

Accessible Syllabus Template

Getting started

Here are [instructions and accessibility formatting tips](#) for using this template, including how to download, edit and maintain accessibility features. Once you make your own copy and begin editing, you can delete this first page.

Personalizing this Syllabus

This syllabus is not one size fits all document! Please customize the language so it fits with your teaching methods, your students, and your own personal style.

Warm language

Syllabi are one of the first documents your students see, so it's important to be welcoming using warm language rather than cold language to develop a more supportive, inclusive environment in your classroom community. Here's a great resource to explore. [Accessible Syllabus: Rhetoric](#)

A note about this template

This template is a product of a collaboration of faculty on the Curriculum Group of the Anti-Racism and Inclusion Action Plan and the DE Committee. Our goal was to update the existing accessible syllabus template to create a more inclusive, equitable and supportive syllabus for our students. Please edit to make it your own and use it as you see fit.

Course Syllabus

Section number, Semester

Days and Times class meets

Welcome

[Here's an example of a welcome with warm language. Make this your own. Let your students know you will support them, are available for them and that their success is your goal. Again, this should be relevant to you and your class.]

Welcome to 964 Listening and Speaking! After a challenging year, I am confident that our class will be a comfortable, inclusive environment where you will thrive at learning how to express your feelings and beliefs about the themes in our book and about various accompanying TED Talks. We are a class of many backgrounds where you can feel confident that your opinions will be considered respectfully. First generation Americans and guest speakers of color will visit our class over the semester to talk about trends and topics related to our coursework. Furthermore, in breakout rooms and through group projects, you will practice how to express your ideas involving equity and inclusion as they apply to a variety of subjects such as climate change and business and philanthropy. So, get ready to overcome your shyness and doubts at speaking English because after this course, you will not be able to stop communicating enthusiastically with your native speaker neighbors and fellow West Valley College community!

How will we keep in touch?

- [your name]
- [phone]
- [email]
- [office location]
- [student hours]

[Here is an example of warm student hour language.]

I am available to meet with you during my designated student hours. We can zoom, email or talk on the phone. Send me an email via Canvas and/or West Valley email. If you are unable to meet during this time, I am available to accommodate you. I will make every attempt to reply to emails within (48) hours. For online courses I will be an active participant in your course and will communicate with you via assignment comments and class announcements.

What if...our class plan for the unexpected

As we've all learned in the past two years, we need to be prepared for surprises. I want to make sure that if our class can't meet on its scheduled day and time (for ex., due to COVID-related events), you know where to get information and help.

What happens if our class can't meet on campus during our regularly scheduled day and time?

- If our class can't meet, I'll let you know via _____ as soon as I am able.
- We may need to change our class to meet via Zoom. You can find instructions and the Zoom link to our virtual classroom in the Getting Started Module in our Canvas course.
- If you haven't already done so, in your Canvas Account>Settings, set up message forwarding to an email address that you check regularly. See [How to Manage My Canvas Notification Settings](#).

What should you do if you can't reach me?

- I will respond to Canvas Inbox messages within _____ [*your response time, for ex. 24 hours Monday through Friday, 9 am-5 pm*]. If you don't hear from me within this timeframe, please email me again! I'm human and sometimes I miss messages.
- You can also try messaging me via my WVC email: _____
- If you still can't get a hold of me, you can reach out to my department chair or my dean:
 - Department Chair: email: _____
 - Dean email: _____
- If you are looking for information that is not specific to our class, you can find updates on the WVC [homepage](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) page. They may have updates or news before I do!

Name and pronoun

If you'd like to be known by a name different from the name on the roll sheet or if you have a personal pronoun, please contact me, and I will make every effort to call you by the name and pronoun you use.

Our community goals

[Tell students what they can expect from you and what you will expect from them. Below is an example.]

What you can expect from me

- I will treat you with dignity and respect and be flexible to support your individual needs.
- I will provide you with a clear, organized course that is designed to ensure you meet our course outcomes in a meaningful manner.
- I will provide a variety of assignments to ensure your learning needs are met.
- I will grade assignments in a timely manner to facilitate your success on future assignments.
- I will be actively present in your learning.
- I will provide a supportive and safe environment for you to share and discuss ideas with your peers.
- I will reach out to you when I sense that you need support.

