

Policy on Collection of Course Syllabi

Departments and programs in the College of Arts and Sciences will collect course syllabi for every section of each course on a semester basis and retain these on file for a period of at least five years.

*Approved: A&S Executive Committee
February 10, 2017*

Rationale

As an institution that awards credit and receives federal funds, CWRU must be able to document its course expectations, credits assigned to various courses, etc. A record of syllabi is important for such purposes.

The Higher Learning Commission, the university's regional accreditation agency, expects CWRU to ensure the quality and integrity of our academic programs. Syllabi seem critical to faculty consideration of this expectation.

CWRU is expected to be able to produce a syllabus for any course during the reaffirmation of accreditation. Given the number of courses offered every other year or less frequently and the value of timely and efficient provision of such materials, regular collection and maintenance of syllabi is necessary.

Students who transfer often need to document their coursework with a syllabus to receive course credit at their new school. Students may not have retained these materials and sometimes the CWRU faculty member is no longer here to provide these materials from the semester the student took the course.

A coherent curriculum should be more than individual courses taught by individual faculty. Departments should know in detail what is being taught, e.g., what is expected to have been covered in a course in preparation for other courses, and beyond content, what methods and skills are being practiced. Many course descriptions (such as those that appear in the General Bulletin) are not sufficiently detailed to provide such information.

At least 16 of the A&S departments now collect the syllabi on a semester basis. Furthermore, learning outcomes and assessment plans typically are developed and implemented at the departmental level, thus departmental collection and maintenance of such material would be appropriate.