

## **Regulation on Publication of Academic Calendars, Grading Policies, and Related Materials**

I. Purpose. Section 400.1.6 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Policy on the University of North Carolina Academic Calendar and Credit Requirements*, provides that constituent institutions shall develop academic calendars and course offerings that are structured to ensure consistent academic rigor and learning outcomes. Section 400.1.6 of the UNC Policy Manual further mandates that institutions shall publish academic calendars, grading policies, and other related materials in a manner publicly available to students and the public and ensure that they are widely distributed.

Access to course syllabi furthers the university's overall goal to improve student progression and timely degree completion. A student's review of syllabi prior to registration in a course properly equips students to critically weigh their respective capacities and successfully plan for their semesters ahead. A student's evaluation of potential course success might include a cost analysis of required materials and an understanding of an instructor's grading scale, relative to the student's additional courseload and evaluation expectations. The availability of current and representative course syllabi further empowers prospective transfer students to evaluate their perceived success and academic fit in a constituent institution's courses and programs.<sup>1</sup>

This regulation informs the public regarding the copyright ownership and public accessibility of course syllabi and reaffirms the university's commitment to transparency as a state agency.

### **II. Syllabus Defined.**

A. "Syllabus" or "Syllabi" is defined in this regulation as an employer required document to accompany any course offered by an institution for academic credit. Syllabi are developed by the instructor, at the institution's direction, and are required to include sufficient detail to inform students of the course and instructor's expectations for the specified class.

B. Directed Works. Syllabi are directed works<sup>2</sup>, as distinguished from creative non-directed works, that are developed within the scope of an instructor's employment and under institutional direction. Under section XII of Section 500.2 of the UNC Policy Manual, *Patent and Copyright Policies*, the institution is considered the copyright owner of course syllabi, as directed work.<sup>3</sup> As such, instructors do not retain personal copyright in these materials, and syllabi owned by a public agency generated in the course of public business, are not copyrightable in a manner that would exempt syllabi from public access to these records, consistent with state and federal public records laws. Syllabi shall be treated as "public records" as that term is used in Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

1. Because of the treatment of syllabi as public records recognized by this

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<sup>1</sup> See UNC Policy 400.1.5.3[R], *Regulation to Foster Undergraduate Transfer Student Success*.

<sup>2</sup> See UNC Policy 500.2, *Patent and Copyright Policies*.

<sup>3</sup> See UNC Policy 500.2 section XII.

regulation, if in response to a public records request, an instructor believes his or her syllabus for academic year 2025-26, or before, includes copyrightable materials for which he or she holds an ownership interest and objects to the production of the syllabus in response to the public records request, the instructor may submit a written position to the institution's provost for review within a reasonable time period prescribed by the institution.

a. Written positions shall include a copy of the applicable syllabus and identify specific language in the syllabus that the instructor believes he or she maintains a copyrightable interest. The provost, in consultation with the institution's General Counsel, shall consider the instructor's position before filling any public records request in accordance with applicable law.

C. Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, all syllabi shall, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Course name and prefix, along with the course description;
2. All goals, objectives, student learning outcomes, and/or student expectations for the course;
3. An explanation of how student performance will be assessed, including the grading scale, percentage breakdown of major assignments, and how attendance or participation will affect a student's final grade;
4. List of all course materials (physical and/or electronic) that students are required to purchase; and
5. A statement noting that the course engages diverse scholarly perspectives to develop critical thinking, analysis, and debate and inclusion of a reading does not imply endorsement.

D. Syllabi do not constitute an express or implied contract among the student, faculty, or institution. Rather, syllabi serve as a guide for the course.

### III. Availability of Syllabi.

A. Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, each instructor teaching a course offered by an institution for academic credit shall establish and maintain a course syllabus to properly define the expectations of the course and include information required in section II.C. of this regulation. Academic experiences occurring outside of organized course sections and providing individual instruction in exchange for course credit, e.g. practicums, internships, independent research, and dissertations, may not require a syllabus.

B. Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, each constituent institution shall develop an online platform to house syllabi for each course offered in a given semester or session. Each institution shall make the online platform publicly available and:

1. Make syllabi readily searchable to the public within that online platform;
2. Post course syllabi on the institution's online platform in accordance with the implementation timeline in section III.C., below; and
3. Update syllabi information within the online platform in accordance with material changes in instructor syllabi and course expectations.<sup>4</sup>

C. Implementation Timeline.

1. Beginning Fall 2026, all course syllabi shall be posted to the institution's publicly available online platform no later than one (1) week prior to the first day of classes for the applicable semester or session (For instance, if an institution's Fall 2026 classes begin August 17, 2026, syllabi for the Fall 2026 semester shall be posted by August 10, 2026).
2. If a syllabus is unavailable as required in section III.C.1. above due to reasonable institutional operational limitations, such as when a course is under development or the instructor is not yet assigned, the institution shall post the syllabus upon its development and completion, which shall occur no later than the first day of classes for that academic semester or session.

IV. Institutional Regulations. Each constituent institution shall implement its own respective policies or procedures on syllabi publication consistent with the requirements of this regulation and applicable law.<sup>5</sup>

V. Other Matters.

- A. Nothing within this regulation shall be construed to require a publicly available syllabus to include the location or time of day at which a course is being held.
- B. The content of posted syllabi shall adhere to all applicable law, including the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act. No syllabus shall include any personally identifiable information of students.
- C. Effective Date. The requirements of this regulation shall be effective on January 15, 2026.
- D. Relation to State Laws. This regulation as adopted by the president supplements, and does not supplant or modify, those statutory enactments, regulations, and policies which govern the activities of public officials.

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<sup>4</sup> Syllabi posted to the institution's online platform may be removed after four (4) years, in accordance with the university's record retention schedule. See also [\*UNC General Records Retention and Disposition Schedule \(2021\), Series # 12.11, "Course Syllabi and Outlines"\*](#) (which has long affirmed that course syllabi are institutional records held by the university, and are not classified as confidential or as containing confidential information).

<sup>5</sup> This regulation applies only to work at the baccalaureate level and above and therefore does not apply to the North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics, the University of North Carolina School of the Arts for its high school programs, or to any lab schools operated by a constituent institution. Secondary instruction at those institutions is subject to separate regulations under various General Statutes.