First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template

The following pages contain a template for what a remote learning syllabus can look like. While you will have your own way of creating a syllabus, there are several differences between face-to-face and remote instruction that influence syllabus design. The syllabus template below, provides the tools to frame your Course Map (remote navigation) and offers specific language you can easily use and/or modify for various components of your class. Feel free to cut and paste or modify the components that are relevant to your seminar.

Note: This remote teaching template is based on informed practices as identified in partnership with the UC Davis Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE).
Course Title
Department, Course Number, and Section(s)
Class Live Zoom Time(s) and Days (if live and on Zoom)
Quarter

Contact Information
Instructor(s) name(s) and preferred pronouns (e.g., she/her/hers)
Preferred contact information (email address, forwarded office phone number)
Office hours

First-Year Seminars: Summary (pick one type)

- Our Classic seminar provides students with a small course experience that fosters sustained faculty-student and peer-peer interactions, while engaging topics of intellectual and social significance. UC Davis, First-Year Seminars (FYS), and I care about your college transition and actively seek to support your academic journey and the cultural and/or community assets you bring to succeed in college and beyond.

- Our CURE (Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience) seminar provides students with an introductory research opportunity where they can hone their research skills, receive valuable mentoring, and contribute to the research of UC Davis scientists and scholars. By integrating research into a course-setting, instructors seek to guide and support your contributions to research and scholarship through hands-on exposure as you embark on your academic journey.

- Our First-Generation seminar provides an opportunity for students who may be the first in their family to attend college—neither parent or guardian has attained a four-year degree—to form meaningful connections with a first-generation faculty member and peers in a shared academic community. UC Davis, First-Year Seminars (FYS), and I care about your college transition and actively seek to support your academic journey and the cultural and/or community assets you bring to succeed in college and beyond.

- Our Global Learning seminar recognizes that we live in a highly interdependent world where many challenges and opportunities have global interconnections. It provides opportunities to increase your awareness of global systems, build your understanding of global diversity, and practice skills to take global/local action. UC Davis, First-Year Seminars (FYS), and I care about your college transition and actively seek to support your academic journey in a small classroom environment that supports your path to intercultural engagement and global community.

Course Description

- Provide a course description consistent with the proposal that was submitted and approved by the program. Include in your description a mention of the fact that the course will be online. You may also want to introduce some of the activities students will engage in class (e.g., major projects or activities; peer and faculty interactions, watching/attending synchronous lectures, attending virtual office hours).
First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template

- You may also provide more detailed information about the course that will help students feel “invited” into the learning experience. You might answer the following questions: How will taking the course prepare students for future learning and/or professional work? How will the learning they will engage in during this course connect to their lives outside of the course? How will the course prepare students to be an engaged citizens of the world and their local communities?

**Course Outcomes**

- List the student-centered course goals or educational outcomes you submitted with your seminar proposal. Outcomes generally answer: What a student should learn or be able to do as a result of participating successfully in your course? Identify modes of thinking and transferrable skills when possible. The best constructed goals are specific, measurable, and attainable.

**Course Components/Course Map**

- **Course geography.** Explain the remote geography of the course. Will the course have live (synchronous) and/or asynchronous activities? Which course activities will take place on Canvas? Which portions of Canvas will the students interact with (e.g., Announcements, Assignments, Modules)? Which course activities will take place on Zoom?

- **Course Map.** The Course Map is the general sequence of activities students should follow each week. For example, if you want students to watch a video or complete assigned readings on Tuesdays prior to a live class meeting on Wednesdays, and then post to the discussion board only after Wednesday’s class, you should state this explicitly in your syllabus. The less this sequence varies from week to week, the more time students can spend on absorbing course content, rather than learning a new process from week-to-week. (See the “Course Map” sample near the end of this document.)

- **Technology needs.** Explain any software or other technology-related items that students will need to have for your class. Include information about where students can get it, the cost, and possible alternatives that may be less expensive, free or more accessible. Consider including links to information that can help students with understanding what the software is/does, and understanding the process of obtaining/downloading it, as applicable.

