TO: Psychology Department Instructors

FROM: Chair's Office via the Administrative Board of CAS and the Faculty Council

RE: Guidelines for Course Syllabi and Class Blogs

DATE: 12/05/2012

GUIDELINES FOR COURSE SYLLABI

As recommended by the Educational Policy Committee and approved by Faculty Council, it is recommended that each course offered for credit has a syllabus that addresses the elements detailed below. The syllabus should be provided to students, <u>electronically or in print</u>, <u>no later than the first day of class</u>.

- **Course Identifiers**
  - Course number
  - Section number
  - Department
  - Term
  - Class times
- **Instructor Identifiers**
  - Name
  - Office location
  - Office hours
  - Phone number(s)
  - Email address
  - Web address
  - Teaching Assistant information (if appropriate)
- **Target Audience**
  - Explain how the course fits into a broader educational program and to whom the course is targeted.
- **Course Prerequisites**
  - Explain course prerequisites or other important rules that describe who is eligible to take the course, who can obtain credit, and how to satisfy any special course registration requirements.
- **Course Goals and Key Learning Objectives**
  - State course goals and key learning objectives. These are descriptions of competencies that students should expect to develop in the course.
- **Course Requirements:**
  - Explain what kinds of work students must do to successfully complete the course.
  - Lists any other requirements such as mandatory recitations, labs, term papers, or mandatory activities outside of class meeting times.
- **Dates**
  - As far as possible, list the dates of all examinations and due dates for assignments.
- **Grades**
  - List the rules that you will use to assign grades in sufficient detail to clearly inform students as to how their grades will be determined.
  - State how student participation in class will be assessed.

- **Course Policies**
  - ➢ Explain your expectations for student conduct during the course. Examples include:
    - o Conduct: explain policies about conduct in class and any accompanying consequences.
    - o Attendance: explain attendance policies including consequences for missing classes too often.
    - o Late work: explain whether late work is accepted or not and any penalizations.
    - o Exams: explain the consequences for missing an exam. The syllabus should state that the course final exam is given in compliance with UNC final exam regulations and according to the UNC Final Exam calendar.
- **Course Resources**
  - ➢ Provide a list of required text books and other course resources, and an explanation of how to access them. (e.g., whether and how Sakai is used.)
- **Honor Code**
  - ➢ Explain requirements for the course that could have Honor Code consequences. (e.g., working together, assistance in preparing assignments, and open or closed book exams.)
- **Time Table**
  - ➢ Provide a course calendar that gives topics and assignments for each class meeting.
- **Syllabus Changes**
  - ➢ Include a clause that informs students of possible modifications.

Sources: Additional details of what to include in your syllabi can be found at http://faccoun.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Res-2012-11OnSyllabusGuidelines_v4FinalAsApproved.pdf. The 2012-2013 Undergraduate Bulletin contains information on Academic Procedures; for additional information see http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/procedures1.html.

GUIDELINES FOR CLASS BLOGS

As class blogs have become a more popular tool for teaching and learning, instructors should be aware that, as with any other written course assignment, students' privacy rights under FERPA must be respected. Therefore, it is not advisable to *require* students to share their class work on a *public* web site or blog, *without their permission, or without providing an option* for them to restrict access to their work.

Instructors who elect to make student blog posts a class *requirement,* or even an *option* for students' graded work, should:

1. provide full disclosure in the syllabus distributed on the first day of class about how blog posts will be used and graded,
2. give each student control over who besides the teaching staff will have access to the student's blog, and
3. keep grades and written evaluation comments private, communicating them only to the student, just as you would for any other written class work.

Source: Sakai offers useful tools for blogging that will be helpful in this regard; for additional information, see https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/help/TOCDisplay/content.hlp?docId=blogwowdefault.