

# Proposed Changes to the YSU Common Syllabus

## What does it mean to have a “learner-centered” syllabus?

It is not so much a difference in what you include in your syllabus, but an intentional choice to use language and format to help students understand how to succeed in your course and what your expectations for learning are. Reframe thinking of your syllabus as a reference document towards a tool that helps guide students’ learning.

## Why should I use the common syllabus template?

**The use of the common syllabus is not required.** The template is meant to be useful to you, and supportive of your students. Many faculty did not receive training during their graduate programs on how to construct a syllabus. These templates serve as a support to you and provide guidance on essential elements of a learner-centered syllabus

## Why are there multiple versions of the template?

The Senate Teaching and Learning Committee sought to be receptive to the varying needs of faculty, and thus developed a full template, as well as a pared down version that only includes required syllabus elements. In order to be responsive to the differing needs of faculty, there is step-by-step language for utilizing the ADA-compliant templates, along with two versions of the template, one with [recommended language](#) and another with only [required language](#). Additionally, the committee is collaborating with Cyberlearning to also develop an optional Blackboard version of the template.

## Where can I download the proposed YSU Common Syllabus?

The following website, which includes downloadable templates, has been co-created by members of the YSU Academic Senate Teaching & Learning Committee: <https://ysu.edu/institute-teaching-and-learning/ysu-common-syllabus>. The website and revised common syllabus templates were designed with both faculty and students in mind. For students, the syllabus template includes learner-centered language and points students towards information and resources that will support their academic success. For faculty, the syllabus template is ADA-compliant and will hopefully be a single source of information for syllabus creation.

## Where can I see the templates?

The YSU Common Syllabus will be owned and approved by the YSU Academic Senate. In partnership with the YSU Academic Senate, the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL), will be responsible for making any Senate approved changes and maintaining the accuracy of web links and information from semester to semester. ITL has committed to checking the YSU Common Syllabus website for necessary updates at minimum 2 months before the start of the next semester. This includes the [policy](#) and [resources](#) pages, which can be linked to in the syllabus template.

*This document is currently in draft form, and we welcome any feedback, critique, or comments you may have to the website and templates. Please email Cary Wecht, Chair of the YSU Academic Senate Teaching & Learning Committee at [CLWecht01@ysu.edu](mailto:CLWecht01@ysu.edu) with your thoughts.*