Resolution on Superseding the Existing Policy on Content of Syllabi

#06-07/08-EP – February 26, 2008

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Humboldt State University recommends to the President that the attached HSU Policy on Content of Syllabi replace the policy currently in the *HSU Faculty Handbook,* Section 336 (created in the Academic Senate "Resolution on Course Requirement Information" (#4, 11/16/82), passed December 7, 1982):

> ### 336 COURSE REQUIREMENT INFORMATION – COURSE SYLLABI
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> *Faculty are encouraged to provide course requirement information to all students enrolled in their classes no later than the end of the first week of classes including, but not limited to: course goals and requirements; instructor grading policy; attendance requirements; policy on due dates and make-up work; required texts and other materials; instructor availability outside of class, including office hours and the office telephone number; and the instructor drop policy. Any changes in course requirements are to be communicated to students in an expedient and timely manner (per Academic Senate Resolution AS-1061,79, approved May 10, 1979.) Additionally, for general education courses, the syllabus is to include the general education objectives appropriate for that course (per Academic Senate Resolution #22-01/02-EP, approved October 31, 2002.)*

; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Humboldt State University recommends that the revised Policy on Content of Syllabi be implemented effective Fall of 2008; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Humboldt State University recommends that this policy shall be added to the faculty handbook and also distributed to every HSU faculty member during the Spring of 2008; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate recommends that self-instructional training materials on creating and posting accessible documents shall be made available as soon as possible, and that these materials should be supplemented by further training as funding permits; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Humboldt State University recommends that appropriate staff and budgetary resources be allocated to ensure the success of the faculty training and support program.

Rationale: The new Policy on Content of Syllabi is intended to assist all students in obtaining the information needed to succeed in their courses. The policy embodies the best practices of Universal Design for Learning, WASC guidelines for educational effectiveness, and accessible content as mandated by the Accessible Technology Initiative (see CSU Coded Memo AA-2007-04).

PASSED – February 26, 2008

HSU Policy on Content of Syllabi
Effective Fall Semester 2008

A syllabus helps enable students to better understand and fulfill their responsibilities as learners in a course. It is a necessary tool in higher education to enable students to take part in the learning process through knowing what is expected of them and what they can expect from the course. Student success may be enhanced when students know in advance as much as possible about the course requirements so that they can plan their study time and coordinate work on assignments from multiple courses. In addition, student success may be aided by encouraging students to contact their professors, by providing information about key University policies to which they are subject, and by presenting information in a format that is accessible to all students.

A. General Syllabus procedures

1. Each member of the faculty at Humboldt State University shall provide a syllabus to each student in every course with a C-classification. This syllabus must be available to students no later than the first class meeting. Faculty are encouraged to post syllabi online in a format that is accessible to individuals with disabilities; as of Fall of 2012, all faculty will be required to provide all syllabi and other class materials in a format that is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Assistance in learning how to create accessible documents is available through the Accessible Technology Initiative website.

2. The faculty member shall provide an electronic and/or hard copy of the syllabus to the department office for department files.

3. The syllabus is an agreement to provide certain classroom experiences to students. While it may be changed as the semester develops, any changes must be communicated to the students appropriately in advance, preferably in writing. Changes to the syllabus are not allowed after the semester ends.

4. Course syllabi for courses listed for both undergraduate and graduate credit must be different. The general expectation is that a student receiving graduate credit should be required to perform at a higher level than an undergraduate student. As such, the graduate syllabi should reflect specific learning outcomes appropriate for graduate level students.

5. Information about these requirements shall be incorporated into new faculty orientation and added to the faculty, administrative, and Department Chair handbooks. Informing faculty of this policy will be a responsibility of department chairs; the Office of Academic Affairs will remind Deans and Department chairs of this policy before the start of each semester.

6. All new course/curricular proposals and program reviews shall explicitly discuss the accessibility of syllabi for individuals with disabilities. As part of the program review process, all departments and programs will be required to provide evidence of the department's compliance with this policy. Information about the Syllabus policies will be appended to all Program Review policies.

