

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY
University Senate

Resolution on Syllabi Policy

9-15/16-APC – December 1, 2015 - Second Reading

Resolved: That the Humboldt State University Senate recommend the HSU Policy on Content of Syllabi, (VPAA 07-02) be modified to include the attached revisions; and be it further

Resolved: That the proposed changes be effective at the start of the Fall 2016 semester.

Rationale: *The advent of on-line learning has introduced new issues that should be addressed in course syllabi. For example, violations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) may take place if instructor grading or comment of student work takes place on publicly accessible websites. There are examples of students who for safety reasons do not want their whereabouts posted on publicly searchable websites. After consultation with various committees of the Senate, the APC felt that, due to the extraordinarily public nature of internet posts, students should be allowed to use an alias if they wanted. Additionally students posting personal writings on the internet as part of a course may not have considered all of the ramifications, personal and professional of self-disclosure in a public venue. There is a need for additional guidance on these topics in the syllabus. A statement clarifying that all courses offered for academic credit toward a degree should comply with the Syllabi Policy will avoid confusion. Emergency evacuation procedures are not relevant for 100% online courses and don't need to be in the syllabi. Another change is that faculty are authorized to post syllabi information on the course web page rather than a document that is handed to students. However it was felt that it was still necessary for the faculty members to provide a document version of the syllabi to their department office, for compliance purposes, developing articulation agreements, PREP reports, and other purposes where access to the information is needed by people not enrolled in the course.*

Where appropriate, the syllabi policy has been modified from the First Reading make some syllabi elements at the discretion of the faculty rather than required. The Second Reading version also removes some of the mandated statements regarding campus policies that were not felt to be directly relevant to syllabi. Faculty are directed instead to the Syllabi Help page maintained by Academic Programs and a Frequently Asked Questions Wiki on the Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs website (expected to be in place by Fall 2016) where they may find updated links and suggested language to put in syllabi. Other requirements, such as providing information regarding course requirements, grading and emergency procedures were kept as they are central to student success and safety.