- **Communicating with the professor.** Explain your communication process. Let students know how often they can expect to hear from you with information about the course (e.g., daily, weekly, etc.) and through what channels (e.g., Canvas Announcements, Canvas Discussions, Canvas Inbox, email, etc.). Inform students how quickly you will respond to their emails or other communications (e.g., 24-, 36-hours) to reduce repeat emails. Make this timeline realistic for your workload, yet responsive to student needs.

- **Communication in this class.** Explain student norms for participation in live Zoom sessions and all course communications. These may include using respectful language and preferred names and pronouns, Zoom-specific practices such as staying muted during meetings, raising your hand to speak, and using the chat function to ask questions, etc.
Instructions for unanticipated connection problems. Provide students a communication plan for unanticipated events, such as internet outages or what to do if students can’t connect to Zoom. For example, tell students that if their internet goes out during a Zoom session, they should look in Canvas Announcements for information about how to proceed. Or if their internet continues to drop during a Zoom session, do you want them to inform you? Should they keep trying to connect for the entire class period, or for 10 minutes and then email you? Give your students guidelines for likely scenarios.

Texts, Materials, and Supplies

- Provide required and non-required texts including: title, author, ISBN #, edition, and where each text can be purchased, borrowed from, or found (e.g., Canvas course page).
- List all required materials or equipment (e.g., lab notebooks, specific calculators, safety equipment, supplies) and where to find these items. Some students may not have access to all of these materials or know where to obtain them. Where possible, direct students to sites or other locations where these can be obtained.
- Include if you will be purchasing and mailing students any materials (e.g., paint, notebooks, etc.). State if you either need their mailing address to ship the item(s) or have a specific or unique distribution system.
- Include information about any required remote class events that have an additional cost or that will occur outside of regular class time (e.g., free or paid film presentation, online field trip).

If free or reduced-cost options for the above items exist, please share that information with the students. Encourage students to speak with you if they experience logistical challenges in obtaining materials or participating in required experiences.

* Remember, First-Year Seminars make available, direct course support funds to cover course expenses, up to a maximum of $500 for each seminar offering. Be sure to include this in your proposal if relevant *

Grading/Assessment

- Grading approach. Provide a statement of your grading approach or philosophy that explains why you grade the way you do and offers some detail about how you will assess student work. During the period of remote instruction, you may wish to change your grading structure to a series of low-stakes alternative assessments. You can find information about alternative assessments at the UC Davis Keep Teaching website.

- Assignments and grading. Provide a grading scale (e.g., letter or pass/no pass) and a breakdown of how much each individual assignment or group of assignments is worth in terms of the overall grade. Example:

Grades for this course will be determined through a number of assignments. I recognize that different kinds of assignments feed into the strengths of different students, and I work to provide a range of opportunities for you to show what you’ve learned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Letter Grade Breakdown:</th>
<th>Grading Scale:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>___% of final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>___% of final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>___% of final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper/Project</td>
<td>___% of final grade</td>
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<td>100-90</td>
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<td>89-80</td>
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<td>79-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>59-Below</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Pass/No Pass Grade Breakdown:</th>
<th>Grading Scale:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>100-70 Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>69-Below No Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper/Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Late Policy.** Indicate your policy on late work, missed exams, etc.

- **Academic Integrity.** Provide a statement on academic integrity, including when and what type of collaboration is permitted. Example:

  > I value each student's ability to learn and expect each individual to do their own classwork and collaborate in ways that are outlined in the assignment instructions for our course. I encourage you to review and adhere to the [UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct](https://ucdavis.edu/about/code-of-academic-conduct/) regarding academic integrity. Any violation (e.g., plagiarism, academic misconduct, etc.) may receive a “0” on that assignment or exam. Depending on the severity of the lapse, a report may be sent to the Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs. If you have questions about what constitutes an infraction, please e-mail me and I can provide further guidelines. I want you to have a successful academic experience.

The [UC Davis Keep Teaching](https://ucdavis.edu/keep-teaching) website contains suggestions for assessments that promote academic integrity.

