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Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

*The Syllabus Evolution: Does the course
environment impact the syllabus?*

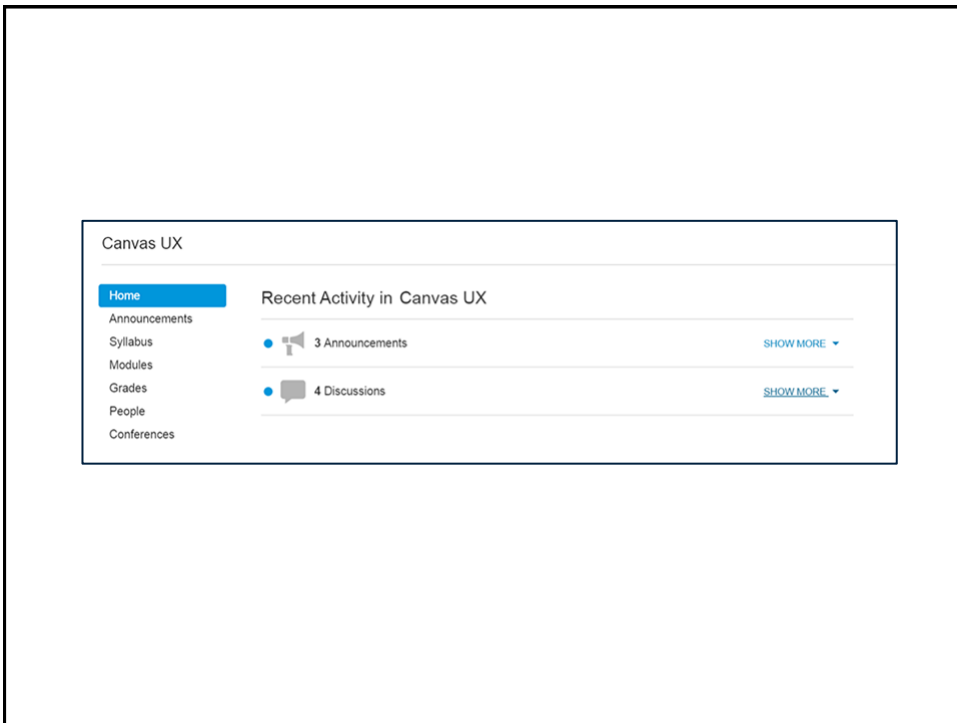
Cindy Decker Raynak,
Sr. Instructional Designer,
Faculty Consultant
cdr1@psu.edu

