**Honors College Syllabus Template (Spring 2025)**

**General Guidelines** As a general rule, Honors College courses should not be carbon copies or minor revisions of regular, department offerings. We require faculty to develop courses that are broadly interdisciplinary and do not require extensive knowledge from your home department or discipline (esp. HONR 370 courses), since our students come from many different majors across campus. In addition, we encourage faculty to think outside the box and develop courses that challenge Honors students in unique and creative ways.

**Instructor & Course Information** If you are submitting a syllabus for a new topics course (HONR 370), please include all instructor and course information, as normal. If you are submitting a syllabus for a permanent course number through CARC, you are submitting a “syllabus of record.” In this case, do not include any information that is personal or that may change from one semester to another: i.e., fill in only the placeholders for the course number and course title. Also, avoid the use of personal pronouns in your syllabi: CARC appears to now be rolling back proposals which include them.

Course Number:

Course Title:

Classroom:

Instructor’s Name:

Email:

Phone:

Office:

Office Hours:

**Catalog Description** A brief, one or two-sentence description that should not include verbs and should not start with, “This course will...” Here is an example from HONR 420: “In-depth exploration of the various dimensions of globalization from different theoretical and disciplinary perspectives.” Do not include prerequisites unless permission has been granted from the Honors College.

**Rationale** If you are submitting a syllabus for a permanent course number through CARC, you are submitting a “syllabus of record.” In this case, you need to include a rationale for why you are proposing this course.

**Course Description** Provide the content, aims, etc. of the course in standard sentence/paragraph form.

**Required Texts** List only the texts that must be purchased. It’s perfectly acceptable to indicate that some or all readings will be posted on Blackboard. In the case of books to be purchased, make sure to include ISBNs. Provide the texts in a discipline appropriate citation style.

**Course Learning Goals** … or outcomes or objectives. Committees will consider whether the proposed learning goals are appropriate to the proposed level of study.

**Core Outcomes (IF necessary)** If you’re proposing a course for the Core, your sample syllabus must include the “course outcomes”—*not* the “applicable learning goals”—listed under the corresponding Core category in the document titled “Core Categories.” Moreover, these “course outcomes” must be numbered so that you can easily indicate which course assignments will be used to meet which “course outcomes.” You must indicate next to each assignment whether it is intended to fulfill a “course outcome” and, if so, which one(s). Note that if you are proposing a course in the Core you must complete an assessment plan which must be approved by the Associate Dean. Attach an e-mail noting approval to your proposal in CIM.

**Course Requirements** Assignments and coursework. Remember that if you’re proposing a Core course, you should indicate which assignments will fulfill which “course outcomes.” Also, the review committees look carefully at assignments to make sure that they are appropriate for the proposed level of study. You can put the value of each assignment here or under your “grading” section (or whatever you call it).

**Grading Scheme & Policies** There’s no C- or D- at TU. Make sure that you either (1) use decimal points that leave no room for ambiguity or (2) provide a statement that explains how you round grades—especially borderline grades. Professors have complete discretion in deciding what constitutes an “A,” an A-, and so on. An “A” can be 99-100% if you’d like. Just don’t leave gaps. (The example, provided below, will work every time.) It would be helpful for students to provide an explanation of what constitutes an “A,” a “B,” and so on for certain assignments but is not strictly required by any committee and varies by discipline; an example from ENGL is provided below if it is of use. Delete the undergraduate or graduate grading scheme below as appropriate for your proposal—**don’t leave both in!**

A 93-100%

A- 90-92.99%

B+ 87-89.99%

B 83-86.99%

B- 80-82.99%

C+ 77-79.99%

C 70-76.99%

D + 67-69.99%

D 60-66.99%

F 0-59.99%

Or, for graduate courses, (add appropriate grade ranges for your Department/program)

A

A-

B+

B

C

F

The following descriptions of grading standards refer specifically to essays but apply generally to all formal work done for this class.