**Student Coursework and Assignments**

- Describe each graded component in enough detail that students reading will have a general understanding of the type and amount of work required. Include information about the assignment's purpose and a general overview. Provide the full assignment prompt in a separate document rather than within the syllabus to avoid syllabus overload. For example:

  > **Final project:** Submit your topic idea by week 7 for instructor feedback. Once approved, the final project will allow you to demonstrate your learning--integrating course readings, research, and other relevant material--and propose informed solutions that an experts in the field might recommend in a 5- to 7-page paper. A rubric will be provided.

Describe what students will be required to do to prepare for class and/or complete weekly homework. Include information here about “best practices” for maximizing their learning (e.g., attending study sessions, taking good notes). You may want to include a link to [UC Davis Keep Teaching Student Resources](https://ucdavis.edu/keep-teaching/student-resources) website to provide students with some guidance on how to approach remote learning during the quarter.

- Explain to students how they will submit assignments in the remote environment (e.g., Canvas Assignments, e-mail). It is helpful to illustrate how to fill out the subject line and/or file name to aid in the management of student assignments (e.g., Lastname_FirstName_AssignmentName).
First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template

Attendance and Participation

• **Attendance.** Describe your attendance policy. Will students be required to attend live sessions? If so, what will count as attendance in those sessions? Will it be okay for students to do most or a portion of the class asynchronously? Will you be taking video views into account as part of your attendance policy? (You may want to think about the time zones students are located in, as well as whether they will have access to internet bandwidth required for live sessions. A pre-course survey can help with this. You may also want to check knowyourstudents.ucdavis.org for results of the Summer 2020 Technology Access Survey for aggregate information about student access to technology.)

• **Participation.** Describe the function of classroom participation within the course as well as your expectations for how students should participate. (Note: This should be in alignment with your discussion about communication in the Course Components/Course Map section of your syllabus.) Explain whether participation is required and how it will be assessed. Example:

  *Be explicit about how you want students to interact online. Will you expect them to interact in Breakout Rooms on Zoom? Will you want them to post on the Discussion Board? Will they need to interact with group members outside of class independently? If so, mention some tools they may want to use (e.g., Zoom, Slack, Facetime, Google Hangouts). For example:*

  *Discussion and participation are an important part of this remote course. You will learn better and more effectively if you come to class ready and willing to take part in group knowledge building. Your participation grade for this class will be based upon the small group work I ask you to do during live Zoom sessions (as evidenced by work on a Google Doc that is assigned to each group), and your participation on the Canvas Discussion Board. I will provide you with a provisional participation grade at three checkpoints during the quarter.*

Classroom Climate

• **Course agreements.** Consider including course agreements for appropriate classroom interactions, as well as a clear statement of expectations that classroom interactions will remain civil, respectful, and supportive. You may also want to invite, but not require, students to turn on their cameras during live sessions to build trust in the classroom and enhance student learning. You may also want to invite students who may feel uncomfortable using a camera to contact you to find other accommodations (e.g., using a photo). This will also give you an opportunity to learn more about your students’ access to technology.

• **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement.** Include a diversity, equity and inclusion statement in your syllabus to communicate your approach to creating an equitable and supportive environment in your classroom. You might include information about your views of diversity as an asset for learning, steps you will take to ensure that every student has a voice, and a discussion of how the contributions of diverse scholars have enriched your discipline. For example:

  *I understand that our students represent a rich variety of backgrounds and believe that diversity enhances our learning experience. I am committed to creating an inclusive classroom*
environment that supports diversity of thought, perspectives, and lived experiences, and honors your identities (e.g., ability, class, gender, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation).

To achieve this, please let me know if: (1) you have a name and/or preferred set of pronouns that differ from your university records; (2) you have already established accommodations with Student Disability Center, communicate the approved modification at your earliest convenience to discuss your needs in this course; (3) I (or anyone) said something in class that made you feel uncomfortable (private or anonymous) as we grow and learn together; and (4) your academic performance in class is being impacted by your out-of-class experiences or speak to someone outside if the course such as the department chair or an academic advisor.

University-Wide Policies and Information

- The instructor and/or department may decide which university-wide policies to include on the syllabus. Examples of some types of university-wide policies that may be included on syllabi are given below. Customize using your university’s policies.

