# A black background with green and yellow letters  George Mason U LogoGMU Required Syllabus Information

Updated August 2025

This sample syllabus template is compliant with [GMU Catalog Policy AP.2.5](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/course-information/#AP-2-5).

**All faculty are required to provide the information noted below** to all their students. Guidance in blue type is for reference only.

Faculty must also make available to all students, and abide by, the [**Common Policies Addendum**](https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/25-Common-GMU-Syllabus-Policies.pdf).

Please **check with your academic unit, program leader, or course coordinator**: They will likely require you to include additional information and/or policy language in your syllabus.

You may **reorganize or reformat** this information to meet your needs. Your syllabus may be printed, provided in an online document, and/or integrated into your LMS site (e.g., Canvas).

Additional suggestions for writing a clear, complete syllabus that supports student learning are [available from the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning](https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/designing-your-syllabus/).

# Course Information

**Course Number**

**Course Title**

**Instructor Name**

**Semester and Year**

**Class Meeting Day(s) and Time(s) and Modality/ies**

**Instructor Contact Information**: Provide any direct contact method(s) (*George Mason email use is required*), and any Office Hours/Location.

**Course Description/Overview**: Typically 2-5 sentences. This should include an expanded description of the course. If this course is designated by the university as Mason Core, writing intensive (WI), research and scholarship intensive (RS), or community-engaged, or it is an otherwise notated course for the university, include relevant details.

**Course Learning Outcomes**: Typically 3-6 items. Learning outcomes identify high-priority, whole-course goals. They typically include actionable verbs (rather than static verbs like “know” or “understand”): What should students be able to *describe*, *recall*, *analyze*, *apply*, *critique*, *perform*, or *create* by the end of the semester? Your course may already have learning outcomes defined for it. (See tips and examples on Stearns Center’s [Learning Outcomes Advice](https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/course-and-curriculum-redesign/student-learning-outcomes/) page.)

# Grading Policies

**Grading Schema**: Provide the numerical breakdown of the ***boundaries*** between letter grades that you will use to calculate the final course grade. For instance, you could indicate, “*B+ = 87-89%, B = 84-86%, B- = 80-83%; I do [not] round up at .5 or higher.*”

GMU does ***not*** have a university-wide grading schema; please check with your academic unit for expectations or suggestions.

If you are using any alternate grading schema (complete/incomplete, mastery/in-progress/needs improvement, lowest score drops, extra credit, etc.) you should indicate how you will convert initial marks to letter grades.

**Grade Weights**: Provide a list of ***percentages*** that shows how individual assignments, exams, homework, and other course requirements will be calculated into the final grade. All major assessments (>10%) should be listed separately. You may include general categories where multiple low-stakes assignments are counted equally for a category grade (e.g., homework, journals, quizzes).

**Grading-related Policies**: Include any policies that can significantly lower student grades. These might include policies regarding

* Late work
* Missed exams
* Missed labs or rehearsals
* Team project responsibilities
* Course-specific details about your expectations for academic standards (e.g., limits of collaboration with other students, use of tools or outside resources, or expectations about source citation processes or formats)

# Academic Standards: Use of AI Tools

**AI (Artificial Intelligence) Tools Policy**:According to 2025 catalog policy, this should be “**A statement about allowable and prohibited uses of AI tools, with as much specificity as possible**.” In addition to sharing the Academic Standards Policy via the Common Policies Addendum, you should indicate your specific expectations about whether and/or how students are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence tools. Stearns Center recommends that you specify:

* ***Your basic principles***: Will you allow no use, some use, open use, or required use of AI tools?
* ***What (kinds of) tools you include in your policy***: Your policy may include text-focused chatbots like ChatGPT, Copilot, or Claude; it may include image- or video-generation tools like Runway or Midjourney; it may include tools like Grammarly or other editors; it may include basic text-prediction or text-completion tools. Please note that many common applications, including Grammarly and some apps in the Microsoft suite, may have an ***AI tool turned on by default***; if you are prohibiting or limiting student use, you should talk with students about turning off or avoiding these ubiquitous offerings.
* ***When and how AI tools may be used, and which ones,*** if you are choosing to allow them: You might limit usage to particular assignments, to parts of assignments (an outline vs. a full presentation), or to types of work (composing vs. editing). If you are requiring students to use an AI tool, be sure to comply with [GMU AI guidelines](https://www.gmu.edu/ai-guidelines/ai-guidelines), especially those that serve to protect students’ privacy and ensure accessibility.
* ***How you plan to track AI usage***, if that is relevant: If you plan to use some kind of tool to help detect AI usage, you should explain what you will use (and how you will compensate for possible false reports); note that Canvas at GMU does *not* have an AI-detection tool available. If you expect students to acknowledge or cite their AI use, you should explain how to do this.

For additional guidance on developing your policy, see [Stearns Center’s AI Resources](https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/ai-text-generators/) page.