What I will expect from you

- Treat me and your peers with dignity and respect.
- Strive to be an active participant in this course.
- Maintain an open line of communication with me so I understand how to support you.
- Aim to meet due dates. Contact me if you have a concern with meeting a due date.
- Do your best to have patience with technology. There will be hiccups; expect them. We will get through them together.

What we can expect from each other

- We won't be perfect. We are human and will make mistakes at times. We will view mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow.
- We will all strive to contribute regularly in collaborative activities to ensure all members of the community have ample opportunity to read/listen, reflect, and respond to all ideas.
- Disagreements are part of learning and growing, but we will always treat one another with dignity and respect. If you sense a negative emotion surfacing within yourself, step away for a while; reflect on what is happening; then return and respond by focusing on the issue, not the person.

Is there anything else you would like to add to any one of these lists? If so, you will have the opportunity to add your suggestions during the first week of school.

What will you need for this class?

- The textbook for this class is _____.
 - This book is completely FREE to you and you can get it _____. You can view this online, download a pdf copy and/or order a print copy, whichever format is most helpful for you.
 - You can purchase this book in the campus bookstore, but it is available online for less money. This book may also be available through our Textbooks 'n Technology program, or you may be able to check this book out from the library.
- We'll be using _____ almost every day during class. You can check this out for free from the library's Textbooks 'n Technology program.
- We will be using Canvas for this course, so you will need access to a computer and internet. Canvas is also mobile-friendly and can be used on your phone or tablet through the [Canvas Mobile App](#) or a mobile browser!

What assignments will you do in this class?

[Describe the types of assignments in your class. Be clear while aiming for a supportive tone.]

How will you be graded?

I want to make sure you know how you're doing in this class, so I'll be updating grades regularly in Canvas.

[Again, this needs to be tailored to your class. Here are some things to consider:

- *Give grading scale.*
- *Be clear as to whether grades are straight percentage based or on the curve.*
- *Be clear about whether you are accepting late assignments.*

Below is some example language around late work.]

- Due dates are set to help you manage your time. Keeping to the suggested timeline will help you earn 100% of your desired grade.
- If you need extra time to complete your assignment, please contact me.

- Late work is eligible for __% of original points.

Attendance

[Example language for synchronous]

During class, we'll be working together to [learn and practice math.] You are all very busy people, and I do everything I can to make our time together an active learning experience for you.

According to the West Valley Catalog, instructors may drop any student who does not attend the first class or who has missed more than ten percent of the total class hours for the semester.

This semester is a little bit weird, so I will be flexible, but participation is important to learning the subject matter. Specifically, if you're not in class regularly and not passing the class with a C or better, I'll talk to you about dropping the class because this might not be the best semester for you to take it.

[Example language for asynchronous]

I look forward to you participating in this course. Attendance in this course means interacting through discussions and submitting your assignments for feedback.

Course information

Catalog Description: *[Use current Catalog description.]*

Objectives: *[Use course objectives from Course Outline of Record.]*

Student Learning Outcomes: *[Syllabi must list the student learning outcomes (SLOs) as they are listed on the course outline of record (COR).]*

Important dates

Last day to ADD this class: [date, as it applies to this class]. I'll give you an add code. Please add this class the same day I give you the add code so that you will be able to see our Canvas page.

Last day to DROP this class without a "W" and with a refund: [date, as it applies to this class]. You will get a full refund if you drop this class before this date, and the class won't show up on your transcript.

Last day to DROP this class with a "W:" [date, as it applies to this class]. Please talk to me before you decide to drop this class so that we can discuss your progress and whether it is a good idea to drop the class. If you drop this class after _____ and before _____, you will get a "W" on your transcript, which stands for withdrawal. Typically, transfer universities don't count a "W" in your transfer GPA.

FINAL for this class: [final exam date, location, and time]. The final will give us a chance to review and apply the key ideas from this course.

Religious holidays

I realize there are a variety of religious celebrations that you observe. Please inform me within the first week of each semester about such holidays so we can work out an accommodation.

