

elements, to foster the curiosity, creativity, and innovative capacity of highly motivated learners. Students partner with Honors Program staff to plan student activities and to advance the Honors Program mission.

- ▶ **International-House.** The I-House is a vibrant community of world cultures, foreign affairs, and enthusiastic students interested in how the world works beyond campus. I-House residents plan and attend events related to international outreach, literature, film, cuisine, sports, cultures, and languages.
- ▶ **Women, Science, and Technology (WST).** WST offers programs addressing academic and professional issues for Tech women students who live together and who connect with one another and faculty through monthly dinners, biweekly lunches, campus receptions, and research panels. Students may also be paired with a faculty mentor.

## SOURCES

- ▶ **Office of the Registrar**  
registrar.gatech.edu
- ▶ **Office of Undergraduate Education**  
Suite 205, Clough Undergraduate Commons |  
404.385.8543 | llc.gatech.edu
- ▶ **Undergraduate Advising and Transitions**  
Suite 283, Clough Undergraduate Commons |  
advising.gatech.edu

## Syllabus Development

Your syllabus is one of the most important documents you create for your course. This document gives students a first impression of you and sets the tone for the course and classroom environment from the very first day. The syllabus is a working agreement between you and your students, an opportunity to not only share your expectations for the work to be done but also to help students understand what, how, and why they will be learning and doing in your course. An inclusive syllabus helps student to see themselves in the course as well as a path to success and ways to engage the course meaningfully. The Institute requires that you provide students a syllabus before the last day of the add/drop period, and a good syllabus is a roadmap for learning.

Taking the time to write a thorough and organized syllabus that that emphasizes students' learning outcomes, clarifies your expectations, and lets students know what it takes to be successful in your course. Adopting a tone of support for student learning will also help to establish a good relationship between you and your students, contributing to a healthy learning environment and classroom dynamic, even as plans may change.

For example, consider using "we" language in your descriptions of course goals and activities.

The following Syllabus Checklist was created to assist in developing a syllabus. More information, including template syllabi, is available on the CTL website.

### CTL Syllabus Checklist

#### 1. Welcome and Overview of the Course

- Course Prefix and Number, Name, Section, and Credits**
- Instructor name and contact information (email address and office phone)**
- TA(s) name and contact information (email addresses)**
- Class day, time, and location (include lab/recitation times and locations if appropriate)**
- Instructor office hours and physical or virtual location**  
You may also choose to include a brief statement encouraging students to see you outside of class.
- Course Description**  
Your course description should provide a brief introduction to the scope, purpose, and relevance of the course. Your course description in your syllabus can go beyond the description in the course catalog, provided it is consistent with that description. Aim to give students a sense of what is interesting/useful about the course, while avoiding the use of jargon and terms that students who haven't yet taken the course might not understand. Students are interested in what they will learn and how it connects to other courses in a curriculum or their future plans.
- Prerequisites and Corequisites**  
If applicable, list prerequisites here. In some instances, you may also want to describe the background knowledge/experience that is most likely to lead to success in your course (e.g., this is often relevant in a graduate-level seminar).
- Course Goals and Learning Outcomes (Objectives)**  
Developing learning objectives is an important first step in course design, and they should be articulated on your syllabus as a bulleted list. Your learning objectives are meant to identify your main course goals for your students, in terms of the skills and knowledge they will develop in your class. They should be student-centered, action-oriented, and measurable, and should reflect a big-picture view of the purpose of the course. One way to do this is to write them as a bulleted list of completions of the sentence starter, "Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to ...." Aim for three to five learning objectives for a single course.

## 2. Course Requirements and Grading

### □ Assignments

List all the graded components of your course, including assigned homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects, or other assignments that will be turned in, along with the dates they are due and how much weight (e.g., percentage, points, etc.) each component carries. Keeping it on the first page of your syllabus will help your students quickly answer their most pressing questions on the first day of class (What's the workload like? and How do I earn an A in this class?).

