

Suggested Syllabi Statements & Student Resources

The course syllabus functions as a contract between students and faculty. In addition to providing a map to the content and assignments for the course, the syllabus is the place to identify issues that may arise in the course of the term as well as to provide students with information about resources that can contribute to their success. Discussing these procedures and resources with your students at the beginning of the semester and including them on the syllabus are both preventative ways of addressing issues and assisting your students at the outset.

Please consider either adding this information to your syllabi, Sakai sites, and/or help students otherwise know of the existence of these offices and resources.

Note: For easy reference, suggested syllabi statements are presented below in italics.

Best wishes for a successful semester!

[General Course Information & Deadlines](#)
[University Policies & Course Expectations](#)
[Resources for Students](#)

Use the links above to jump to main sections. Press Ctrl+f to search for keywords within this document.

General Course Information & Deadlines

Faculty Contact Information

Include your email address (PLU only), office hours, office location, and PLU phone extension.

Learning Objectives

All majors and minors have clearly defined learning outcomes. These outcomes need to be acknowledged in course syllabi, demonstrating which program objectives are met by the specific course. Courses designated as meeting General Education requirements need to also acknowledge those learning outcomes within the syllabi. More information about PLU's [current General Education requirements](#) can be located in the most recent course catalog.

Registrar's Deadlines

The Registrar's Office recommends including the following dates in your syllabi:

- the last day to add/drop without a fee,
- the last day to withdraw, and
- the last day to file for pass/fail.

These dates are posted on the [Dates & Deadlines](#) page of the Registrar's Office website.

Student Contact Information

The university requests that you communicate with students electronically through their PLU email accounts only. Important university communications are sent to students via email, and when faculty members also communicate with students through their PLU email addresses exclusively, it reinforces this system of university-wide communication, as well as assists faculty in assuring the identity of the message sender/recipient. This expectation should be noted in the section of your syllabus addressing communication.

University Policies & Course Expectations

Academic Dishonesty

PLU has an [Academic Integrity Policy](#) as part of the Student Code of Conduct. This policy outlines definitions of academic dishonesty as well as processes for reporting and resolving incidents of academic dishonesty, of which faculty should become aware. All faculty members at PLU share responsibility for educating students about the importance of academic integrity to everyone in a university community and, most specifically, the practices of academic integrity in each particular discipline.

You are strongly encouraged to place the following statement about academic integrity—or something similar—in your syllabus:

PLU's expectation is that students will not cheat or plagiarize, and that they will not condone these behaviors or assist others who plagiarize. Academic misconduct not only jeopardizes the career of the individual student involved, but also undermines the scholastic achievements of all PLU students and attacks the mission of this institution. Students are inherently responsible to do their own work, thereby ensuring the integrity of their academic records.

The most common forms of dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- *Submitting material that is not yours as part of your course performance, such as copying from another student's exam, allowing another student to copy from your exam;*
- *Using information or devices not allowed by the faculty; such as formulas or a computer program or data, or unauthorized materials, such as a copy of an examination before it is given;*
- *Fabricating information, such as data for a lab report;*
- *Violating procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of an assignment, test, or other evaluation;*
- *Collaborating with others on assignments without the instructor's consent;*
- *Cooperating with or helping another student to cheat; or*
- *Other forms of dishonest behavior, such as having another person take an exam for you, altering exam answers and requesting the exam be re-graded, or communicating with anyone other than a proctor or instructor during an exam.*

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- *Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to*

- identify them; or*
- *Using any course work previously produced by the same student without prior approval from the current instructor; or*
 - *Using altered wording, materials or ideas of others without properly identifying their source; or*
 - *Representing an idea or strategy that is significant in one's own work as one's own when it comes from someone else. If you are unsure about something that you want to do or the proper use of materials, then ask your instructor for clarification.*

Because plagiarism involves a misrepresentation of principles and processes fundamental to the integrity of the university, matters of plagiarism are taken very seriously by both administration and faculty. If a student is unsure about something that they want to do or the proper use of materials, it is the student's responsibility to ask the instructor for clarification.

