

# COURSE OUTLINE GUIDE

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Your course outline provides important factual information, which students need to be able to meet the requirements of any course. It can also serve as a reminder to students of all the support services that are available to help them achieve academic and personal success.

When you are reviewing your course outline at the beginning of the semester, it is a good practice to talk about these services and to point out the contact information to your students.

Students may experience academic or personal difficulties at any point during their academic career. So providing this information on all course outlines for every level of class means that if a student has a question, they can find the help they need easily.

For this reason, it is strongly recommended that a list services (see next page) be included in every course outline.

## WHAT IS A COURSE OUTLINE?

A course outline is an agreement between the professor (representing the University) and his / her students.

A course outline identifies how the course is structured, both pedagogically and administratively, and therefore must be as complete and cover as much pedagogical and administrative information as possible. The pedagogical objectives must be clearly stated.

It must explain the criteria used for grading. It must also state what is expected from students in terms of course work, preparation, assignment due dates and in-class behaviour. Sanctions must also be clearly indicated and explained.

It is recommended that all faculty members send a copy of their course outline to their Department or Unit.

## THE FOLLOWING RUBRICS AND INFORMATION MUST BE PRESENT IN EVERY COURSE OUTLINE:

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Course title, number, credits, semester, year.
- Class date, time and location (campus, building, room number).
- Name and title of the instructor, Faculty and Department.
- Access to the instructor: office location, campus phone number, email, website (if available), office hours, preferred means of contact.
- Similar access information for teaching assistants, where applicable.

### 2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

- Calendar course description (must be identical to that in the calendar).
- Prerequisites.

#### Optional:

- Expanded course description.
- Specific knowledge or skills students should have before beginning the course (e.g., computer skills).
- If appropriate, explain what the course is not about or what topics will not be covered.
- [Territorial Acknowledgement](#)

### 3. OBJECTIVES

Clear statement of the knowledge, competencies or skills students are expected to achieve by the end of the course (e.g., synthesize information, make predictions, solve problems, etc.).

### 4. SCHEDULE (may be subject to change)

- Assignment due dates.
- Exam dates.
- Legal holidays/No class dates.
- Special activities (e.g., group selection for project work, guest speaker, etc.).
- Provide a general schedule of the main topics to be addressed and questions that will drive discussion.

#### Optional:

- The DNE/DISC withdrawal dates.
- Include plan for make-up classes.

### 5. BEHAVIOUR

Include the following statements:

All individuals participating in courses are expected to be professional and constructive throughout the course, including in their communications.

Concordia students are subject to the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) which applies both when students are physically and virtually engaged in any University activity, including classes, seminars, meetings, etc. Students engaged in University activities must respect this Code when engaging with any members of the Concordia community, including faculty, staff, and students, whether such interactions are verbal or in writing, face to face or online/virtual. Failing to comply with the Code may result in charges and sanctions, as outlined in the Code.

### 6. IP

Include the following statements:

Content belonging to instructors shared in online courses, including, but not limited to, online lectures, course notes, and video recordings of classes remain the intellectual property of the faculty member. It may not be distributed, published or broadcast, in whole or in part,

without the express permission of the faculty member. Students are also forbidden to use their own means of recording any elements of an online class or lecture without express permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the [Academic Code of Conduct](#) and/or the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#). As specified in the [Policy on Intellectual Property](#), the University does not claim any ownership of or interest in any student IP. All university members retain copyright over their work.

## 7. EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Include the following statements:

### **For undergraduate courses & courses that are cross-listed with graduate courses:**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances and pursuant to the [Academic Regulations](#), the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.

### **For graduate courses:**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances, the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.

## 8. COURSE MATERIALS

- Required textbook(s) for the course.
- Where book(s) can be borrowed or purchased.
- If additional readings are required, include the articles and indicate where they can be obtained.
- Indicate readings that have been placed on reserve in the libraries.
- Other required resources (e.g., lab equipment, software, art supplies, etc.); indicate where they can be found and, if applicable, how much they will cost.

### **Optional:**

- Suggested readings.

## 9. GRADING

- Provide explicit information about the format and timing of assignments and grading procedures (e.g., term papers, exams, quizzes, and grading procedures (e.g., term papers, participation)).
- Provide a clear indication of the weight of each assignment on the final grade.
- Include the grading scale and the grading criteria.
- Indicate your expectations about respecting due dates and any sanctions if these expectations are not met.
- Inform students of their right to write in French.

### **Optional:**

- Describe your Department's policy on oral and written proficiency. The policy on evaluation states (item 16.3.1 in the calendar): The weight accorded to the various elements that make up the final grade is at the discretion of the instructor or instructors responsible for the course. At the beginning of a course, the instructor will

provide students with the evaluation scheme in writing. Once the semester has started, the grading scale should not be changed without either unanimous consent of students or consent from the chair. (Reasonable efforts must have been made to contact all students.)

**For Information, see the [Undergraduate Calendar](#).**

## 10. ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Include the following statements:

### **Plagiarism:**

The most common offense under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism, which the Code defines as “the presentation of the work of another person as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement.”

This includes material copied word for word from books, journals, Internet sites, professor’s course notes, etc. It refers to material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It also includes for example the work of a fellow student, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased from any source. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone –it can refer to copying images, graphs, tables and ideas. “Presentation” is not limited to written work. It includes oral presentations, computer assignments and artistic works. Finally, if you translate the work of another person into any other language and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism.

### **In Simple Words:**

Do not copy, paraphrase or translate anything from anywhere without saying where you obtained it.

(Source: [The Academic Integrity Website](#))

### **Optional:**

- Indicate the kind of in-class behaviour that you expect and state what kind of behaviour you consider disruptive; you may wish to refer students to the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- Ask students to advise you early in the term if they are taking religious holidays.
- Include an accessibility statement in your course outline: Instructor will strive to make learning experience as accessible and inclusive as possible. If you have accessibility needs that require academic accommodations, please meet with an advisor from the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) as soon as possible to set up an accommodation plan. I welcome meeting with all students to discuss their [accessibility needs](#).
- Include a statement on Ethical Behaviour: Sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, is not tolerated at Concordia. Please see Concordia’s policy on sexual violence for more information about awareness and prevention, support for survivors/victims, responding to disclosures and procedures for reports and complaints. You can also contact the Sexual Assault Resource Centre for information and support. More information and support are available at the [Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#), by email [sarc@concordia.ca](mailto:sarc@concordia.ca) or phone 514 848-2424 x 3353

## 11. USE OF THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE & WEB SITES

If you are using third-party software and/or web site, see the guidelines and include a statement. Information and standard wording found [here](#).

### LIST OF STUDENT SERVICES

1. [Access Centre for Students with Disabilities](#)
2. [Student Success Centre](#)
3. [Counselling and Psychological Services](#)
4. [Concordia Library Citation and Style Guides](#)
5. [Health Services](#)
6. [Financial Aid and Awards](#)
7. [Academic Integrity](#)
8. [Dean of Students Office](#)
9. [International Students Office](#)
10. [Student Hub](#)
11. [Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#)
12. As a Concordia student, you are a member of the Concordia Student Union and have many resources available to you including:
  - a. [HOJO](#) (Off Campus Housing and Job Bank)
  - b. [CSU Advocacy Centre](#)
13. [Aboriginal Student Resource Centre](#)
14. [Birks Student Service Centre](#)