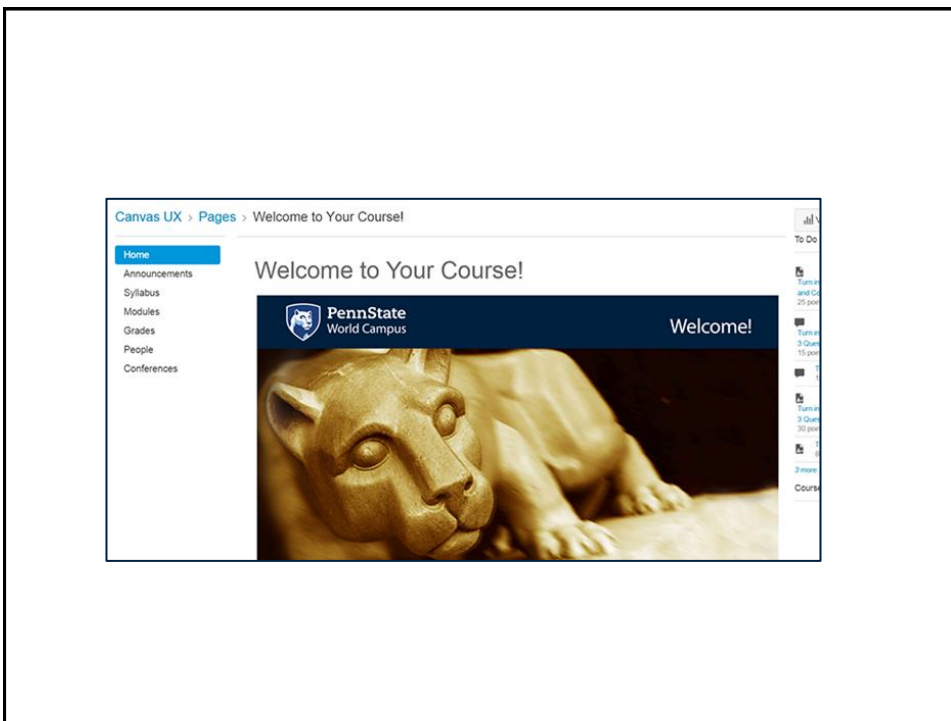
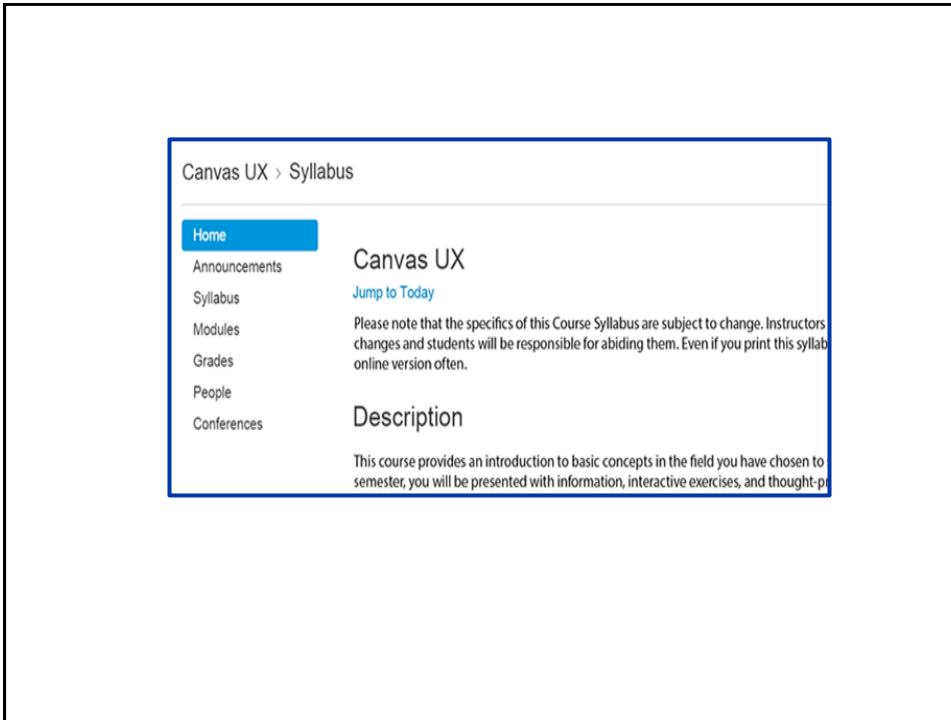


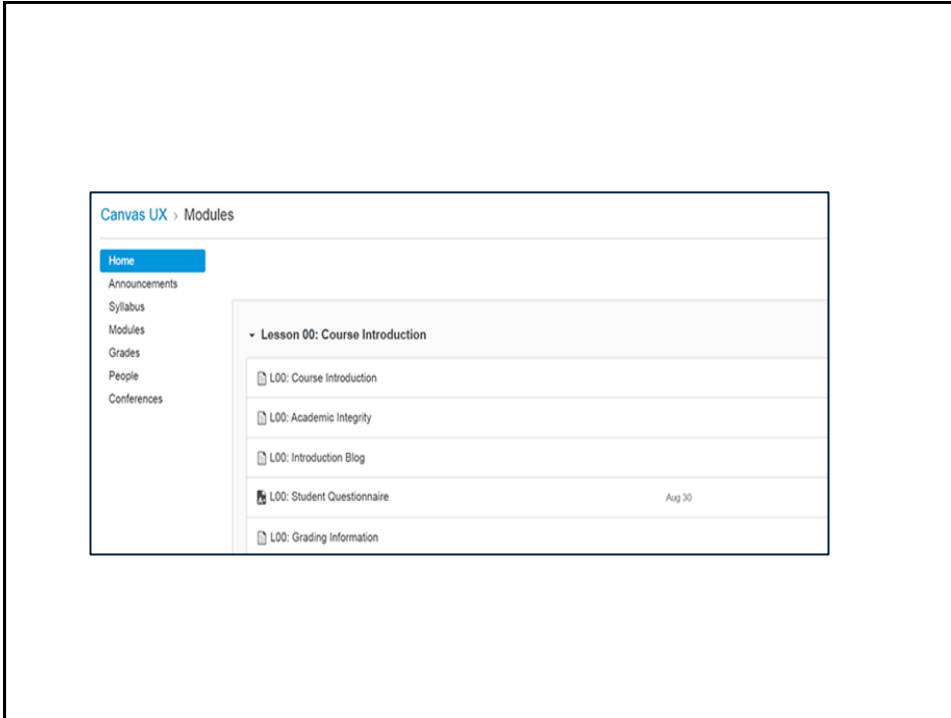
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- **Look at your syllabus through the eyes of your students.**
- **Strategically prioritize the content of your syllabus**
- **Evaluate the tone – lean toward constructive.**
- **Begin to develop a mindful strategy for helping students navigate your course.**