Excerpt from PLU Faculty Handbook, Academic Integrity Policies, pp. 58-61 (Eighth Edition, first published September 2014, updated January 2019 and the Student Code of Conduct, 2018-2019).

Academic Emergency Plan

The PLU faculty adopted the [Educational Policies for Pandemic and Evacuation Emergencies](#) in 2007. This policy states that each faculty member will have a plan for how a course either will be completed or final grades for the course determined in the case of an emergency, e.g., natural disaster, epidemic, etc. that would necessitate closing the university during term. As you prepare your syllabus, consider how graded elements are distributed throughout the term to ensure that there are multiple data points from which a final grade could be calculated in the unlikely event that a semester is abruptly concluded.

Attendance

Making students aware of classroom expectations regarding attendance and consequences for absences is critical. The PLU catalog (under Academic Procedures) states: "The university assumes that all registered students have freely accepted personal responsibility for regular class attendance. Course grades reflect the quality of students' academic performance as a whole, which normally includes regular participation in the total class experience and is evaluated accordingly. Absences may lead to a reduction of a student's final grade. In the event of unavoidable absence, students are expected to inform the instructor. Assignments of make-up work, if any, are at the discretion of the instructor."

It is important for you to make your attendance policy clear to students, including how it addresses any absences students accrue when they are officially representing the university off campus for a performance, competition, or academic presentation.

To help guide your creation of an attendance policy, the Faculty Handbook (Eighth Edition, first published September 2016, revised July 2019, p. 78) states:

SECTION 10. CLASS ATTENDANCE—STUDENTS

A. The university assumes that every student has freely accepted personal responsibility for regular class attendance. Although attendance itself is not a measure of successful learning, and course grades are issued on the basis of academic performance and not on the basis of attendance alone, such performance normally includes regular participation in the total class experience and is evaluated accordingly. In the event of unavoidable absences, students are strongly encouraged as a matter of courtesy to inform their instructors and may be required to do so. Any arrangements for missed work are discretionary between instructor and student, except as specified below.

B. Undergraduate students officially representing the university off campus for a performance, competition, or academic presentation shall not be penalized solely for missing class due to such events (including travel time). With prior documentation of such involvement, these students shall be allowed to complete missed exams or, at the discretion of the course instructor, substitute an alternative assignment. However, whether a missed lab, clinical, or other in-class activity may be made up shall be up to the academic unit.

C. The burden is always on the student, not the faculty member, to take steps to remedy the effects of absences from class. In particular, the student is responsible for making prior arrangements with the instructor to complete missed work or to substitute comparable work instead. An academic unit may adopt shared policies to govern such assignments, including an expectation that the work be submitted, or the test taken, prior to the absence.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Stating expectations for appropriate classroom behavior in the syllabus helps orient students to the norms for your course and provides a reference in situations when disruptive behavior occurs. Alternately, you could engage students in the collective creation of such expectations to enhance student agency as well as accountability. (See the handout [“Developing Class Norms and Participation Guidelines”](#) from The Institute for Teaching Excellence & Faculty Development at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for additional information on this approach.)

A helpful starting point for considering standards of classroom behavior is the following excerpt from the “Disruption of University Community” section of PLU’s Student Code of Conduct, which you may consider including in your syllabus:

The University holds as basic the integrity and well-being of every person in the community. PLU is committed to providing a living, learning and working environment that is fair, consistent, caring, and supportive of intellectual and personal growth. Further, PLU is committed to protecting the rights of its community members to engage in dialogue and express ideas in an environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, and exploitation. This freedom of expression does not, however, entail the freedom to threaten, stalk, intimidate, harass, or abuse.

Students are therefore expected to treat every individual with respect and civility. The University prohibits any activities which cause or threaten physical or mental harm, suffering or exhaustion,

which demean the dignity of any individual, and/or which interfere with one's academic progress, living environment or employment responsibilities.

You may also want to include in your guidelines a statement to the effect that disruptions that continue after you have discussed the issue with the student, that are egregious, or that are blatantly in violation of the Student Code of Conduct may be referred to PLU's Student Rights and Responsibilities system. See the [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) webpage for more information.

