

# Video Syllabus Framework

Recording a brief walkthrough of your course syllabus can help students connect with you and the course more quickly by transforming a dense document into an accessible, personal overview. This simple video, which doesn't have to be perfectly produced to be effective, allows you to highlight what truly matters in the course, while reducing confusion and the need for repeated questions.

## Outlining your video syllabus

- **Video setup:** Choose a location with good lighting or use a ring light. Aim to have the main light come from the front to illuminate your face. Practice switching between “screen share” and “camera share” so that you are comfortable when you record. Be familiar with how to share your screen while also keeping yourself on the screen. Plan to share your syllabus on the screen while you step through it at a good pace.
- **Recording time:** Aim for a video that is no more than 5 to 7 minutes.
- **Speaking to the audience:** Talk with your eyes to the camera like you are talking to the class. Imagine they are in front of you. This will make your students feel that you are speaking directly to them.
- **Tone:** When speaking through the syllabus, be mindful of your tone. Students appreciate instructors who are excited about the course and subject matter.
- **Introduction:** Introduce yourself and the course. Optional: Add a compelling or interesting fact related to the course to support student interest.

- **Modality:** Review the modality of the course:
  - If in-person: Provide the course meeting times and where to find the classroom.
  - If online asynchronous: Provide information about the virtual format and what students should expect.
  - If hybrid: Do a combination of the above as needed.
- **Learning goals:** Let students know about the learning goals of the course
- **Required materials:** Tell students about required course materials and how you use them (e.g., book, Canvas)
- **Course items:** Share the main features of the class and why you chose them (e.g., assignments, quizzes, exams)
- **Grading:** Review how students will be graded
- **Student Hours:** Talk about where to find information about one-on-one meetings and how to schedule a meeting with you.
- **Teaching philosophy:** Briefly explain your teaching philosophy
- **Affirmation:** Encourage students to have a growth mindset (or use another positive affirmation). This is best delivered at the beginning or end of the video. Example:
  - "Trust the learning process and know that when the work is challenging, your brain is actively growing stronger."
  - "We are a learning community here, not just a room full of individuals. If you are confused, reach out!"
- **Closing:** End the video on a warm, approachable note to reinforce your commitment to their success (e.g., I'm looking forward to a great semester with you!).
- **Captioning:** Remember to [caption your videos](#) to make them accessible to all students.
- **Uploading to Canvas:** Properly [upload your video](#) to Canvas so that students can view it. Consider sending out the video to students' emails in case they cannot access Canvas yet (i.e., if they are new students).