* “A” work demonstrates mastery of the material and does not contain factual errors or unfounded suppositions. The prose is consistently clear, precise, and grammatical, and the essay is thoughtfully and productively organized/structured. The essay contains highly effective argumentation in defense of an original and expertly developed thesis. The writer cultivates ingenious ideas with accurate and insightful points, drawing on thoughtfully chosen textual references and background information in support of fully explained analyses. The thesis and supporting arguments are exceptionally specific, focused, and purposeful, and the essay uses clear and valid reasoning to develop a compelling, highly organized discussion of the material. The essay reflects meticulous adherence to the guidelines articulated in the assignment sheet.
* “B” work demonstrates a strong grasp of the material and contains few, if any, factual errors or unfounded suppositions. The prose is mostly clear, precise, and grammatical, and the essay is competently organized/structured, but more sophistication, refinement, and attention to detail may be possible. The essay contains effective argumentation in defense of a thoughtful and developed thesis. The writer cultivates a number of thoughtful ideas with mostly accurate and insightful points, drawing on relevant textual references and background information in support of productively explained analyses. The thesis and supporting arguments are specific, focused, and purposeful, using mostly clear and valid reasoning to develop a thoughtful, organized discussion of the material, but the ideas may not be fully explained or developed, suggesting that the essay may benefit from greater attention to detail. The essay reflects acceptable attention to the guidelines articulated in the assignment sheet.
* “C” work demonstrates adequate comprehension of the material but probably contains some factual errors or unfounded suppositions. The prose is reasonably clear and readable but possibly too simple or informal, and the organization/structure of the essay is somewhat logical but at times unrefined, if not haphazard. The essay contains some promising, yet often general or obvious, argumentation. The writer develops some worthwhile ideas and analytical points, drawing on somewhat effective textual references and background information in support of somewhat comprehensible analyses. The thesis and supporting arguments have potential but are largely general and at times devoid of sound reasoning, and the ideas may be somewhat obvious or under-developed, suggesting the need for greater specificity, focus, and purposefulness and for considerably greater attention to organization/structure. The essay represents competent college-level work, but it requires additional revision to improve structure, clarity, and argumentation. The writer may have deviated significantly from the guidelines articulated in the assignment sheet.
* “D” work demonstrates inadequate understanding of the material and likely contains factual errors or unfounded suppositions. The prose is frequently unclear, imprecise, and ungrammatical, making it difficult to read, and the essay mainly lacks logical organization/structure, thus hindering reader comprehension. The essay contains very little, if any, promising or productive argumentation. The writer develops few, if any, ideas and analytical points, likely failing to draw effectively or sufficiently on textual references and background information, thus rendering the essay inadequately developed. The thesis and supporting arguments are vague, obvious, or perhaps absent and reflect little, if any, sound reasoning or organizational/structural integrity, rendering the essay mostly devoid of specificity, focus, and purposefulness. The essay lacks college-level competence, suggesting that the writer may not have completed the readings or paid adequate attention during classroom discussions. The writer may have deviated exceedingly from the guidelines articulated in assignment sheet.
* “F” work demonstrates unacceptable understanding of the material and contains some, if not many, factual errors or unfounded suppositions. The prose might be largely unclear, imprecise, and ungrammatical, making the writer’s intentions difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain. The essay contains virtually nothing in the way of promising or purposeful argumentation. The writer develops few, if any, ideas and analytical points while failing, or mostly failing, to draw on textual references and background information, rendering the essay devoid of any recognizable specificity, focus, or purposefulness. The thesis and supporting arguments are scattered, if not absent, and there is little, if any, attention to the principles of sound reasoning and organizational/structural integrity. The topic or style may be inappropriate, and the essay reflects little, if any, attention to classroom discussions and/or the guidelines articulated in the assignment sheet. The essay, or parts of it, may have been plagiarized.

**Academic Dishonesty** This section should refer to forms of academic dishonesty and possible penalties. The approved language below is the most current example. Please specify the minimum penalty for violations in your course.

In order for you to benefit from the course—and to be fair to all students—the instructor will not tolerate academic dishonesty, in any form. The following constitute violations of the Student Academic Integrity Policy:

* Plagiarism: Presenting someone else’s work as your own
* Fabrication and falsification: Inventing or altering information for academic work
* Cheating: Using unauthorized materials in academic work
* Complicity in academic dishonesty: Assisting someone else in committing an academic violation
* Abuse of academic materials: Making resource materials inaccessible to other students
* Multiple submissions: Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization of the instructor(s)

The minimum penalty for violations of academic dishonesty in this course is …

Please contact me if you are uncertain of the definition of these academic violations and their potential consequences.

For a more extended explanation of these violations, visit this site: <https://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/appendices/appendix-e-code-student-conduct/>

**Generative AI** The Provost’s Office strongly recommends that every syllabus have a statement about the use of generative AI in your class. How you decide to use AI (or not use AI) is up to you. Below are two sample statements from FACET that you can use as models. To clarify your policy and minimize confusion, you may also wish to address the use of AI for each class assignment.

