Guidelines for Syllabi
Barnard College Committee on Instruction (COI)

The creation of any new course should start with the steps outlined on the website Proposing a New Course or Changing an Existing Course; faculty should make sure to include all required elements as explained on the website before submission to the COI. It is expected that a new syllabus will be in a near-final state when it is reviewed by COI. Faculty are encouraged to use the resources of the Center for Engaged Pedagogy as they develop their syllabi.

The primary objective of the COI review of a new syllabus is to ensure that the substance and schedule of the course:

- reflect the learning objectives and the purpose of the course as stated on the syllabus.
- present a rigorous but manageable workload with attention to the number of hours per week as defined by the New York State Education Department (see Guidance on Course points below).
- include assignments that are scaffolded and pacing that is appropriate.
- include the appropriate GER designations from the Distributional Requirements and the Modes of Thinking.

The COI also verifies that all relevant information and required elements for the course are indicated clearly on the syllabus. This includes:

- dates for class sessions (as opposed to Week 1, Week 2, etc.) Please consult the Barnard Academic Calendar in preparing the schedule. Students are not expected to do readings before the first day of the semester.
- dates for all major assignments.
- page numbers for readings.
- description of assignments with sufficient detail to inform the students from the beginning of the semester what the work of the course and overall expectations will be.
- word count (as opposed to the number of pages) for writing assignments.

Below are detailed points that faculty should take into consideration before submitting a new syllabus to the COI.
Participation:

In general, participation should not be more than 15% of the total grade; if you feel higher participation is appropriate, justify this with a breakdown of how this part of the grade will be earned and assessed. Please note that attendance cannot be in itself a percentage of the grade, but it may be incorporated either into a participation grade or into the overall grade, as the instructor sees fit.

Attendance:

It is critical that faculty communicate their attendance policy to students. Please refer to the Faculty Guide to Attendance Expectations, found on the Faculty Portal in Teaching Resources for Barnard’s official attendance policy, the College’s recommendations for how to incorporate your expectations into your syllabus, and sample attendance policies. If a student is having issues with attendance, please fill out the Early Academic Report and refer them to the Dean’s Office for consultation.

Course points:

The number of points assigned to a course should correspond to the hours students will spend in class and doing work outside of class. For each point of academic credit, students are expected to complete at least three hours of work per week (assuming the course meets for the full semester); this includes time in class as well as all work outside of class. For guidance on the overall hours required by the New York State Department of Education, please see COI Guidance on Course Points. (You may also refer to the Columbia College and School of General Studies “Guidance on Course Points” at http://www.college.columbia.edu/coursepoints.)

Seminar vs. Lecture and Labs:

- Seminars
  
  o **Format:** Barnard seminars typically enroll between ~10-22 students, emphasize robust discussion during classes, and require significant work outside of class.
  
  o **Class level:** Seminars are typically at least at the 3000-level.
  
  o **Class time:** Seminars typically meet once a week for one-hour and fifty minutes. Please reference the approved class meeting times for lectures that are outlined here. For pedagogical reasons related to the nature of a particular seminar, faculty occasionally opt to meet twice a week for one-hour and fifteen minutes; in such a scenario, the faculty member should select one of the approved class meeting times for lecture classes that meet twice a week.
  
  o **Work outside of class:** It is expected that seminars will make significant weekly demands on students’ time in the form of readings, research, written work and/or other individual or group projects.
  
  o **Assessment:** Grades are typically determined via written work and seminar participation. It is recommended that major assignments (e.g., research papers,
projects, podcasts, or other capstone projects) be scaffolded via a series of graded steps (e.g., proposals, annotated bibliographies, or drafts).

- **Points**: Typically 4 points, in recognition of the extra work expected outside of class.

- **Lecture courses**

  - **Format**: Barnard lecture courses typically enroll 15 or more students, emphasize instructor presentations, and demand somewhat less work outside of class than seminars.
  
  - **Class time**: Lecture courses typically meet twice a week for one-hour and fifteen minutes. (It would be very unusual for a lecture course to only meet once a week.) Please reference the approved class meeting times for lectures that are outlined here. In some cases, particularly for courses with over 30 students, discussion sections are required, though whether this extra meeting justifies an increase in credit points varies.

  - **Work outside of class**: Most lecture courses require less outside reading and written work than seminars.

  - **Assessment**: Most lecture courses employ a combination of midterm and final exams, papers and other smaller graded assignments. Depending on the enrollment of the lecture course, a "participation" component for the final grade may be given if participation will be assessed in a way that is made clear to the students.

  - **Points**: Typically 3 points. If a mandatory discussion section is included, an extra half-point or point of credit may be added. Keep in mind, however, that the state guidelines for points of credit are for minimum time spent in and out of class, and that a discussion section does not always add sufficient work to meet the requirements of extra points of credit. Please also note that any extra points of credit would be added to the lecture course as a whole, rather than as a separate “discussion section” course.

- **Lab courses**

  Labs vary from discipline to discipline. Faculty creating new lab courses should consult with their department to discuss the format, scheduling, assignments, assessment and course points for the lab.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Each syllabus should have 3-5 learning objectives.
  - **Note**: List the most important learning objectives first and place them directly after the course description.

- Be specific and concrete: make sure you are able to clearly assess the desired learning objective or skill.

