

Proposed Academic Senate Policy on Course Syllabi

Justification

This policy updates Academic Senate Policy #S08-90 (Policy on Course Syllabi) and Academic Senate Policy #F07-244 (Syllabus Disability Statement Policy), which established requirements for course syllabi.

The guiding logic behind this revision is to balance individual faculty workloads and freedom, on the one hand, with the identified needs of the students, the university, and the faculty as a whole on the other. This policy does so by:

- empowering students to take responsibility for their own educational attainments. By making syllabi explicit and intentional about campus values and expectations for learning, it links instructors and students in advancing students' knowledge and thinking;
- emphasizing coherence across the key curricular levels of courses and programs, and thus diminishing the potential disconnect between department, college, and university missions and goals course objectives;
- addressing the requirements of accrediting bodies that expect coherent and explicit learning expectations for students.

These three broad goals were endorsed by faculty participants in the 2009-2010 WASC Capacity and Preparatory Report and by the Academic Senate in a March 11, 2008 resolution endorsing the Educational Goals for the Baccalaureate.

1 I. Guidelines covering syllabus use in course

2 Students shall receive a written syllabus (digitally or in hard copy) by the first
3 course meeting or, in the case of courses taught online, it will be available to them
4 when the course opens.

5 During the semester, students shall be notified in writing (digitally or in hard copy)
6 of any substantive changes in the course syllabus. Colleges, schools, departments,
7 or programs may specify additional syllabus requirements for their courses.

8 II. Basic information for all course syllabi

9 All course syllabi shall include:

- 10 1. the instructor's name, office location, office phone number, office hours,
11 and contact information;
- 12 2. the course title and number;
- 13 3. a statement of scope, content, course objectives and student learning
14 outcomes (SLOs) for the course;
- 15 4. a list of texts and materials to be used throughout the course, including any
16 additional fees or costs;
- 17 5. a description of the grading policy;
- 18 6. a description of the teaching methods to be employed; and
- 19 7. any additional statements required by Academic Senate Policy.

20 III. Courses within the General Education (GE) program

21 In support of the new university baccalaureate degree requirements policy and
22 undergraduate baccalaureate goals, additional information will be required on all
23 new undergraduate course syllabi proposed for inclusion in the GE program,
24 including:

- 25 1. the student learning outcomes for the GE area (and/or overlay{s}) for which
26 the course is seeking certification;
- 27 2. any course specific student learning outcomes; and;
- 28 3. linkage of all SLOs (GE area, overlay, and course-specific) to the activities
29 students will complete to demonstrate they have met those SLOs.

30 [Example: Appendix A]

31 IV. Courses within the major

32 All new undergraduate course syllabi submitted for inclusion within a major
33 program shall include the following:

- 34 1. alignment of the course objectives and outcomes to the mission statement or
35 program objectives of the major [Example: Appendix A];

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37 V. Statements required by Academic Senate Policy

38 All syllabi shall include statements required by Academic Senate Policy:

39 1. The university's statement regarding disability access:

40 'Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged
41 to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is
42 available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is
43 located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone
44 (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email (dprc@sfsu.edu).'
45 (<http://www.sfsu.edu/~dprc/facultyfaq.html#1>)

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47 This policy replaces Academic Senate Policy #S08-90 (Policy on Course Syllabi)
48 and Academic Senate Policy #F07-244 (Syllabus Disability Statement Policy)

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Appendix A, Example of Course Syllabus alignment with department mission and GE Area D

History 400: Modern Imperialism (excerpt)

I. What is this class?

History 400 is a class about 16th-20th century imperialism. This class is about conquest and domination, but it is also about gender, race, class, and culture. We will discuss ‘imperialism’ as an internalized ideology, culture, and set of institutions. We will also look at imperialism’s corollary – colonialism – in terms of the relationships among societies and individuals in the metropole and colonies.