### □ Description of Graded Components

Your syllabus should include details for each component of your students' final grade. The idea here is to give your students a sense of what kind and quantity of work will be expected of them. Some things can be lumped together (e.g., midterms and final exams), but add a descriptive blurb associated with every component of your course that counts toward a student's final grade. In cases where attendance and/or participation will be graded, explain how you will be assessing their attendance and/or participation. You can also include information about late-work policies, coursework resubmission, and information about how, where, and when assignments should be turned in.

### □ Grading Scale

Grades are awarded on a scale of A to F with no +/- grades permitted. In your syllabus, you should define your approach to assigning grades so that students can clearly see the ways in which their work and grades earned along the way will contribute to their final grade in the course. According to policy, grades at Tech are interpreted as follows:

- A Excellent (four quality points per credit hour)
- B Good (three quality points per credit hour)
- C Satisfactory (two quality points per credit hour)
- D Passing (one quality point per credit hour)
- F Failure (zero quality points per credit hour)

Visit the [Registrar's website](#) for more information about the grading system at Tech.

### □ Extra Credit and Grade Dispute Policies and Procedures

## 3. Course Materials

### □ Course Texts

Specify whether texts are required or recommended and where they can be purchased. If you are putting materials on reserve in the Library (either print or electronic versions), tell students how to access these materials. If applicable, include items like lab supplies, electronic devices, computer applications, and other materials that are required for your class. Alternatively, consider including optional/support materials, like additional books/readings that interested and/or motivated students might want to read. You may also consider listing any resources or services that may be helpful for students to know about or that you want students to use

during your course, such as organizers, or campus tutoring support.

### □ Course Website or Other Classroom Management Tools

Either mention your use of a Canvas site, or add a link to your course website. Your Canvas site should serve as the hub for your class, an easily accessible place where course materials, assignments, videos, discussion boards, etc. reside for easy access.

## 4. Course Expectations and Guidelines

Below are the policies that should be included in all Tech syllabi. As you write this portion of your syllabus, use language that emphasizes your students' role in the process, and aim for a tone that communicates both authority and approachability. Each policy should make it clear what is and is not expected/permissible in this class, what the rationale or motivation behind the policy is, what students need to do in extenuating circumstances, and what the consequences will be if they do not live up to the expectations laid out in the policy. Finally, your policy should represent something that you are comfortable implementing consistently, throughout the course.

We have integrated some suggestions for doing that in the explanations below. Please stay up-to-date on policies and language that may come from Georgia Tech or USG as needed.

### □ Academic Integrity

Suggested wording for this policy:

*Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, which will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations. For more information on the Honor Code, [visit this webpage](#).*

### □ Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

Each syllabus should contain a statement directing students to the Office of Disability Services if they require special accommodation. Consider this wording for a traditional course:

*If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or [their website](#), as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Then, make an appointment as soon as possible to discuss your learning needs.*

Encourage your students to reach out to the Office of Disability Services, and take accommodations into consideration when drafting both your syllabus and course plans. Also check the Office's webpage frequently for officially suggested language.

### □ Assignment Submission

Explain to students your directions for how, where, and when assignments should be turned in. For example, will assignments be turned in hardcopy at the start of a class period or via Canvas by a certain time of the day? Assignments will mostly likely be turned in in-person or via Canvas to maintain confidentiality and abide by FERPA standards.

#### □ **Attendance and/or Participation**

Whether attendance and/or participation are required and/or graded in your class is up to you. When determining your attendance policy, do consider the lessons learned from the pandemic. Also consider the rationale for requiring or grading participation, and explain to students both your reasoning and what they can do to succeed in this participation. Offering multiple avenues for participation, such as contributing to full or small group discussions, asking questions, contributing regularly to discussion board posts, are all ways students might contribute to the intellectual activity of the course.

Your expectations are an important course design consideration. Be flexible, and consider working with your students to develop shared expectations and pathways for learning. Here are several questions worth thinking about as you articulate expectations in your syllabus: What happens if a student chooses not to or cannot attend in-person courses for health reasons? What viable remote learning pathways would be available to them? How will you be sure attendance and/or participation methods are equitable regardless of a student's physical location? How will student absences affect the learning experience of other students in your course?

