

Systemically collect ethnographic data

- Field notes

### Conduct an Ethnographic Research Project

Analyze data to test ideas and/or discover significant patterns (Code data if necessary)

- Field notes

Present research report of significant findings of the research conducted

- Final Research Report

# What to Include?

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## ➔ The basics

- ➔ What do students need to know about the class?

# What to Include

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- ➔ Pay attention to tone
- ➔ Syllabus, and how you present it in class, is the student's first clue as to what kind of teacher you are

# What to include

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## ➔ Philosophy and Personality

➔ Why does the course matter to you

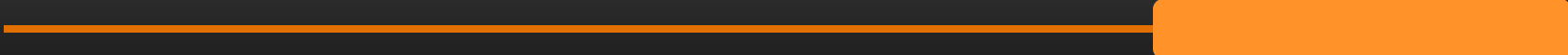
➔ Why should it matter to them?

➔ “It’s a requirement.” Why?

# What to Include

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- ➔ Signal what is important:
  - ➔ Diversity statement
  - ➔ Disability accommodations
  - ➔ Academic integrity



“Cornell University is a community of diverse people, respectful and appreciative of difference. A commitment to diversity, central to the university’s founding vision, remains a core value of Cornell.”

“Cornell recognizes that learning, discovery, creativity, and the innovative dissemination of knowledge benefit tremendously from the full participation of individuals with diverse points of view, coming from varied life perspectives.”

-President Skorton

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# How does your Syllabus Look to Students?

- ➔ Have people look at your syllabus
  - ➔ Colleagues
  - ➔ Students
- ➔ Is it clear what students are asked to do and why?
- ➔ Is it clear how students will be evaluated and why?



# How does your syllabus relate to your course?

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- ➔ Syllabus and course design
- ➔ A better syllabus can make teaching easier and more effective