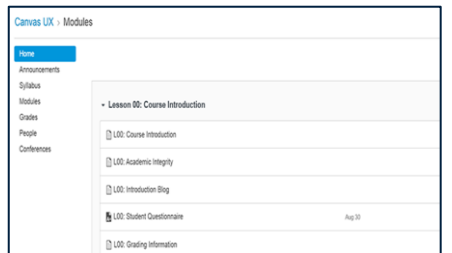
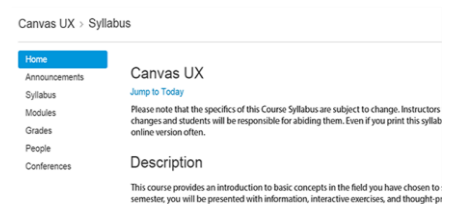
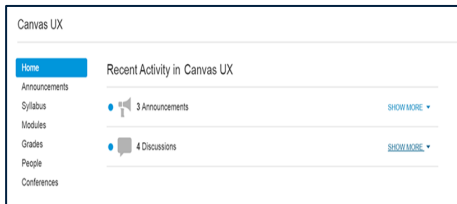






1: Recent Activity

2: Course Syllabus



3: Branded Landing Page

4: Modules




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Syllabi, in a blended course, still need to be effective because...some things never change!

- Sets the tone
- Helps motivate students to reach for academic goals
- Planning tool for faculty
- Structuring tool for students – work management
- “Agreement” between faculty and students




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The more explicit the course syllabi in terms of number of objectives, content, instructional resources, and grading components the better it enables the processing of the information gained in the learning situation and the students' final grade performances

...

Serafin (1990)



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In a blended/online environment, the syllabus is how you introduce yourself to students.

- *“The second [behavior] is about immediacy—the extent to which the teacher gives off verbal and nonverbal signals of warmth, friendliness, and liking . . . without [immediacy], teachers are seen as cold, uncaring, and incompetent by their students—as deserving targets of incivilities.”*
(Boice, 1996)

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Where we've been

CED429: Natural Resource Economics

Fall 2011

INSTRUCTOR:
TIME AND LOCATION: T TH 4:35 - 5:50 PM, 205
CONTACT: smaj@psu.edu
OFFICE HOURS: T TH 2:00 - 3:00PM, or by appointment
TA: [blank]
CONTACT: smaj@psu.edu
OFFICE HOURS: M 1:00 - 2:00PM, or by appointment

Required Text
 (C) Conrad, Jon M. (2010). *Resource Economics* (4th edition) Cambridge University Press.
 (W) (optional) Eckstein, N.O. and S.M. Orlinand. (2007) *Markets and the Environment*. Wiley Press.
 This is a very small textbook that offers great intuition behind environmental and resource economics without the math.
 (F) (optional) Field, Barry C. (2014). *Natural Resource Economics: An Introduction* (3rd edition) McGraw-Hill. This textbook provides a great introduction to the fundamental principles of economics and how these principles apply to natural resource use.
 These books should also be available in the library in the course reserve. Any required chapters from Eckstein and Orland (W) and Field (F) and additional outside readings will be posted to CANVAS either as a PDF or as a link to an electronic copy in the library. Posted readings are to be done before class.