- Examples and models of learning objectives:
o Demonstrate broad factual knowledge of the intellectual origins, key figures, works, and approaches in [key topic].
o Compare and contrast different interpretations or analyses of the main problems or phenomena studied by selected theorists in [key topic(s)].
o Write focused essays analyzing the key arguments, concepts, and issues or questions in assigned readings.
o Develop a clear and persuasive argument supported by textual evidence.
o Apply concepts from ecophysiology to evaluate how the various social and physical drivers of the environment affect animals and ecosystems.
o Use writing as a way of crystallizing thought and improving writing clarity and precision through a multi-step drafting process.
o Develop a completely functional computer experiment that (1) instructs viewers how to complete the experiment, (2) displays experimental stimuli, and (3) collects their behavioral responses.

Course Materials:

Please provide a clear explanation of the materials (textbooks, readings, etc.) that students will be using in the course and indicate where and how they can procure the materials (purchase, download, Reserve, etc.). It is important to ensure that all required materials are available to all students either electronically or on Barnard Library Reserves. Finally, please be sure to include the “Course Materials and Textbook Accessibility Statement.”

Graded Assignments:

- Graded assignments should be evenly distributed over the course of the semester, with at least one substantial graded assignment due early in the semester.
- No one assignment should be more than 40% of the total grade, unless the given percentage is specifically broken down and justified (e.g. seminar research work).
- Make sure your expectations for the course are clear and specific. Assignment topics and lengths, for example, should be unambiguously stated.
- Include a course outline, which must state the length of individual readings (i.e. page numbers or ranges) and specific due dates for assignments. For written assignments, it is recommended that you indicate the required or expected word count.
Guidelines for End-of-Semester Assignments:

Due dates for final papers, projects, and presentations are set at the discretion of the instructor. However, please remember not to assign a due date during the reading period.

Please be mindful that students may also have final exams during the final exam period and that these exams cannot be rescheduled. If the due date for a final paper, project or presentation in your course falls on the same day a student has final exams, please be flexible and work with the student to find an alternative due date before the end of the final exam period.

Please ensure that due dates for final papers, projects or presentations will allow sufficient time to review student work and submit grades by the College's deadline.

Required statements for all syllabi:

The below statements are required of all syllabi. These statements are available as a Word document on the Faculty Portal in Teaching Resources. If you primarily utilize a printed syllabus, these must be on your syllabus. If students access their assignments from courseworks, they must be available as a link on courseworks.

- Honor Code

Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

*We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.*

  - When including the Honor Code on your syllabus, please include a statement acknowledging that it has been updated. For example, “established 1912, updated 2016.”
  - [https://barnard.edu/honor-code](https://barnard.edu/honor-code)

For courses with any virtual component, the COI recommends adding to your syllabus the following:

The [Barnard Honor Code](https://barnard.edu/honor-code) includes relevant language for the proper use of electronic class material.

“*We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources.*”
To be clear, this means that recorded class content—from lectures, labs, and seminars to office hours and discussion groups—is the intellectual property of your professor and your fellow students and should not be distributed or shared outside of class.

- Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) Statement

If you anticipate barriers to your academic experience due to a documented disability or emerging health challenge, please contact your instructor and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) as early as possible. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations for the semester, contact CARDS at (212) 854-4634 or cards@barnard.edu. You can learn more about on-campus support at barnard.edu/disability-services. CARDS is located in 101 Altschul Hall.

- Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services (CARDS) Statement (for courses taking place off-campus)

If you anticipate barriers to your academic experience in an off-campus course due to a documented disability or emerging health challenges, contact your instructor and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) as early as possible. Any student with approved academic accommodations for an off-campus course is encouraged to contact the instructor during office hours or via email. Please be advised that disability accommodations available for on-campus courses are not always available for off-campus courses, so please contact CARDS to discuss the course location and how it may impact the availability of particular accommodations. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations, please contact CARDS at (212) 854-4634, cards@barnard.edu. You can learn more about support both on and off campus at barnard.edu/disability-services. CARDS is located in 101 Altschul Hall.

- Wellness Statement

It is important for you as undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. As a community, we urge you to prioritize yourself—your health, sanity, and wellness—throughout your career on campus. Sleep, exercise, and eating well are all part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- [http://barnard.edu/primarycare](http://barnard.edu/primarycare)
- [https://barnard.edu/about-counseling](https://barnard.edu/about-counseling)
- [https://barnard.edu/TheWellnessSpot/about](https://barnard.edu/TheWellnessSpot/about)
• Affordable Access to Course Texts & Materials Statement

All students deserve to be able to study and make use of course texts and materials regardless of cost. Barnard librarians have partnered with students, faculty, and staff to find ways to increase student access to textbooks. By the first day of advance registration for each term, faculty are expected to provide information about required texts for each course on CourseWorks (including ISBN or author, title, publisher, copyright date, and price), which can be viewed by students. A number of cost-free or low-cost methods for accessing some types of courses texts are detailed in the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability Guide (library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability). Undergraduate students who identify as first-generation and/or low-income may check out items from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library (library.barnard.edu/flip) and in Butler Library for an entire semester. Students may also consult with their professors, librarians, the Dean of Studies, and the Financial Aid Office about additional affordable alternatives for access to course texts.

• Institutional Review Board (IRB)
  o If you are using interviews or another type of subject-based method in your course, please visit https://barnard.edu/provost/research/regulatory-agencies for information regarding research protocol.

For a list of other Provost related policies, please see:
https://barnard.edu/provost/faculty-resources/publications

For a list of College-wide policies, please see:
https://barnard.edu/college-policies-procedures.