**Sample syllabus language, if you choose to allow some use of ChatGPT:**

As we begin the semester, I want to remind you of the importance of academic integrity. Part of what you learn here at Towson University is how to do your work authentically and honorably, and I am here to help you do that. In my course, you will be given assignments and I will provide you with specific instructions about how to complete them. Sometimes the instructions will tell you to do the work entirely on your own without consulting other people or material, including the internet. At other times, you may be asked to work together or to use certain technology tools. If you are ever uncertain about how you should work on an assignment, please contact me.

**Sample syllabus language, if you choose not to allow use of ChatGPT:**

As we begin the semester, I want to remind you of the importance of academic integrity. Part of what you learn here at Towson University is how to do your work authentically and honorably, and I am here to help you do that. In my course, you will be given assignments and I will provide you with specific instructions about how to complete them. Sometimes the instructions will tell you to do the work entirely on your own without consulting other people or material, including the internet. At other times, you may be asked to work together or to use certain technology tools. You will never, in this class, be permitted to plagiarize, meaning to use the work of another person or a tool such as ChatGPT, for any purpose. If you are ever uncertain about how you should work on an assignment, please contact me.

**Late Work** Make sure that your late-work policy doesn’t violate TU’s excused-absence policy regarding “compelling verifiable circumstances beyond the control of the student”: for instance, don’t write anything like, “Late work will never be accepted.” Also make sure that your policy is clear and consistent: for instance, don’t write something like, “Late work will be accepted at my discretion.” There can be nothing vague here.

**Attendance** This one causes a lot of problems because some instructors apparently violate relevant TU policies without realizing it. For instance, Professors are not allowed to say that a certain number of unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course, and many instructors fail to differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Also, make sure that even if you don’t grade attendance, you provide some kind of statement: perhaps something about the importance of attending class. Don’t delete or alter the boilerplate language about excused absences and include the link to the TU policy statement. The following is an example of a policy for unexcused absences provided by the CLA Curriculum Committee and has not been flagged as an issue by CARC, so feel free to use it or modify it in your sample syllabus.

The instructor will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Three or fewer unexcused absences will have no effect on your grade. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 2% deduction from your cumulative course grade. Failure to arrive at class with the assigned materials (hard copies of the texts, essay drafts, etc.) will be counted as an unexcused absence. Arriving at class more than ten minutes late or leaving more than ten minutes early will be counted as an unexcused absence unless your late arrival or early departure is covered by the excused-absence policy explained below.

It is the policy of the university to excuse absences of students for the following reasons:

* illness or injury when the student unable to attend class
* death of a family member (See student bereavement procedure here: <https://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/documents/bereavement.pdf>)
* religious observance where the nature of the observance prevents the student from attending class
* participation in university activities at the request of university authorities (e.g., Intercollegiate Athletic, Forensics Team, Dance Company, etc.). Students who will be representing TU at events, conferences, or other official activities should obtain a Notification of Absence from Class Form from the Office of Campus Life, University Union 232, to be given to their instructors to verify the excused absence. Students are encouraged to notify faulty of anticipated absences as soon as they learn they will be missing class.
* compelling verifiable circumstances beyond the control of the student
* See: <https://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-absence-policy/>.

Students requesting an excused absence must provide documentation to the instructor two weeks prior to the scheduled absence when known in advance or, in other cases, as soon as possible.

**Participation** This section can be deleted if you don’t assess participation in any way. Just keep in mind that if participation counts for 10% or more of students’ final grades, you must explain how it will be graded, including how the grade will be conveyed to students over the course of the semester. It’s a generally bad idea to combine participation with attendance.

**Cook Library** (recommended for courses with an emphasis on research and writing)

Albert S. Cook Library provides the resources, services, and spaces that our community needs in order to find, evaluate, and use information appropriately and ethically. Librarians are available through chat, email, and 1:1 consultation. <http://libraries.towson.edu/>

**Repeat Policy** If a course can be repeated for additional credit, provide a statement such as “May be repeated for a maximum of \_\_ units. But, typically, …

Students may not repeat a course more than once without prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

**Emergency Closure** Please use the approved language below.

Conditions on campus sometimes force the university to close. Should this occur, the instructor will send a message to your Towson e-mail addresses that explains any revisions to our schedule and assignments. The university’s website (www.towson.edu) and the main University phone number (410-704-2000) state when conditions on campus force the university to close. To have text message alerts regarding campus closings sent to your cell phone, visit: <https://www.towson.edu/news/emergency.html>

**Disability Statement** ADS (Accessibility & Disability Services), *not* DSS.

This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS), 7720 York Road, Suite 232, 410-704-2638 (Voice) or 410-704- 4423 (TDD). Students who suspect that they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact ADS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from ADS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made. See: <https://www.towson.edu/accessibility-disability-services/>.

