Refining Your Syllabus
for Day 1 and Beyond

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Agenda

Content
• Typical content
• Required elements
• Templates and outlines

Functions
• Contract
• Power instrument
• Communication device
• Collaboration

Reflection and Discussion
Considering Your Syllabus

1. Identify two features of your syllabus through which you might articulate a more collaborative or andragogical approach. (What will you do?)

2. Compose a short statement for yourself about the specific affordances of making those changes for this course. (What do you hope to gain?)

3. Articulate any constraints you’ll face and how you will address them. (What impedes or complicates the change? How will you address those matters?)
Typical Content *

• Contact info: name, title, phone, email, office hours, etc.
• Course info: title, number, meeting time & place, prerequisites, texts
• Goals and learning outcomes
• Calendar
• Grading system
• Policies

* Please contact your home unit to confirm content requirements.
Required Elements

- Disability accommodation statement (ADA)
- Academic integrity policy (COAM)
- Grading system (OSU Policy)
- Goals and expected learning outcomes for general education courses (OSU Policy)
- Departmental statements (Please inquire)
Templates and Outlines

• **UCAT**: What did you put in your syllabus?

• **ODEE**: Using Model Courses

• **ODEE**: Syllabus Template
The 21st Century Syllabus

Syllabus as ...

- Contract
- Power instrument
- Communication device
- Collaboration
The 21st Century Syllabus

Syllabus as Contract

- Oldest, most common metaphor
- Based in a regulatory mindset
- Limits student agency
- Leads to working the loopholes, grade-mongering, and lack of trust
The 21st Century Syllabus

Syllabus as Power Instrument

- Asserts instructor as sole source of rules
- Reads as dictatorial
- Devalues student agency and responsibility
- Reduces student efficacy and thus motivation
The 21st Century Syllabus

Syllabus as Communication Device

- Communicates values and *ethos*
- Still instructor centered
- Often a mismatch between language of inclusion and rhetoric of assertion
The 21st Century Syllabus

Syllabus as Collaboration

- Least studied purpose
- Seeks to distribute instructor power
- Most constructivist, learner centered
- Demands student responsibility for learning
- Can be confusing for novice students
From Pedagogy to Andragogy

- Recognizes university students as adults, not children
- Respects their agency
- Assumes effort is more productive than compliance
The Andragogically-oriented Syllabus

- Shares responsibility for learning
- Offers student input into evaluation measures
- Integrates more positive, learning-oriented policy statements and includes rationales
- Moves away from contractual and consequential language toward encouragement and student-owned experiences
The Andragogically-oriented Syllabus

Constraints
• Risk change from the norm
• Feel pressure from colleagues and institution
• Lose structure and perceived certainty
• Give up some control

Affordances
• Increased student motivation
• Greater student responsibility
• Better learning performance
• More open relationship with students
• Improved student satisfaction?
Considering Your Syllabus

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Discussion and Questions
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