

COURSE OUTLINES

Course outlines provide students with a set of expectations regarding the intended course and learner experience. To support student learning and their academic achievement, course outlines should consistently and effectively communicate instructor and, where applicable, program expectations, content, learning outcomes, delivery and the timing and methods of assessments. Clearly established expectations provide students with the ability to manage their time, identify required accommodations proactively, and plan in conjunction with course requirements.

Because teaching activities and learning environments are informed by and interrelated to the course outline, instructors should consider pedagogical approaches that are attentive to accessibility, equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenization and make these efforts evident through specific and deliberate design elements to structure the learning for all students. When trying to create an inclusive classroom, instructors may want to communicate and model their commitments through statements, learning outcomes, course materials, activities, and assignments. Course outlines should communicate instructors' clear and visible commitments to considerations of accessibility, equity, diversity, inclusion, Indigenization and/or decolonization in their discipline and in their learning environments.

As soon as possible, and no later than one week prior to the commencement of classes, the course outline, approved by the Program Head, must be posted on either the University's central repository or an institutionally supported department/school/college/program website. Where there are special topics courses, the department/school/program should consider posting a draft description of the offering at the start of the course selection period. The Program Head is responsible for reviewing and approving the course outlines for all courses offered by their department (see VII. Undergraduate Regulations and Procedures, Grades, Grading Procedures, Resolution 11). The Program Head is responsible for ensuring the course outline adheres to all related University policies and procedures (see VII. Undergraduate Regulations and Procedures: Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions; Academic Accommodation of Religious Obligations; Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Guidelines and Procedures; Grades, Grading Procedures; and Examinations; Schedule of Dates). This may be delegated to an Assistant Program Head.

Instructors must post the approved course outline, electronically via the Learning Management System or course website, by the first day of the semester. Course outlines must be developed in an accessible format in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. In support of the University's sustainability commitment, physical copies should be provided to students only in exceptional circumstances or in situations where a student requires a physical copy because of an accommodation.

Course Outline Components

To allow students to make informed course selection decisions and prepare for the course expectations, each course outline must include the following information:

- Name of Department, School, College, and/or Campus offering the course
- Course name, course code (including section), and credit weight
- Semester of offering

- Calendar description including any pre-requisites, co-requisites, and restrictions
- Detailed course description
- Instructor(s) name, email, and office hours information
- GTA name, email, and office hours information, if applicable
- Class schedule and location
- Final examination date and time, if applicable
- Course learning outcomes
- Statement of purpose, goals and/or objectives, if desired
- Required and recommended texts and course resources
- Delivery method
- The intended weekly schedule/syllabus, if applicable
- Assessment information including methods, breakdown (% of grade), specific due dates, and alignment to course learning outcomes
- Additional detailed information on assignments, midterms, and final exams
- Instructor or department policy on late or missed assignments, in alignment with academic consideration policies and processes
- Institutionally approved standard statements or a link to the statements.

Academic units may require additional information specific to the unit or program to be included on course outlines. Instructors should check with the Program Head in their unit for more information.

Revisions to Assessment Methods and Due Dates in Approved Course Outlines

Instructors may find it necessary to change the timing and/or method of assessment provided in the approved, circulated course outline after the first class date. This may be due to unforeseen circumstances (not covered by the Academic Disruptions outlined in the policy on academic continuity – see Academic Policy 2.2), or when using an emerging course design approach. In such cases, the instructor must receive approval from the Program Head after consultation with students. The Program Head is responsible for ensuring meaningful consultation with students has occurred. In more complex cases, the Program Head should consult with the Associate Vice-Provost. Where the change is supported by the Program Head and is consistent with University policies and procedures, such change may be enacted. When a change is approved, students must normally be provided a minimum of two weeks' notice before the revised change is to be implemented. Instructors must consider students with identified accommodations. A revised course outline clearly indicating the change will be provided electronically to students. Instructors are encouraged to use multiple methods when communicating the revised course outline: e.g. email message to the class, announcement through the learning management system, message posted on a course website, etc.

Course Outline Retention and Archival

Starting with the courses offered in Fall 2023, course outlines are to be retained in a central institutional repository or by the department/school/college for at minimum ten years after the offering of a course. Acknowledging that each course offering may be different, students are encouraged to consult these outlines for course selection purposes. The University of Guelph recommends that students retain copies of their course outlines for future use.