Prerequisites
 ECON 302, MATH 120

Overview and Objectives
 This course investigates how and why humans manage scarce natural resources the way they do. Specifically, the course will focus on fisheries, forestry, non-renewable resources, resource scarcity, water resources, and sustainability. Students will use microeconomic techniques and spreadsheet software (Excel) to rigorously analyze the use and management of natural resources. Students will develop intuition for dynamic problems along with the ability to solve and interpret numerical allocation problems.

After this course, students should understand economic concepts, theory, and intuition to analyze natural resource use and value, be able to solve and interpret numerical allocation problems, and be able to apply these concepts, theory, and intuition to a range of contemporary natural resource policies such as tradable fishery quotas, forest certification, land conservation purchases, water conservation policies, renewable energy incentives, and endangered species protection.

Requirements and Grades

Requirement	Each	Number	Total
Class Participation			100 (10%)
Homework Assignments	60	5	300 (30%)
Quizzes	100	4	400 (40%)
Issue Brief	200	1	200 (20%)
TOTAL			1000 (100%)

Your grade for the course will be determined using the following scale:

Grade	Points	Grade	Points
A	= 930-1000	C-	= 770-799
A-	= 900-929	C	= 700-769
B+	= 870-899	B-	= 600-699
B	= 830-869	F	= 0-599
B-	= 800-829		

Class Participation
 Class participation involves (1) attending the entire class period, (2) reading the assigned materials before class and coming prepared to discuss this material, and (3) completing an in-class worksheet to a satisfactory level. In-class worksheets will be administered every class period without a quiz or presentation scheduled. An example in-class worksheet is:

1. In 1-2 sentences, what was the thesis from last class?
2. What are the benefits of harvesting a natural resource today?
3. What are the benefits of harvesting a natural resource in the future?
4. How do property rights changes these benefits today and in the future?

You are permitted three excused absences for the semester. For each class that you miss after the 3 permitted absences, 5 points will be deducted from your class participation grade.

Homework Assignments
 There will be 5 problem sets throughout the semester. You are free to discuss assignments with your classmates. I even encourage you to work in group to work through the numerical problems and/or compare answers once you have completed the work. However, everyone is required to submit their own work following Penn State's guidelines on academic integrity (see Academic Integrity section). If you work in a group, you must submit your own work and list all group members on the assignment.

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Many of the homework assignments will involve numerical problems that are solved in Excel. If you would like more experience with Excel I suggest using the Lynda tutorials available for free for Penn State students, faculty, and staff (<http://www.lynda.com/Excel/training/author.asp?biid=1920>). Your homework assignments should be professional, typed, printed, stapled and turned in during class on the day that they are due. Assignments will not be accepted electronically. Three points (~16% of your grade for that assignment) will be deducted per day (24 hours) for late assignments.

In extenuating circumstances an extension may be granted where valid documentation is provided. Requests for extensions should be made as far in advanced of the due date as possible.

Quizzes
Four quizzes are scheduled throughout the semester (see the Schedule below).

Issue Brief
Students will also be required to write a 5-7 page paper in the format of an issue brief. Issue briefs are short papers that clearly state an issue, make a recommendation for action, and support the recommendation in this case with an economic critique using the concepts, theory, and intuition discussed in class. Each student will submit an issue brief proposal summarizing the policy they will investigate (due on 10/18), a draft (due on 11/17), a final written report (due by 12/16 at 4pm). Additionally, each student will briefly present their issue brief on class on 12/6 (or 12/8 if additional time is needed).

For example issue briefs visit the Resources for the Future (RFF) website: www.rff.org. (Note that plagiarism will not be tolerated, see the Academic Integrity Section or more information).