COVID-19

Let students know you care about their health. Provide information about where students can get more information about UC Davis’ COVID-19 response, including official campus communication for updates: UC Davis News Page, UC COVID-19 Page, and Campus Operating Status.

Resources for Students

The syllabus can be a place for students to find support for academic and non-academic challenges that can impact their learning. Some of the resources for students that can be highlighted in the syllabus include those listed below.

UC Davis Campus Diversity Resources

Include a section on support resources on campus that students can access remotely and in-person when campus is open. For example:

UC Davis reflects and is committed to serving the needs of a global society comprising all people and a multiplicity of identities. This commitment is embodied in the UC Davis Principles of Community. As your instructor, I am also committed to celebrating and nurturing the diversity and strengths of all members of our class, and of our class as a whole. The following is a list of many of the centers and departments across campus that support students as part of UC Davis’ commitment to diversity.

- AB540 & Undocumented Student Center
- Center for African Diaspora Student Success
- Center for Chicano and Latinx Academic Student Success
- Native American Academic Student Success Center
- Cross Cultural Center
First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template

- LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual) Resource Center
- Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian Student Resources
- Student Recruitment and Retention Center
- Women’s Resources and Research Center
- Aggie Compass Basic Needs Center
- Community Advising Network
- Office of Educational Opportunity & Enrichment Services
- Harassment & Discrimination Assistance and Prevention

Consult the UC Davis Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coronavirus Resources and the CEE student support Just-in-Time Teaching resource for references to other groups that support students on campus.

Preferred Names and Gender Inclusive Pronouns

In order to affirm each person’s gender identity and lived experiences, it is important that we ask and check in with others about preferred names and pronouns. This simple effort can make a profound difference in a person’s experience of safety, respect, and support. I encourage you to post your pronouns in Zoom and use the pronouns that others have identified as their preferred pronouns. See: [https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/name-and-gender-changes-ucd](https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/name-and-gender-changes-ucd) and [https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/guide-pronouns-allies](https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/guide-pronouns-allies).

Disability Resources

UC Davis and I strive to make the academic experience accessible and inclusive for all students. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the UC Davis Student Disability Center (SDC) at 530.752.3184 or via e-mail at sdc@ucdavis.edu. You can also visit the SDC website for information about requesting academic accommodations. Located in 54 Cowell.

Academic Assistance and Tutoring Centers – Writing

If you have questions about writing or would like to meet with a writing tutor, the UC Davis Academic Assistance and Tutoring Centers (AATC) offers online tutoring. Writing tutors and specialists can assist by providing feedback on the strength of an argument, clarity, and organization. You can contact them at 530.752.2013, Zoom at [http://zoom.us/j/5307522013](http://zoom.us/j/5307522013), or visit the AATC website to make an appointment. Main Office in 2205 Dutton Hall.

Student Health and Counseling Services

UC Davis Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) provides a wide variety of medical, mental health and wellness services to all registered UC Davis students regardless of insurance coverage. Most services are provided through scheduled appointments; however, acute care (services without appointments) for acute medical and mental health needs are also available. Visit the SHCS website for more information and locations.

The Pantry

The goal of the Pantry is to fight food insecurity, promote health, fresh food, and ensure that all students have access to food and basic necessities. The Pantry is a free resource for all students at UC Davis. You can contact them at 530.752.2612, thepantry@asucd.ucdavis.edu, or visit the Pantry website for more details. Located in Memorial Union.
COURSE MAP

Ko & Rossen (2017) discuss the necessity of providing students with a “map” with which to navigate their courses in a remote environment. The course map below is an example of a way to organize your class so that students know exactly what they need to do and in what sequence, which is important for student success as they shift to remote learning. For this section, you may want to complete this template using your first content module and include it in your syllabus. It is a best practice to go over this with students verbally during the first class if you are teaching live so that they can ask questions and so that it establishes in their minds a clear process for navigating the course. If you are teaching asynchronously, you might consider making a video in which you go over the syllabus in some detail. Directions for the instructor about how to write up a course map are italicized in the template below. This is a course map for a 1-day per week class, which can be modified to meet your instructional frequency.

