

TITLE OF THE CLASS
Professor's Name

Semester, Year – Days & Times Class Meets – Room

Syllabus – Updated August 7, 2017

General Information

A. Required or strongly recommended

1. Contact information.

Give students your LC email address (if you check or forward it) or the email address you will check for their messages. Give students a phone number where they can reach you or leave a message that will reach you. It is also helpful to indicate your time expectations for reading and responding to student calls and/or emails.

2. Materials.

If you are using a casebook, identify it. If you are using other materials, indicate what they are and how the students can access them.

3. Attendance policy.

The following language is included at the end of each course description in our curriculum (emphasis supplied):

The American Bar Association accreditation standards require students to regularly attend the courses in which they are registered. Lewis & Clark expects students to attend classes regularly and to prepare for classes conscientiously. Specific attendance requirements may vary from course to course. *Any attendance guidelines for a given class must be provided to students in a syllabus or other written document at the start of the semester.* Sanctions (e.g., required withdrawal from the course, grade adjustment, and/or a failing grade) will be imposed for poor attendance.

If you have an attendance policy other than the default set out in the first sentence of this notice, you must provide that policy in writing. The syllabus is probably the best place to do this. Note that any attendance policy you choose must still meet ADA accommodations. It is a good idea to include:

- How you will take attendance (if you plan to do so).¹

¹ Many of us pass a sign-in sheet in each class. Your Faculty Assistants will be able to keep a spreadsheet for you. If you adopt this method, you can mention in the syllabus that signing another student's name will be considered an Honor Code violation.

- How many absences you will allow, and whether you want advance notice and/or your permission for a student to have an excused absence.
- The consequences for exceeding the number of allowed absences.²

4. **Course evaluation.**

Indicate how you will evaluate students and impose a grade. If you will use a variety of evaluation measures (e.g. mid-term, final exam, class participation), indicate the weight you will give each measure.

5. **Notice to students with a disability.**

The Lewis & Clark Student Support Services Office has requested that faculty include a statement like the following on their syllabi:

Students who have a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, may seek an accommodation through the Student Support Services office (access@lclark.edu), which is located on the undergraduate campus. Students whose religious practices may impact their academic schedule, may seek accommodation through Associate Dean for Student Affairs Libby Davis (eadavis@lclark.edu). For questions regarding any type of accommodation, please contact Associate Dean Libby Davis.

6. **How you will contact them between classes.**

Most of us use LC email to send announcements, new materials, and so forth to our classes. Each class has an email list-serve for this purpose. (Note that, should you wish, our faculty legal assistant can also send emails to the class list-serve on your behalf.) If you will be contacting your students through email, consider including in your syllabus a statement similar to the following:

I will make announcements through the class list-serve, which uses your lclark email address. *Announcements may include additional reading assignments if new cases or other materials become available.*

It is your responsibility to maintain access to messages sent to your lclark address, including forwarding these to another address if necessary and making sure your Inbox has enough space to receive new messages.

² Examples of possible consequences might include reduced grades, not being allowed to take the final exam (which normally means an F in the course), or being dropped from the class.

B. **Optional** (but a good idea)

1. **Course TWEN site.**

If you are using a TWEN site, indicate whether it is password protected or not. Indicate the types of materials you will be posting on your TWEN site.

2. **Policy on accessing the Internet during class.**

Many faculty include this type of policy in the syllabus. If you choose to include an Internet use policy, be sure it is one you can reasonably enforce. The following is an example of an easily enforceable policy:

Please do not access web sites in a manner that is distracting to those around you (including those who can see your screen from behind). I will respond to complaints by (a) respecting confidentiality (i.e. not revealing who complained), and (b) asking the person engaging in distracting Internet usage to move to the last row.

3. **Study aids.**

If you know of commercial study aids that are especially helpful – or especially poor – you can indicate this in your syllabus.

4. **Learning Objectives for this Class.**

The ABA is encouraging professors to articulate learning objectives for each class, and doing so will aid the Law School in developing our required institution-wide learning objectives. The syllabus is a good place to state your learning objectives.

The primary purpose of learning objectives (sometimes also referred to as “learning outcomes”) is to inform students what they should expect to learn or be able to do by the end of the semester. For example, professors typically want students to achieve more than simply understanding the material. We want students to be able to explain and apply basic and, depending on the class, advanced concepts (which can be described generally or in specific terms), to be able to use their knowledge and understanding to solve certain kinds or problems, etc.

Learning objectives are also very helpful to professors, because they help us organize and prioritize course themes, as well as to develop evaluation tools (quizzes, exams, etc.) that are capable of assessing what we have asked students to learn or do.

If you are interested in including learning objectives and would like help doing so, please contact the Associate Dean of Faculty, John Parry (parry@lclark.edu).

C. Assignments

You do not have to give a full semester's assignments all at once. Many professors give assignments in two or more installments, once they have a sense of the rhythm of the class. That said, students grumble if they don't have at least two weeks of assignments in advance. If you cannot provide assignments well in advance—or do not wish to do so for pedagogical reasons—consider explaining the reasons for your approach in the first class of the semester.

The ABA requires students to spend roughly 3 hours per week for each credit hour earned in a course. Class time counts toward this requirement, with the result that, for each hour of class, students should expect to spend roughly 2 hours of time preparing for class. You should plan your assignments accordingly, but you do not have to keep track of how much time students are spending. Remember that the time students will spend on an assignment is likely to be significantly more than the time it would require you to do the same work.

Students appreciate having more than just dates and page numbers. You should consider including all of the following information.

- Date.
- The topic(s) each class will address.
- Pages to be read.
- Written assignments to be handed in; group work to be done before class.
- Dates of quizzes, midterms, major paper submissions.

Some faculty also provide learning objectives for each part or section of the course or for each class.