Examples of issue briefs include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Fishery policies
 1. Tradable fishery quotas
 2. Gear restrictions
 3. Marine reserves
- Forest resources
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 2. Ecosystem management in national forests
 3. Carbon sequestration policies
- Land conservation
 1. Smart growth and urban sprawl
 2. Private land trust conservation
 3. Endangered species act
- Energy conservation
 1. Renewable-electricity standards
 2. Tax credits for renewable energy
- Water conservation

1. Water rights trading
2. Riparian doctrine

Late and missed work
Penn State considers the following to be legitimate reasons for missing a deadline (Policy 42-27): illness, injury, family emergency, religious observance, or regularly scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities (such as field trips, debate trips, choir trips, and participation as an athlete). Please notify me as soon as you possibly can if you will miss a deadline for these legitimate reasons and I will work with you to find a reasonable opportunity for you to make up the work. If a quiz is missed, I may substitute an alternative format of testing.

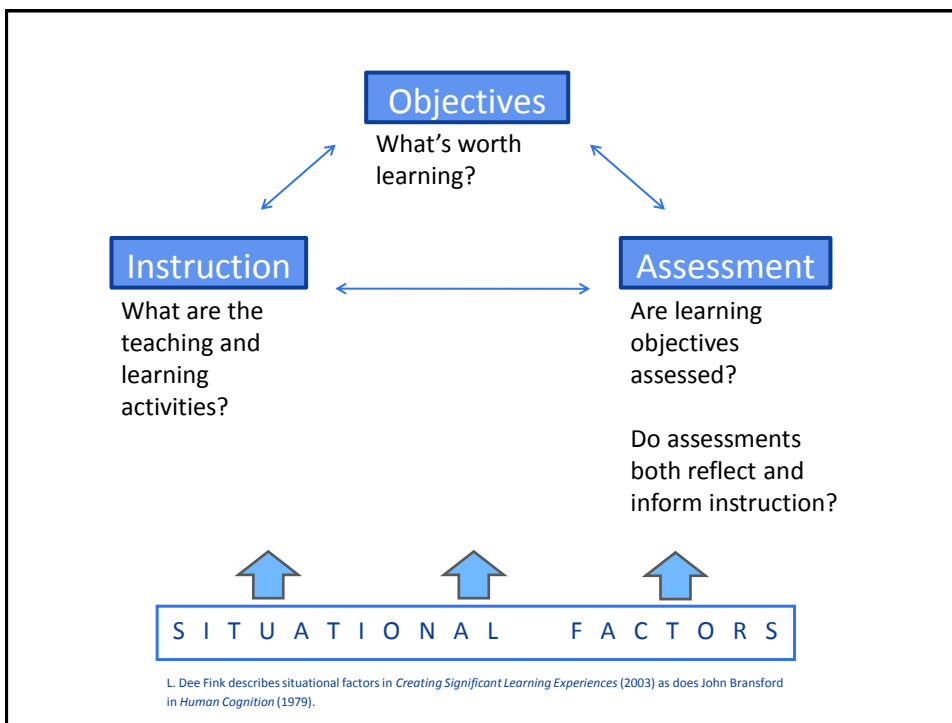
Requests for missing an evaluative event due to reasons that are based on false claims may be considered violations of the policy on Academic Integrity.


Schedule

Date	Due	Possible points	Points received
Throughout the semester	Class participation	100	
9/15	Homework #1	60	
9/20	Homework #2 (Excel lab)	60	
9/20	Quiz #1	100	
9/29	Homework #3	60	
10/11	Quiz #2	100	
10/18	Proposal of Issue Brief	25	
10/20	Homework #4	60	
10/27	Quiz #3	100	
11/10	Homework #5	60	
11/17	Quiz #4	100	
11/17	Draft of Issue Brief	50	
12/6	Presentation of Issue Brief	50	
12/16, 4pm	Final Issue Brief	75	
	TOTAL	1000	

Administrative Issues
Electronic devices
Please turn off all cell phones and alarms prior to the start of class. If a situation arise in which you must be able to be contacted please turn off the ringer and let me know before class. *The use of any computer, tablet, cell phone, or other electronic device is not permitted in class.* Tape recording (audio or video) is prohibited unless you receive prior permission from me.

...but where are we going?