#### □ **Collaboration and Group Work**

The Institute's Honor Code gives you the job of defining for your students the levels of collaboration that are permitted outside of class, as well what outside resources they are permitted to use (e.g., on assignments, exams, projects, etc.) and how they are supposed to report their use of those outside resources. Articulate your policy here, considering acceptable collaboration and groupwork.

#### □ **Extensions, Late Assignments, and Rescheduled or Missed Exams**

Students need to know what your policy is on things like late assignments and missed exams. Be as clear as possible about your expectations, but also discuss how you will be flexible when appropriate due to illness or circumstance. Note also that at Tech some exceptions are made for "[approved Institute activities](#)"(e.g., field trips and athletic events).

#### □ **Public Health Expectations**

Extenuating circumstances might arise as a result of continuing public health concerns, so consider adding a statement saying you will abide by guidance from the CDC and Georgia Tech during the semester.

#### □ **Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom**

To set this policy in a traditional course, think about individual students, the overall dynamic you would like to see at work in your classroom, and your own tolerance of distractions in the classroom. Students may need access to technology such as laptops or mobile phones in order to participate actively and engage with peers and using technology might be an accommodation students in your course have documented. Flexibility can go a long way, and this might be a policy you collaborate with your students to define.

#### □ **Student-Faculty Expectations**

Consider the following wording for this policy:

*At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to continually strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [This page](#) in the catalog articulates some basic expectations that you can have of me, and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech, while in this class.*

## 5. Course Calendar and Content

Present a clear course calendar to help students understand the trajectory of the course and what they can expect to learn. You may also want to briefly discuss how you will be responsive to any disruptions related to public health challenges. The following subheadings can be used as a place to start in a traditional or adapted course:

#### □ **Course Meetings**

List each class meeting date as well as the final exam or project due date and time (if known). Visit the [academic calendar website](#).

#### □ **Official Holidays**

List any official school holidays that will effect a class meeting as a reminder; official Tech calendars are located [here](#). Keep religious holidays, campus events, and other special occasions in mind.

#### □ **Important Dates**

Consider important dates when scheduling exams or other major assignments.

#### □ **Requirements Outside of Class Time**

List any key dates that students are expected to attend events that are outside of normal class time. Examples include review sessions, film screenings, career fair, etc.

#### □ **Class Plan**

For each class date or asynchronous module, list the topics or activities planned for the class meeting. You should mention to students that the calendar is tentative, and state how you will notify students if changes are made.

## 6. Additional Sections to Consider

### □ **Tips for Success and Learning Tools**

Add suggestions for how to study for the course or how to succeed, which might include how to take useful notes, how to read for understanding, how to work effectively in groups, how to take exams, how to do research at the Library or on the Internet, how to communicate effectively in writing, or how to give effective presentations. Simple reminders like these help students understand your expectations and ensure all students are on equal footing to start the course.

### □ **Discipline-Specific Tips**

Examples include terminology and notations you will use throughout the course, and prerequisite skills you expect students to be aware of or to have mastered prior to your class. Doing so can contribute to students feeling a sense of belonging in the discipline through your course.

### □ **List of Additional Campus Resources**

Consider adding quick links to offices such as Tutoring and Academic Support, Counseling Services and CARE, Serve-Learn-Sustain, and the Office of Institute Diversity, for example. Consider adding a link to student resources at [success.gatech.edu](https://success.gatech.edu), where students can seek support in academics, advising, health, and more.

### □ **An Introduction to Yourself**

Including a personal greeting, especially a video greeting for a hybrid or remote course, can enhance the personal nature of the course and relieve student anxiety. Let students know if you have received Safe Space, Trans 101, QPR, Implicit Bias, or other training to create a more inclusive learning environment and support well-being.

### □ **Diversity Statement**

Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion is a Georgia Tech value. Add a statement of diversity and inclusion that welcomes students into the course and establishes guidelines for how to value the diversity of people and perspectives in the class regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or other identities. as well as how to respectfully engage with each other.

## SOURCE

**Center for Teaching and Learning**  
Suite 457, Clough Undergraduate Learning  
Commons | 404.894.4474 | [ctl.gatech.edu](https://ctl.gatech.edu)

