

## **Quick guide for new faculty: preparing a Weinberg College syllabus – Pandemic edition**

(See page 3 for recommendations specific to remote instruction)

*Some items are University policy, others are governed by Weinberg College Faculty legislation, and the rest are a selection of best practices. For more comprehensive information, see “Teaching Guides and Resources”:*

<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/faculty/teaching-research-service/teaching-curriculum/teaching-guides-resources.html>

### **COURSE CONTENT**

Do not plan to fit a 14-week semester’s worth of content into one ten-week quarter. Our students typically take 4 courses at a time, just as they would on a semester calendar. So, the amount of work they can complete for one class in a typical week is the same as the work they could complete under a semester schedule. In your planning, also please be mindful of the cost of materials to our students. University Library staff can assist you with setting up course reserve materials, and also answer questions you may have about copyright in relation to sharing documents digitally (such as on the Canvas course management system). Your required materials list in the CAESAR class description should include detailed information like ISBNs and estimated costs.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Your learning objectives must be included on the syllabus. For tips on formulation of learning objectives, see:

<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/faculty/teaching-research-service/teaching-curriculum/new-courses/learning-objectives.html> and also <https://www.northwestern.edu/searle/assessment-of-student-learning/assessment-process/developing-objectives.html>.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

In addition to standard office hours information, include information about how students can reach you to set up an appointment or ask a quick question outside of those hours.

### **CALENDAR**

For any quarter, important dates relevant to planning your syllabus can be found on the University Calendar posted on the website of the Office of the Registrar:

<https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/index.html>. Please pay particular attention to the course drop and withdrawal deadlines.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Faculty should make an effort to avoid scheduling exams or other mandatory events on religious holidays. The Office of Religious & Spiritual Life maintains a list of the holidays of various faiths here:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/religious-life/programs-events/religious-holidays/index.html>

### **READING PERIOD**

Faculty teaching Weinberg College courses cannot require students to submit work during Weinberg College Reading Period, and no exams, tests, or quizzes may be given. Whether class meetings take place is up to the instructor, though typical practice is to not meet except for review sessions. Note that students in your class may also be enrolled in other, non-Weinberg classes that do not adhere to Reading Period, so you will not be able to require any special class meetings outside of regularly scheduled class hours. Reading Period is

sometimes, but not always, a full week. For more information about Reading Period, see:

<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/courses-registration-grades/reading-period.html>

#### FINAL EXAMS

All courses are automatically assigned a two-hour slot during Final Exam Week as part of the Registrar's Office class scheduling process. It is the responsibility of the student to double-check the exam schedule at the time of registration to avoid conflicts. Additionally, faculty should indicate the exam day and time on the syllabus. If a final paper is assigned in lieu of an exam and the instructor chooses to make the paper due earlier in exam week (as early as the first day of exams is permissible), that must be clearly indicated in the syllabus. Final Exam schedules can be found at this link:

<https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/final-exam-schedules/index.html>

#### COURSE DROP DEADLINE

Every student has the option of dropping a class, with no special permissions, up until the published deadline (usually the sixth Friday of the term). Plan your assignments such that students receive feedback about their performance on at least one significant test or paper before that deadline. More information about policies and procedures pertaining to **dropping**, **adding**, or **withdrawing** from courses can be found at this link:

<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/courses-registration-grades/adding-dropping.html>

#### DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

AccessibleNU is the campus office that works with faculty to determine whether and what accommodations may be needed by a student with a disability. A statement recommended for inclusion on course syllabi can be found here:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu/faculty/general-information/index.html>

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The syllabus can include the following: "Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean's Office. For more information on Northwestern's academic integrity policies, see

<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/courses-registration-grades/integrity/>." Instructors who plan to use software that checks student work against other sources must include a statement that alerts students their work may be checked in this way. For example, "All student work in this class may be analyzed electronically for violations of the University's academic integrity policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content."

#### GRADES

Your syllabus must clearly indicate the basis for grading, including the relative weighting of different assignments and tests in the computation of the grade; this helps to prevent grade disputes from arising and eases resolution when a student does formally dispute a grade. Note that faculty submit grades electronically through CAESAR, and those grades are typically due before 3PM on the Monday following Finals Week. Entering missing grades after this deadline is onerous! As you plan your syllabus please ensure that you (and any teaching assistants) will have adequate time to evaluate student work to meet this deadline.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

In November 2018, the Faculty Senate approved a resolution recommending the following be added to course syllabi: "Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the [NUhelp](https://www.northwestern.edu/nuhelp/) website and app." The full URL is <https://www.northwestern.edu/nuhelp/>

## **Additional notes: preparing a Weinberg College syllabus in the pandemic**

### TECHNICAL HELP AND SUPPORT

So that students do not expect you to be the sole person to help them resolve technical problems, you may want to include a statement pointing students towards technical support help for the requirements in your course, for example the Northwestern IT Support Center: <https://www.it.northwestern.edu/supportcenter/>.

### STATEMENTS ABOUT RECORDING

Many courses are currently being offered remotely with synchronous instruction. Experience suggests that even the most diligent student will sometimes miss synchronous classes due to technology issues, so you may want to record your classes within University guidelines. **Unauthorized recording of classes by students is prohibited.** For guidelines and recommended syllabus statements see the Office of the Provost webpage: <https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/recording-class.html>.

### REQUIRED TECHNICAL SKILLS

You may want to include in your syllabus a statement of what technical skills you will be expecting students to use in your course. Some examples:

- Use Northwestern email and check it regularly
- Use Northwestern VPN (GlobalProtect)
- Use the learning management system Canvas (and specified integrated Canvas tools\*)
- Use web browsers and navigate the World Wide Web.
- Use the Northwestern Library online resources.
- Use applications to create documents and presentations (e.g., Microsoft Word, PowerPoint).
- Use Box (or Google Drive) to share files
- Use software for statistical analysis (e.g., SPSS).

### \*STATEMENTS ABOUT SPECIFIC CANVAS TOOLS

There are a variety of Canvas tools options, and you may want to add a note on your syllabus about these tools. The two most commonly used for video are Zoom and Panopto. Below are **example** syllabus statements used by the NU School of Professional Studies. You may want to create a version relevant to your course.

#### **Zoom**

We will use Zoom for optional synchronous meetings. The [Zoom support page](#) provides additional guidance for using Zoom, and the [Zoom for Students in Canvas](#) page has guidance specifically for students. The [Zoom Privacy Policy](#) and the [Accessibility Features on Zoom](#) are also available. Please note that any scheduled synchronous meetings are optional. While your attendance is highly

encouraged, it is not required and you will not be graded on your attendance or participation. These synchronous sessions will be recorded, so you will be able to review the session afterward.

### **Panopto**

Videos in this course may be hosted in Panopto. If you have not used Panopto in the past, you may be prompted to login to Panopto for the first time and authorize Panopto to access your Canvas account. You can learn more about using Panopto and login to Panopto directly by visiting the Panopto guide on the [Northwestern IT Resource Hub](#). Depending on the assignment requirements of this course, you may be asked to create videos using Panopto in addition to viewing content that your instructor has provided through Panopto. The [Panopto Privacy Policy](#) and the [Accessibility Features on Panopto](#) are also available.