PennState

- What should a Syllabus Contain?
 - Faculty information, office hours, required texts, etc.
 - Course Goals and Objectives
 - Methodology
 - Course Calendar and Schedule
 - Course Requirements
 - Course Policies
 - Course Resources

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Penn State Faculty Senate Policies for Syllabi

Faculty Senate Policy (43-00) *requires* that a written (paper or electronic) syllabus must be given to students on or before the first day of class and that the syllabus must include:

- Course goals (broad benchmarks describing general understanding and knowledge domains in the course)
- Course objectives (student skill sets with assessable learning outcomes)
- Contact information for all course instructors
- Location of program
- Examination policy (note evening exam schedule, too, if applicable)
- Grade breakdown by assessment type and percentage
- Required course materials
- Academic integrity statement
- Disability accommodation statement
- Information on available counseling and psychological services

Changes to the syllabus shall also be given to the student in written (paper or electronic) form.

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Learning objectives *still* should:

- Reflect essential knowledge, skills or attitudes
- Focus on results of the learning experiences
- Reflect the desired end of the learning experience.
- Answer the questions:
 - If I'm a student in this course, what should I know and be able to do when I leave?
 - If I'm a student in this course, how will I demonstrate my learning?

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These are *still* weasel words!

Students will ...

1. **Learn**
2. **Know**
3. **Be aware of**
4. **Be familiar with**
5. **Have a firm grasp of**
6. **Understand**
7. **Appreciate**



Students will be able to”....**Analyze****Compare****Critique****Integrate****Write****Design****Compute**

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Setting the tone and being clear becomes even more important when a syllabus is being shared in an online environment.

- Be careful and accurate in using pronouns.
- Ask for the behavior you want!
 - Phrase expectations in positive terms.
- Think of your syllabus as the roadmap to that eternal question:
How can I get an “A” in this course?
- Be very clear in how grades will be determined.
 - “Participation”/“Attendance” grading should be clearly described (and administered carefully!)
 - Avoid describing grading in percentages [only] whenever possible.
- Help students understand the benefits of your course.
Why do I need to know this?
Why do you love your course.

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- *The course includes four exams composed of 25 multiple-choice and true/false questions, with each exam worth 100 points. Two 2-page papers will ask you to take a position on an issue and defend it with evidence from class readings and from your experience, each worth 50 points.*
- Four exams = 400
- Two 2-page papers = 100
- **Total points = 500**

If you follow the advice I give you on how to do well on these graded experiences, you can earn up to 500 points (and an A in the course!).

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CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation is based on attendance and class discussions. If you're not there, you can't share. Each absence will result in a 10% reduction of the Presence grade. Ten absences will result in a 0 for the Presence, which reduces the final grade by one letter grade. Cell phones should not be on in class; please turn them off or on vibrate, so ringing does not interrupt class time. Ringing, beeping, and any other disturbance results in a tardy, and two tardies are the equivalent of an absence. A tardy also occurs when you disturb class time by arriving more than fifteen minutes after the beginning of class. One absence (or two tardies) will be excused. Those with perfect attendance will receive a grade of 110%.

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Course Requirements:

...A summary may not be handed in late unless you were absent for that class and have an excuse from a doctor or a funeral director...

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This Course Is For:

...people who like to think and want to improve their ability to think and to write.

This Course Is Not For:

...those who don't attend class faithfully and/or don't make a good effort to fulfill the course requirements and to learn. Although I am a very nice guy, you and I will clash if this description fits you. If it does, you should go waste your time and money with some other professor: I'm definitely old-fashioned about education and I'm not the guy for you.

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We assume you will attend every class prepared to discuss the readings; any student who does not will be in peril of being dropped from the course. Our readings are diverse, and in our views not especially demanding. If, however, you find yourself overwhelmed or encounter any sort of unexpected difficulty, be certain to get in touch with either one of us; part of being a college student is to anticipate difficult patches in a semester and to make arrangements with your instructors, who are almost always sympathetic.

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Attendance and Syllabus Change Policy:

It is extremely important that you attend class. Your attendance and class participation will be used as a guide to make decisions in borderline cases. The syllabus can be changed at any time as needed by the instructor. Any such change will be announced in class and also through ANGEL.