Grading Policy and Grade Disputes

The university catalog provides the [general policies on grading](#). As with almost all other dimensions of teaching, PLU leaves the specific system of grading to the professional judgment of faculty. You should consult your chair or dean to learn what shared agreements and practices exist, if any, about grading in your unit.

Include in your syllabus the grading scale and system that you use. You may also want to include your rationale for it. Ideally, your syllabus also will include some description of what criteria is used to assess "A"-level work, "B"-level work, etc. Providing such information in the syllabus (or on an assignment sheet) contributes to students' ability to incorporate appropriate disciplinary standards and assists students in successfully achieving them. A transparent grading policy also enables students to understand your evaluation of their work and is a resource when questions about a grade arise. (If you do not provide information about your grading policy in your syllabus, provide it before the first major exam or the submission of the first graded assignment.) Each division of the College of Arts and Sciences, professional school, and interdisciplinary program at PLU has a procedure for handling grade disputes. While you may not want to put that procedure on your syllabus, you should know what it is for your unit and where a student can find it, should an issue arise.

Weather Conditions

The Provost's Office recommends including a statement regarding weather-related school closures. Sample text:

Make sure to call ahead to confirm whether class is meeting if you have any concerns about snow accumulations or icy roads that would make travel to campus unsafe. You can call the University's hotline after 6 a.m. (253-535-7100) or access the PLU website (www.plu.edu) to see if school has been cancelled.

Resources for Students*

Below, you will find information about various resources that can be helpful in ensuring that students not only persist but thrive while attending PLU. Some resources provide language that faculty can insert into syllabi, or you may consider sharing this information with students via an email at the beginning of the term or on your Sakai site.

*The Center for Student Success (described in more detail [below](#)) is intended to be a hub for student resources. Providing students with information about how to find and access this office

is highly encouraged.

Office of Accessibility and Accommodation

The [Office of Accessibility and Accommodation](#) is part of the Dean of Students' office, within the Division of Student Life. OAA is dedicated to ensuring equitable access and inclusion for all students with disabilities. We serve students with either temporary or permanent physical, health, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities. Students partner with our office, faculty, and staff to establish reasonable accommodations and services to receive equitable access to academic and co-curricular opportunities. Reasonable accommodation will be provided at no cost to the student on a case-by-case basis as recommended in the student's documentation of a disability and as determined by the DSS Coordinator.

To make students aware of this resource, the following text is recommended for inclusion in your syllabi:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, have emergency medical information to share with me, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. If you have questions concerning the services available for students who need accommodations, contact the Office of Accessibility and Accommodation at 253-538-6392 or dss@plu.edu.

Related Resource: [Disability Support Services: Information for Faculty](#)

Bias Incident Response Team

The purpose of the [Bias Incident Response Team](#) (BIRT) is to anonymously collect data regarding instances of experienced bias within the PLU community and monitor the type and frequency of such occurrences. Doing so will help us better understand our campus climate, create community-based educational opportunities to address noted trends in such occurrences, and foster an environment where everyone feels welcome. BIRT can be utilized by anyone within the PLU community.

The BIRT does not adjudicate violations of PLU's Student Code of Conduct, the Sexual Misconduct Policy, or Grievance Policy. It also does not address violations of federal discrimination laws. In such cases, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Campus Safety, and/or the University Dispute and Resolution Committee should be contacted.

Related Resource: PLU's [Diversity Center](#)

Center for Student Success

The [Center for Student Success](#) (CSS) is a campus-wide network of units dedicated to helping students succeed at PLU. They provide PLU students with individualized academic and personal supports and resources through a collaborative, student-centered approach. By visiting the CSS, students can access resources related to Academic Advising & Career Planning,

Tutoring & Assignments, Career & Vocational Planning, Financial Services, Personal Health & Wellness, and the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations as well as learn about resources for affinity groups such as students of color, LGBTQ students, international students, veteran & military students, and transfer students, among other groups.

The main hub of the CSS is located on the first floor of the Mortvedt Library building; additional partner offices can be located using the [CSS services map](#). If you are unsure or would like help navigating the resources, you can contact the CSS directly at success@plu.edu and 253-535-7459.