WEEK 1 COURSE MAP

This document provides you (the student) with an overview of a module for this course using our first week of content. A module is a topical unit for our course. You will work through one module (every week/every two weeks). As you work through the module, please follow the sequence given below, which is the same as that given on our Canvas course. This is your “roadmap” for the class so that you have a clear sense of the purpose and sequence for this module’s tasks. It also provides specific instructions for any required submissions.

Module 1 Learning Outcomes

In this module, you will learn to:

1. Instructor fills these in with the learning outcomes for the module
2. 
3. 

First Class Session, Date

Prepare | Pre-Class (after week one)

Instructions: Instructor fills this sections in with a numbered list of directions for the “Prepare” section. Start with a sentence or two explaining to students the purpose and why this will help them with their learning. Include any tasks you want them to complete in this sections (e.g., complete the study guide, summarize/respond to the reading) and instructions when students will submit any materials and how (e.g., Canvas, email).

Materials:

1. Study Guide for Reading 1
2. Reading 1 (to prepare for Lecture Video 1)

Learn | Lecture

Instructions: Instructor fills this sections in with a numbered list of directions for the “Learn” section. Start with a sentence or two explaining to students the purpose and why this will help them with their learning. Include any
First-Year Seminars: Remote Syllabus Template

tasks you want them to complete in this sections (e.g., take notes, breakout groups) and instructions when students will submit/report out any materials and how (e.g., Canvas, message board, virtual discussion).

Materials:

3. Lecture Video/Zoom Session 1
4. Homework/Activity 1 (based on Lecture Video 1)

Apply | Homework

Instructions: Instructor fills this sections in with a numbered list of directions for the “Apply” section. Start with a sentence or two explaining to students the purpose and why this will help them with their learning. Include any tasks you want them to complete in this sections (e.g., reflection paper, summarize/respond to the reading) and instructions when students will submit any materials and how (e.g., Canvas, email).

Materials:

1. Homework/Activity 2 (extending or applying knowledge)
2. Homework/Activity 3 (extending or applying knowledge)

Additional Resources

Instructions: Instructor fills this sections in with a numbered list of directions for the “Additional Resources” section. Start with a sentence or two explaining to students the purpose and why the materials will help them with their learning. Include any items you would like students to pay particular attention to. You may want to briefly annotate each resource with background information of details explaining its relevance to the course.

*Space for additional/optional readings, handouts, etc. Do not put resources here if you want students to use them in a particular sequence. If they are part of your instructional sequence, build them into the main content area of your Canvas Module, but keep in mind that the workload should be manageable for students to complete.*

*The instructor may want to end the instructions for the module noting any special circumstances that apply, a summary of or dates connected to the module, a preview of next week’s topic, a restatement of virtual office hours, or note of encouragement for students. Sign off with your name and photo to increase instructor presence.*

WEEK 2 COURSE MAP

Second Class Session, Date

Review

Instructions: Instructor fills this sections in with a numbered list of directions for the “Review” section. Start with a sentence or two explaining to students the purpose and why this will help them with their learning. If time...
permits, have instructions for a specific, low-barrier task (e.g., write a questions you have about last week’s lecture and be prepared to ask it during the Zoom lecture). This low-barrier exercise is optional.

1. Bulleted summary of last class session
2. Short statement of how the last class session relates to this class session

Repeat the Prepare, Learn, Apply, and Additional Resources sequence...

Course Schedule

[This course schedule provides an overview of the course that is more broad than that included in the Course Map. Include dates you plan to cover specific topics (with reading assignments), the due dates for major assignments, and the due date for the final exam or final project. Consult relevant academic calendars and keep in mind religious holidays and significant campus events.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics/Assigned Readings/Homework</th>
<th>Major Assignments and Deadlines</th>
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Adapted from Washington University in St. Louis (n.d.). Constructing a Syllabus.  
https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/course-design/constructing-a-syllabus/

References


Pasadena City College (n.d.)  http://online.pasadena.edu/faculty/files/2012/02/Online-Syllabus-Example-CANVAS-New-Login.pdf

Washington University in St. Louis (n.d.). Constructing a Syllabus.  
https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/course-design/constructing-a-syllabus/