The first part of this class will center upon a discussion of the origins and context from which modern imperialism arose. We will then look closely at the reasons for, and events of, imperial expansion. We will spend much of this course seeking to understand the colonial relationships, experiences, and oppression. Finally we will look at decolonization, and ask whether colonialism has actually met its end.

Course-specific outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- engage the existing historiography on the origins of modern imperialism;
- discuss imperialism as a constituent element of certain 16th- 20th century societies, cultural constructs, military, and economic considerations;
- understand the roles of the ‘metropoles’ and ‘periphery’ in jointly (although unequally) constructing the operations of the colonial state;
- demonstrate various models for the functioning of colonial states;
- investigate the roles and actions of colonized peoples within and against the colonial system;
- compare imperial and colonial systems globally; and
- define and discuss various scholarly and popular approaches to and understandings of modern imperialism.

History 400 within the major

The Department of History has no formal mission statement for the major, but describes the objectives of the program as follows:

“History students at both the undergraduate and graduate level at San Francisco State University are expected to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of political, social, cultural, and economic institutions and values in many times and places. Undergraduate history majors achieve this goal by following a program that accords with the recommendations of the American Historical Association. That program requires students to complete foundations courses in the history of the United States and either Western Civilization or World History, a course in historical methods, courses designed to acquaint students with the diversity of the global setting in which they live (the department offers and requires that students take a total of eight upper division courses in the United States, Europe, and either Asia, Latin America, or Africa), and a capstone research seminar with a writing requirement. In these courses, the San Francisco State Department of History seeks to communicate a broad knowledge and understanding of the past while developing the student skills of historical analysis and interpretation, including how to compare and contrast, synthesize, and draw conclusions.”

History 400 is one of eight required variable upper division courses. It is normally counted as a course in European history. However, depending upon the research topic chosen by the student the department may allow students to count it as a course in one of the other areas of concentration.

The course helps students to understand the mutual constitution of empire in a particular long durée period (c.1550-present) and on a global scope, although with excursions to particular, more focused periods and places. It features assignments that call upon students to interrogate both primary and secondary sources, and to apply skills both in historiology (the study of history) and historical research.

History 400 as a General Education course in the baccalaureate

This class fulfills the student learning outcomes for Area D (Upper Division Social Science) of the baccalaureate degree requirements. The Baccalaureate Degree Requirements Policy (insert Policy number) states that students completing courses in these areas will be able to:

1. apply the methods of inquiry and analysis characteristic of one or more of the behavioral and social science disciplines to the study of human behavior, institutions, or socio-economic systems as related to the appropriate economic, ethnic, geographic, historical, political, social, or cultural contexts;
2. articulate how theories and practices in one or more of the behavioral and social science disciplines come to be accepted, contested, changed, or abandoned by the scholarly community;
3. evaluate the quality of behavioral and social scientific information and claims on the basis of their sources and the methods used to generate that information;
4. construct coherent and sound arguments with support from multiple sources, including library resources and proper citations, that communicate what students have discovered;
5. analyze economic, political, social, or cultural issues as well as ethical dilemmas and choices that arise out of behavioral or social scientific research, discoveries, and applications; and
6. analyze issues of equity and discrimination related to human behavior or to economic, political, social, or cultural institutions or systems, in the present or in the past, and, as appropriate, apply that knowledge to their own lives and to ways in which they could contribute purposefully to the well-being of their local communities, their nations, and the people of the world; to social justice; and/or to the sustainability of the natural environment.

This course reflects these outcomes through course assignments as described below:

Assignment	Topic	%	Area D outcomes
Analytical	Empire in the context of the early	20%	1, 3

paper	modern world		
Midterm	Historiography of the “new imperialism”	20%	2, 3
Research paper	Analysis of colonialism in specific place and time (guided student choice)	25%	1, 3, 4
Final exam	Questions on methods, theory, evidence, ethics,	25%	1, 5, 6
Debate	American empire	10%	4, 6