Mental Health Resources

As a student you may experience a range of mental health issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, strained relationships, feeling down, or loss of motivation. PLU's Counseling Center is here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 253-535-7383, visiting <https://www.plu.edu/chws/>, or emailing counseling@plu.edu. Help is always available. For urgent mental health support after business hours, including weekends and holidays, contact the Counseling Center Crisis Line at 253-535-7075.

Related Resource: [The Faculty and Staff Guide to Helping Students in Distress](#) recently developed by the Counseling Center.

Center for Military Support

The [Center for Military Support](#) is a space dedicated for military-affiliated students to use as a lounge, study space, or to connect with other military-affiliated students. This space is located in Room 107, Hauge Administration building. In this space, there are several resources for students to use, including laptops, fireplace, comfy chairs and couch w/trays, resource board, microwave, and coffee. Students can also connect with the Vet Corps Navigator or the Director of Military Outreach.

Supporting DACA and Undocumented Students

PLU's mission of care, rooted deeply in our Lutheran heritage, requires action and an unequivocal commitment to fight for social justice. This page listing various resources for [DACA and undocumented students](#)--including those related to housing, legal issues, financial aid, and study away--is just one aspect of PLU's ongoing commitment to them.

Related Resource: [Defending Dreamers - A Toolkit for University Leaders](#)

Land Acknowledgment

Faculty may also consider adding a land acknowledgement to their syllabi. For example:

We are on the traditional lands of the Nisqually, Puyallup, Squaxin Island and Steilacoom peoples; we acknowledge and respect the traditional caretakers of this land.

Please note that this statement should be seen as an opportunity to engage students and colleagues in conversations about our obligations to these indigenous peoples as a university and community and to also reflect on your curricular choices, given this statement.

Lute Library & Course Reserves

The [Lute Library & Course Reserves](#) seeks to build a library of current course materials (books, clickers, etc.) to increase student accessibility to learning materials through the library's Course Reserves system. Course materials in the Lute Library & Course Reserves are available for checkout at the library front desk and are available for a few hours at a time in the case of textbooks and videos or for an entire semester in the case of clickers.

Faculty may consider adding the following language to their syllabi to help inform students of this resource:

Copies of the course texts are also available for you to borrow for ____ [faculty determine how long students can check out reserved materials] hours at a time via the Lute Library Reserves System. This system, part of Mortvedt Library's [Course Reserves](#) system is located on the Library's main floor at the Circulation Desk. If the materials you need are not currently available under Course Reserves, please contact me so that I can work to either have that item integrated into the Lute Library or so we can try to find another solution, if possible.

PLU Pantry

Students are hungry for many different reasons. The conditions of the spaces that they come from do not change because they attend a university such as PLU. Therefore, it is important for campuses to have food pantries in the efforts to help alleviate the stress and worry that students face due to food insecurities. Food insecurity is the lack of access to affordable and nutritious foods. Students cannot do their best in class on an empty stomach, and the PLU Pantry exists so they have the resources they need to succeed.

The [PLU Pantry](#) is located on the first floor of the Anderson University Center between the Scandinavian Center and Campus Ministry. It is open Mon-Fri from 9am to 5pm. or help outside of regular hours, students can contact either their community director or commuter director, both of whom have access to the pantry. Any member of the community with a valid PLU ID can access the pantry.

Religious Accommodations

Per [WA SB 5166](#) passed during the 2019 regular session, all WA postsecondary institutions must create a policy whereby students are provided religious accommodations. This policy “must require faculty to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of the course or program. ‘Reasonably accommodate’ means coordinating with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for completion of the program and includes rescheduling examinations or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities.” Faculty are encouraged to consult with the Dean of Inclusive Excellence (Dr. Jen Smith, jennifer.smith@plu.edu or x7811) or Campus Ministry (University Pastor Jen Rude, rudejl@plu.edu or x7465) for support in providing accommodations.

