

COURSE PURPOSE

One of the first steps in identifying the expected learning outcomes for a course is identifying the *purpose* of teaching in the course. By clarifying the purpose of the course, faculty can help discover the main topics or themes related to students' learning. These themes help to outline the expected learning outcomes for the course.

The course purpose involves the following:

1. What role does this course play within the major?
2. How is the course unique or different from other courses?
3. Why should/do students take this course? What essential knowledge or skills should they gain from this experience?
4. What knowledge or skills from this course will students need to have mastered to perform well in future classes or jobs?
5. Why is this course important for students to take?

This section of a syllabus is distinct from the "Course Description" section that many faculty members already use. While the "Course Description" provides general information regarding the topics and content addressed in the course, the "Course Purpose" goes beyond that to describe how this course fits in to the students' educational experience in the major.