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This course provides an introduction to how the world wide web utilizes new media technologies. Students will acquire a sound conceptual understanding of how simple to complex web sites are constructed, and how this knowledge can be applied in their professional career. Knowledge gained in this course will dovetail into Information Sciences and Technology Associate degree options.

There are three major course objectives: (1) students will be able to perform a written critical evaluation of any web site, using the criteria listed below for evaluation; (2) students will be able to develop a written and/or electronic comprehensive proposal for the design/redesign of a web site; and (3) students will collaborate in meaningful, deep discussions of the topics listed above with peers, experts, and faculty via interactive technologies, as demonstrated by chat logs or other interaction records. Students will construct a simple web page that exemplifies the weekly topics. This web page may be built over the course of the initial 10 weeks as new topics are introduced, or the students may construct separate examples for each topic area. In some cases (such as e-commerce) the students may construct a non-functional prototype as opposed to a fully functional site. A quiz on the weekly topic(s) will occur at the end of each automa

Student

What can an athlete "choking" during a big game tell us about user interface design? What do public radio donation campaigns and Wikipedia have in common? Why do computer users do things that seem irrational even when interfaces are designed to be "user friendly"? This semester, we'll grapple with these questions by studying one of most complicated parts of information systems design: people and the contexts in which they live, work, and play. In the first half of the semester, you'll learn surprising facts about individual, group, and cultural characteristics that can predict whether a technology will be usable and useful. You'll also sharpen your visual communication skills. In the second half of the semester, you'll apply these facts and skills to design and evaluate technologies that meet the needs of a target audience, and learn how to communicate with design clients. The goal in this class is twofold: to challenge your assumptions about human nature and provide you with knowledge and skills requisite for designing usable, useful, and enjoyable technologies.

- Predict how course information impacts individuals, communities, markets, cultures, and society.
- Evaluate whether the topics presented in this course strengthen this discipline as a whole or if there are areas

Required Quizzes 22.5%

Return to Arigel PENNSYLVANIA

Canvas UX > Syllabus

Basic principles of wildlife management. Introduction to general ecology and wildlife population dynamics.

Grades 28 29 1 2 3 4 5

People

Conferences

Description

The course will provide a working knowledge of animal behavior; how animals behave and the ways in which this relates to wildlife. To effectively manage and understand the needs of wildlife, we must understand what affects the decisions that animals make and what influences key behaviors such as finding food, courtship, reproduction and migration. Ecology, evolution, physiology and neurobiology all influence behavior and the course will use examples from these sub-disciplines to illustrate how behavior is generated and adapted to the current environment. The class will be oriented around discussion of current scientific understanding of animal behavior.

Tips for Writing Course Descriptions

1. Use the second or “you” person.
2. Create an engaging first sentence.
3. Use action verbs (discover, acquire, get etc.).
4. Vary words and techniques.
5. Spice it up.

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What was the landscape designer thinking?



Are we making the same mistakes in our online syllabus design?

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Understanding Student Preferences to Help Inform Online Course Design: Canvas UX Study

<https://sites.psu.edu/canvasux>

- ❖ Amy Garbrick—Director, Learning Design; College of Information Sciences and Technology
- ❖ Dr. Andrea Gregg—Associate Director for Research; World Campus
- ❖ Jana Hitchcock—Instructional Designer; World Campus
- ❖ Ronda Reid—Instructional Designer; College of Information Sciences and Technology
- ❖ Dr. Vicki Williams—Assessment Manager; Teaching & Learning with Technology

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The major finding is...
in a word:

EFFICIENCY!