**Counseling Statement** Choose only one of the following approved Senate options and delete the other two. CARC now requires this.

Option 1: Students who are experiencing personal difficulties or mental health challenges are encouraged to seek free and confidential assistance at the Towson University Counseling Center (TUCC). Same-day appointments are available, and you can reach a crisis counselor by phone after hours. For more information about TUCC, please visit their website at <https://www.towson.edu/counseling>. To make an appointment or for after-hours crisis assistance, please call 410-704-2512.

Option 2: The Towson University Counseling Center (TUFF) provides free and confidential counseling services. For more information about TUCC, please visit their website at <https://www.towson.edu/counseling>. To make a same-day appointment or for after-hours crisis assistance, please call 410-704-2512.

Option 3: We all experience emotional distress and personal difficulties as a normal part of life. As your instructor, I am not qualified to serve as your counselor. However, The Towson University Counseling Center (TUCC) provides free and confidential mental health services that are not connected to your academic record in any way. If you are experiencing mental health challenges, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of TUCC’s services. For more information about TUCC, please visit their website at <https://www.towson.edu/counseling>. To make a same- day appointment or for after-hours crisis assistance, please call 410-704-2512.

**Title IX** Don’t alter or delete this entry. CARC requires it.

Towson University (TU) is committed to ensuring a safe, productive learning environment on our campus that does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or intimate partner violence [Policy 06.01.60]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff, but keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. It is a goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions and in one-on-one meetings. However, it is required to share information with the Title IX Coordinator regarding disclosures, but know that the information will be kept private to the greatest extent possible. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the TU Counseling Center 410-704-2512 to schedule an appointment, and locally within the community at TurnAround, Inc., 443-279-0379 (24-hour hotline) or 410-377-8111 to schedule an appointment. See: <http://towson.edu/titleix>.

**Reporting Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents**: Don’t alter or delete this entry. CARC requires it.

Towson University prohibits all students, staff, and faculty from committing or engaging in any hate crimes as defined under state and federal law, or any acts of bias, hate, or prejudice exhibited in conduct that is in violation of another University policy on campus, on University property, at University-sponsored events, or when engaged in University activities and business on or off campus. The University must receive notice to respond effectively to alleged Hate Crimes or Bias Incidents in the University Community. Please report or file a complaint of a Hate Crime or Bias Incident in the following ways:

* Report to University Police: Towson University's Police Department (“TUPD”) will determine if incidents are criminal in nature. In cases of hate crimes, individuals can be punished with fines and/or imprisonment. Felony offenses demonstrated to be motivated by bias are subject to enhanced penalties.
* Contact the Office of Inclusion & Institutional Equity: Online at: <https://towson.edu/notattu>, email at: [OIIE@towson.edu,](mailto:OIIE@towson.edu) telephone, in-person or via regular mail.

See: <https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/06-01-20-policy-procedures-reporting-hate-crimes-bias-incidents.html>.

**Additional Educational Resources/Bibliography** Required for upper-level courses and graduate courses only; recommended but not required for lower-level. Can also include videos and other non-traditional resources. A full page is generally sufficient. Make sure to format the entries in a discipline appropriate style (CLACC requires this).

**Calendar** …or “Course Content,” as it’s called in the document titled “Syllabus Guidelines (FH).” As indicated in that document, “Semester-long classes last 14 weeks and two days. Therefore classes meeting once a week have 14 sessions, classes meeting twice a week have 29 sessions and classes meeting three times a week have 43 sessions. Do not include sample schedules with 15 or more weeks that include holidays and breaks.” The schedule should include proposed readings for each week or session (do not simply list a topic to be covered).

**Contact Hours (mainly for summer course scheduling)** According to the Registrar, a 50-minute class session equals one “contact hour.” Thus, a typical semester course should have 45 contact hours or 2250 contact minutes. Make sure this aligns with any course that is proposed over the summer.