Checklist for a Learner-Centered Syllabus

As you finalize your course syllabus, consider if you have included elements below that contribute to a learner-centered syllabus. Including elements of a learner-centered syllabus increases faculty-student rapport, retention, and student perception of effective teaching (Richmond, 2016). While not all of these elements may be appropriate for your course format and focus, increasing use of these elements will have a positive impact.

Community

☐ You are available for multiple office hours, and by multiple means of access, including phone(s), e-mail, Blackboard, etc.

☐ You hold open hours in locations other than office (e.g., library or student union).

☐ You provide rationales for assignments, activities, methods, policies, and procedures that are tied to learning outcomes.

☐ Collaboration is required through group work in class, team projects, or encouraging your students to learn from one another in other ways.

Power and Control

☐ You encourage students to participate in developing policies and procedures for class and to provide input on grading, due dates, and assignments.

☐ Students are expected to provide outside resource information for class.

☐ Your syllabus is weighted toward student learning outcomes and means of assessment.

Evaluation and Assessment

☐ Your grades are tied to learning outcomes.

☐ You provide opportunities to achieve extra points.

☐ Not all work done in the course is graded.

☐ Your syllabus provides clear and complete information about course grading/assessment.

☐ You employ periodic feedback mechanisms to monitor learning (e.g., graded and non-graded quizzes, tests, lecture-response systems, tests, reflection papers).

☐ You have both summative and formative evaluations (e.g., oral presentations, group work, self-evaluation, peer evaluation).

☐ You allow students to revise and redo their assignments.