

RESOLUTION-POLICY

X	Action Item
	For Information Only

From: Dr. Eric Milou, Rowan University Senate President

To: Dr. Ali Houshmand, Provost

Date: 5/12/09

RE: Senate Resolution **090511-2**

**Resolution Regarding Dissemination of Course Syllabi
and Information Regarding University-Wide Classroom Policies**

WHEREAS, syllabi are important documents specifying the expectations and responsibilities of instructors and students with respect to a given course, constituting an enforceable agreement;

WHEREAS, economic and environmental concerns are driving a desire to reduce use of ink and paper;

WHEREAS, course materials, including syllabi, are increasingly made available online, via course management software, websites, and/or email;

WHEREAS, the length of syllabi has continued to increase as instructors are required or encouraged to reproduce information on University-wide policies in syllabi;

AND WHEREAS, practices for distributing syllabi vary widely and are not governed by a formal policy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the University should adopt a policy permitting electronic distribution of syllabi

AND ALSO, to facilitate streamlining of syllabus content, permitting syllabi to refer students to information on University-wide policies, which is made available on-line and in the *Student Information Guide*, rather than reproduce this information in syllabi;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University should continue to investigate more effective and efficient means of disseminating course syllabi and information on University-wide classroom policies, such as a centralized system of on-line access, as part of long-term efforts to implement paperless processes and move toward carbon-neutrality.

The recommended policy follows, which incorporates the current syllabus policy as it appears in the *Faculty/Professional Staff Handbook* (www.rowan.edu/provost/aft/documents/Handbook2008-09.pdf), pp. 43-44.

Revisions and additions to the current policy are italicized; omissions are indicated by strikethrough. The order of items of content for the syllabus is also rearranged slightly. The recommendation to include the full Student Accommodation Policy on syllabi has been removed; this policy is noted as one of the University-wide policies that the syllabus should refer to and that instructors should emphasize.

Syllabi are important documents that specify the expectations and responsibilities of faculty and students with respect to a given course, constituting an enforceable agreement.

Content: Prior to the end of the Drop/Add period, instructors shall disseminate to each class the following information *in writing*:

- ∞ *Instructor's office hours and contact information*
- ∞ *The meeting times and locations*
- ∞ *A course description and statement of course objectives*
- ∞ *The proposed topical outline, where appropriate*
- ∞ *Course requirements (e.g., readings, research group work, presentations)*
- ∞ *The criteria and procedures for evaluating student performance, including the availability of a pass/no credit option*
- ∞ *The attendance policy, within the parameters of the existing University policy*
- ∞ *Additional departmental or instructor policies as appropriate*

University-wide policies: *Whether distributed in print or electronically, the syllabus should refer to, but does not need to reproduce, relevant University-wide policies. University-wide policies are posted on-line and are distributed to students as part of the Student Information Guide (available www.rowan.edu/studentaffairs/infoguide/). Instructors are encouraged to emphasize the importance of this information and verify student access as appropriate. Relevant University-wide policies include the following:*

- ∞ *Classroom Behavior Policy*
- ∞ *Academic Integrity Policy*
- ∞ *Student Accommodation Policy*
- ∞ *Laptop Computers in the Classroom*
- ∞ *University Attendance Policy*

Distribution: *Syllabi may be distributed in the form of printed copies or may be distributed electronically via an Open Area folder, website, or web-based course management software such as Blackboard. Instructors should ensure that electronically distributed syllabi are readily available in a stable location and that students have been informed of how to access the syllabus. Use of document access tracking in Blackboard is encouraged to verify that students have accessed the information*

Students with limited access to a computer or printer may request a printed copy. Departments will determine procedures for keeping copies of syllabi on file.

Changes: While making changes to the syllabus after it is distributed is strongly discouraged, in cases where alterations are unavoidable, the instructor must inform students in writing (*via* printed copy, email, website, or web-based course management software) in an expeditious manner.

Acceptance:

_____ I give my approval. I have forwarded this item to _____ for implementation.

_____ No approval is actually needed. I have forwarded this item to the following individual or office for informational purposes only:

ADDITIONAL REVIEW NEEDED:

_____ I am willing to give approval if the following modification(s) are made:

_____ Before I can approve or reject this item, I need clarification on the following:

_____ I have forwarded this item to the following individual or office for further consideration and consultation.

Rejection:

_____ I decline acceptance of this item for the following reason:

Please Return this Copy to the University Senate President ~ Retain a Copy for Your Records