Additionally, “A postsecondary educational institution shall provide notice to students of its policy by publishing the policy on the institution's web site and **including either the policy or a link to the policy in course or program syllabi**. The notice to students must also include notification of the institution's grievance procedure.” Accordingly, faculty should include the following language (or a similar statement) in their syllabi:

PLU makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for all students who, because of religious observances, may have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance in courses. Students are responsible for reviewing the course schedule at the beginning of the semester to determine any such potential conflicts. Then, students should communicate with their faculty member about the need for a religious accommodation at least three weeks in advance of the date when the conflict occurs. If students would like support in making this request, they can contact PLU’s University Pastor Jen Rude (rudejl@plu.edu or 535-7465).

Related Resource: [Religious Inclusion and Accommodation](#) webpage

Student Care Network

The [Student Care Network](#) (SCN) works with the PLU community to proactively connect with students and partners for a successful academic, social, and emotional experience at PLU. The SCN accomplishes this by:

- Providing one point of contact ([SCN Report](#)) for all community members to share any concerns regarding a student;
- Working with established PLU systems to outreach to the student, provide support, and refer as appropriate;
- Collaborating and partnering with families and local agencies as necessary;
- Following up with the reporter to “close the loop” and to share responses to concerns and outcomes as they are known;

- Assessing responsiveness of established PLU systems and making recommendations for improvements and updates to policy, process, availability of resources, and other relevant systemic features.

Faculty should consider submitting a care report if students are repeatedly absent, display a change in behavior or appearance, appear overly stressed or distracted, or notice anything else that makes you concerned for the student's wellbeing. Students can also submit care forms for their peers or for themselves.

The following language may be useful in communicating the availability of this resource to students:

The Student Care Network (SCN) works with the PLU community to proactively connect with students and partners for a successful academic, social, and emotional experience at PLU.

- *SCN will provide one outlet for faculty, staff, students, and parents/guardians to report any concern (academic, emotional, physical, social) related to the well-being of a PLU student.*
- *SCN will connect with the student of concern and provide resources, support, and assistance as appropriate.*
- *SCN will work with campus partners to support a culture of care and response for all community members.*
- *SCN will focus on creating a healthy and safe learning environment for all students on the PLU campus, both on an individual level and at the community level*
- *SCN will provide proactive intervention for PLU students and assist in providing resources to help students gain the skills and resources they need to be effective and successful at PLU and beyond.*

If you would like additional information about the SCN or to submit a form, please go to plu.edu/srr/student-care-network/.

Related Resource: The [Faculty and Staff Guide to Helping Students in Distress](#) recently developed by the Counseling Center.

Title IX

PLU is committed to equality of educational opportunity. The University does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, gender, age, national origin, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In many cases, such discrimination violates state and federal law. The Equal Opportunity/ADA Office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's non-discrimination policies.

To make students aware of this policy and the resources available to them related to Title IX concerns, faculty should consider including the following statement in their syllabi:

As an institution of higher learning that receives federal funds, PLU is required to abide by Title IX, which states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." I take discrimination seriously and am required to report known or suspected acts of sexual harassment including sexual violence as defined by Title IX. While privacy can often, but not always, be maintained, college officials are required to report the following when incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence occur: The (1) nature of the harassment or discrimination, (2) the date (when the incident

occurred and when it was reported), (3) the time of the incident, and (4) generally location of the incident; as well (5) the disposition of the complaint, if known. Other information may need to be reported on a case-by-case basis.

Students have access to confidential services through the Counseling Center, Health Center, the Campus Pastor in Campus Ministry, and the Gender-Based Violence Advocate in the Center for Gender Equity.

For more information on Title IX, including contact information, go to plu.edu/title-ix.

If you feel that our classroom environment in anyway impedes your ability to participate or subjects you to discrimination, or you are experiencing harassment outside of class that disrupts your educational opportunities, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Equal Opportunity/ADA Office/Title IX coordinator.

Related Resources: [Center for Gender Equity](#) & [Gender-Based Violence Advocate](#)

Resources for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students

PLU is committed to the success of transgender and gender non-conforming students at PLU. Whether you are seeking answers to support your transition or working to create an inclusive environment, this [site](#) serves to connect you to community members, resources on and off campus, and opportunities for engagement and advocacy.

Related Resources: How to capitalize on the first five minutes of your first day of class to create a [gender-inclusive space](#) and the locations of PLU's [all-gender restrooms](#)