B. Each syllabus shall include, at a minimum, the following items.

1) Basic information:
- Course title, number, and section; days and times taught, location of class
- Semester and year course is being taught
- Professor's name, office number and location
- Professor's contact information: including office phone and email address
- Identification of any University Curricular Requirement (Institutions, DCG, Specific Area of GE, etc.) that the course fulfills

2) Office hours and days
- Include a statement if additional time is available by appointment.
- If the professor's schedule contains too many TBA activities to make scheduling office hours possible prior to the first class meeting, this section of the syllabus should have a blank space to be filled in by students.
- Professors will announce their office hours to the class as soon as regular times are established.

3) Course or section information
- Description of the course from the University Catalog augmented by section-specific description.
- Description of the format of the course – lecture, lab, activity, discussion, etc.
- Pre- and co-requisites
- If relevant, the minimum grade needed for this course to count towards the major
- Required and recommended texts, readers, or other reading materials
- Any other necessary equipment/materials/fees

4) Student learning outcomes for the course
- Include, as appropriate, GE area Objectives and student learning outcomes, Departmental and University student learning outcomes.

5) Course requirements
- Papers, projects, exams, quizzes, homework, laboratory work, fieldwork, fieldtrips, class participation, etc.
- Statement about the expected time that students will need to spend studying/doing coursework outside of class.

6) Course calendar
- Include assignment due dates, exam dates, and date of final exam.

7) Grading information
- A statement of how you will determine the letter grades for the course, including +/- grades if you use them.
- Extra credit options, if available
- List of the percentage weight assigned to various class assignments
- Policies on late or missed work, including exams
- Policies on attendance, tardiness, and class participation, including an explicit statement of terms and/or penalties which pertain to student participation in co- and extracurricular activities

8) Academic Integrity Statement
Include specific information relevant to your course, as well as information about whether collaboration is allowed and in what form. (See section C.6 for suggested language.)

9) Statement about services available for students with disabilities. (See section C.6 for suggested language.)

10) Reminder that the student is responsible for knowing the University policy, procedures, and schedule for dropping or adding classes. (See section C.6 for suggested language.)

11) Mention of the evacuation plan for the classroom as noted on the orange signs posted in every classroom, and a web-site address for information on campus Emergency Procedures. (see section C.6 for suggested language.)

C. Additional Suggestions/Best Practices

For clarity and completeness of syllabi, faculty may consider adding some or all of the following elements garnered from samples of faculty syllabi from across all Colleges at HSU.

1) With regard to the course calendar (section B.6 above), faculty may want to include a "subject to change with fair notice" statement

2) With regard to grading information (section B.7 above), faculty should note that for almost all courses, multiple graded components are expected.

3) For courses that include group work, section B.7 might include information specifically about how group work will be graded.

4) A statement about circumstances and procedures leading to a grade of "Incomplete" may be included.

5) Include a section on "tips for success and classroom conduct" that might include information/commentary on:

- recommendations for study groups
- how to access to tutorial help
- classroom conduct.

6) Provide links to campus resources embedded into sections of syllabus dealing with these topics.   Suggested language with links that were effective as of Feb. 2008:

- **Students with Disabilities:** Persons who wish to request disability-related accommodations should contact the Student Disability Resource Center in House 71, 826-4678 (voice) or 826-5392 (TDD). Some accommodations may take up to several weeks to arrange. http://www.humboldt.edu/~sdrc/

- **Add/Drop policy:** Students are responsible for knowing the University policy, procedures, and schedule for dropping or adding classes. http://www.humboldt.edu/~reg/regulations/schedadjust.html

- **Emergency evacuation:** Please review the evacuation plan for the classroom (posted on the orange signs) , and review http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/emergencyops/campus_emergency_preparedness.php for information on campus Emergency Procedures. During an emergency, information can be found campus conditions at: **826-INFO** or www.humboldt.edu/emergency

- **Academic honesty:** Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding academic honesty: http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/judicial/academic_honesty.php or *http://www.humboldt.edu/~humboldt/catalogpdfs/catalog2007-08.pdf*

- **Attendance and disruptive behavior:** Students are responsible for knowing policy regarding attendance and disruptive behavior: http://studentaffairs.humboldt.edu/judicial/attendance_behavior.php

Educational Policies Committee (2/12/08)

Academic Senate (Amended, Approved 2/26/08)