<http://www.sixsigmatrainingfree.com/uploads/2/1/7/9/21795380/efficiency.jpg>

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April 4 - May 21, 2016

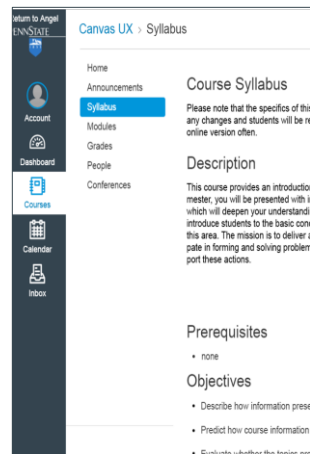
- IRB study
- Help of Dr. Jessica Kropczynski, College of IST
 - Mix of screenshots, ratings, and open-ended text questions
 - Canvas Home page preferences**
 - Syllabus page and components**
 - Navigation preferences and order**
- Open questions regarding the perception of “community”

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Navigation

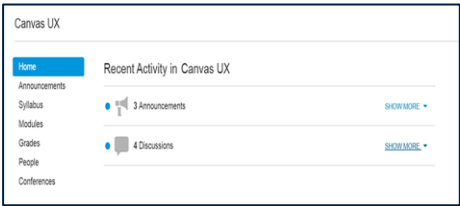
Preferred navigational order (4/2017):

1. Assignments
2. Announcements
3. Modules (or Lessons)
4. Course home page
5. Grades
6. Syllabus
7. Discussions
8. Quizzes
9. Files, Pages, People, and Conferences

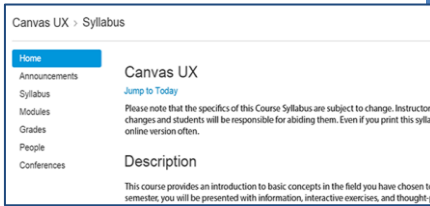


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1: Recent Activity



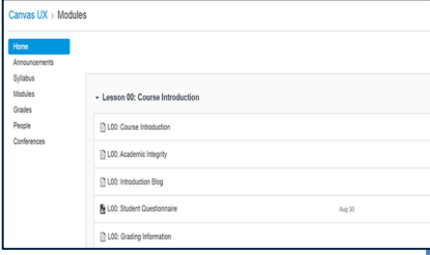
2: Course Syllabus



3: Branded Landing Page



4: Modules



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Based on the **EFFICIENCY** finding:

Syllabus

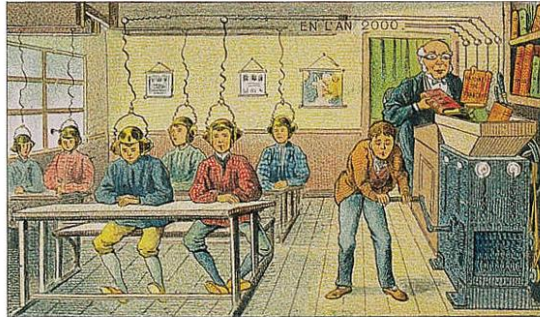
- **Brief text** with the course summary visible was most preferred (schedule, grading, required materials)
 - **Easy navigation and clean, short organized format**
 - **More than 80%** of the students said it is **VERY** important that the course summary be easy to find
 - They **STILL** want to **PRINT** syllabus

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Course Design Academy 2017

[Welcome](#) [Overview](#) [Materials](#) [Grading](#) [Assignments](#) [Policies](#)

Course Design Academy



Here are a few pointers for navigating this page:

- Use the tabs above to switch between sections of the Syllabus.
- See the Assignments Summary (Schedule) below. This table lists assignments by due date.
Note: This table is similar to the Agenda view on the Calendar.
- Click the Jump to Today link at the top of the page to jump directly to today's date on the Assignments Summary.

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From this

Many of the homework assignments will involve numerical problems that are solved in Excel. If you would like more experience with Excel I suggest using the Lynda tutorials available for free for Penn State students, faculty, and staff (<http://www.lynda.com/Excel-tutorial/Excel/192-2.html>). Your homework assignments should be professional, typed, printed, stapled and turned in during class day that they are due. Assignments will not be accepted electronically. Three points (~16% of your grade for that assignment) will be deducted per day (24 hours) for late assignments.

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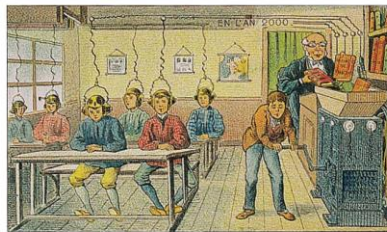
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...to this.

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References

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for Teaching Excellence**



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