Student help and support

West Valley College has many [Student Services](#) that are here to support your success and help you achieve your goals.

Academic counseling

West Valley College wants you to succeed! If you have not made an educational plan with a counselor or if you have other questions about your academic pathway, make an appointment with a counselor right away to explore your academic future. Find more information about the counseling services available, including online appointment booking by going to [Counseling Services](#). You can also see an embedded counselor, special program counselor, or a learning community counselor.

Textbooks 'n' technology

The college Library has textbooks for many courses available to loan out for the term as well as laptops, Surface Gos, hot spots and graphing calculators. Go to the library's [Textbooks 'n' Technology page](#) to find out which courses have books available for loan this term and complete the forms to check out technology.

Accommodations for a disability

West Valley College is here to support you, and we want to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you think you may run into academic barriers because of your disability, such as a learning disability, ADHD, mental health, or chronic or temporary medical condition, please let me know so we can privately discuss your options. Registration with the Disability and Educational Support Program (DESP) is also highly recommended. West Valley College's DESP program is known for going the extra mile to support students, and they will work with you to establish reasonable accommodations to further your success. Find out more about their services by going to [Disability and Educational Support Program \(DESP\)](#).

Health services

West Valley College Health Services is here to help you with a range of services and resources. In addition to clinical assessment and intervention, other services available include mental health support, personal counseling, and specialty support for issues like alcohol and substance use disorder and sexual assault. Many services are covered by enrollment fees and are free of charge to students. For a comprehensive list, go to [Health Services](#).

Learning support

Are you having difficulty with your classes? Do you feel shy or uneasy about asking questions in class or even when attending student hours for extra help? Or has life just gotten in the way, due to trouble managing home duties with school responsibilities? We are here to help! **West Valley College's Success Center** offers FREE tutoring, no matter what your challenges are! Visit the

[Success Center](#) website for more information about tutoring support available to you both in-person and online.

Student needs

- Food: If you need help affording food while attending West Valley College, you are not alone, and West Valley College can help. A mobile food pantry provides free food on campus weekly.
- Housing: West Valley has resources to help you deal with housing instability or homelessness. West Valley also has on-campus showers Monday -Thursday.
- Finances: If you are having difficulty paying for your classes, there is help.

See [Student Needs](#) for information about the services listed above and more.

Honesty is the foundation of academic work

Occasionally, you may feel overwhelmed by the amount of work you need to accomplish. If you cheat, you may get a warning, receive no credit for the assignment or be referred to the Vice President of Student Services for disciplinary action. You would also be de-valuing your resulting degree or certificate when you enter the workforce or transfer and cannot meet the expectations that your degree or certification requires.

Here are some examples of what you should and should not do:

What not to do

- Pay someone to take a test or quiz for you. Recent reports show that people who sell papers or take exams for pay by students may end up "blackmailing" those students in a variety of situations. For example, if the student defaults on the agreed amount of compensation, does not purchase additional services, etc., these people have been known to notify the college of the misbehavior of students caught in this kind of trap.
- Use applications like Photomath to find answers on tests or quizzes. If I suspect that your work is copied from an application, I'll set up a meeting with you and ask you to do a similar problem with me.
- Copy answers or work from another student.
- Ask another student to do your work for you.

What to do

- Trust the value of your own intellect.
- Demonstrate your own achievement and abilities.
- Ask for help from me, or for more time if you need it!

West Valley College nondiscrimination statement

The District, and each individual who represents the District, shall provide access to its services, classes and programs without regard to national origin, religion, age, sex or gender, race, color, medical condition, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, or because he/she is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Emergency information

Be prepared! Please review the college's Emergency Preparedness information. We recommend:

- Downloading the [WVC Go App](#)
- Putting WVC emergency numbers into your phone (also available at the above website)
- Registering for [WVM Alert](#)
- In an emergency, we evacuate to _____.

Schedule

[This section is optional. Some faculty include it in their syllabi and some don't. This section will be unique to the class you teach. If you format your schedule as a table, see [instructions and accessibility formatting tips](#) linked on page 1 of this document for instructions on creating accessible tables.]