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DATE: November 20, 2019

TO: Minot State University Assessment Committee

FROM: Syllabus Audit Team: Deborah Brothers, Sherry Filler, Shanette Haarsager

RE: Syllabus Audit Review for Spring 2019-Summary Report

The MSU Syllabus Audit Team has completed a review of Spring 2019 syllabi for all courses listed on NDUS Section Status Reports for the Spring 2019 semester. Using the syllabus audit spreadsheet, the team identified missing syllabi in each division/department and made notes on the spreadsheets indicating any issues with individual syllabi, such as missing information, incorrectly reported information, etc. Each team member reviewed different academic areas and prepared a spreadsheet with their findings. The spreadsheets will be sent to Michael Brooks, Director of Academic Assessment.

The Syllabus Audit Team met on November 19, 2019 and reviewed team member's notes for the purpose of identifying recurring issues in some of the areas. The team notes the following:

Throughout the process of checking syllabi, the team notes again, required information was often included, but not always in the recommended order or clearly identified by topic heading. For example, some information was imbedded within another topic, such as the Assessment Date or other important dates hidden within the Tentative Course Outline.

Office Location: Again, adjunct instructors did not always have information in this area because most don't have on-campus offices.

Office Hours: Some on-campus faculty did not include specific office hours on the syllabus, but instead directed students to check their office door, or the department office. Nursing was identified as one area where this happened. It was noted some adjunct faculty did list a time when they would be available for students to call if they wanted to touch base personally instead of through email.



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Placement Policy: The team noted that as in the Fall 2018 semester, this line was rarely used.

Assignment & Descriptions, Tentative Course Outline, and Tentative Due Dates of Major Assignments: These three areas are all tied together, and as noted previously in the team's Fall 2018 report, the information included in each area was widely inconsistent. Assignments weren't always descriptive or sometimes were included in the outline or in with tentative due dates of major assignments. Some faculty provided a general outline, some provided a day-by-day listing of topics to be covered and assignments to be given. Faculty often required students to use Blackboard for assignments and/or a separate calendar which was not attached to the syllabus.

Late & Missed Work Policy: As noted in the Fall 2018 audit report, sometimes this information was included as part of the attendance policy and sometimes it was included in Assignments & Descriptions.

Attendance Policy: This was often referenced using a link to the MSU policy on the web.

General Education Requirement: Many courses did not indicate if the course did or did not meet a general education requirement. The team noted it was common for the general education requirement to be missed, even if the course fulfilled one of the requirements.

Assessment Day: This continues to be left off syllabi, especially if the course did not regularly meet on Assessment Day.

Final Exam: Often, faculty provided a link to the MSU final exam schedule listed on the MSU website and did not reference the specific date on the syllabus.

Disability Policy: It was noted many faculty used old policy language which referenced ADA accommodation.

Academic Honesty Policy and University Sanctioned Events Policy: Faculty did not always use the same language for these two policies.



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The team questions the use of live links in syllabi because if a syllabus is used for reference in subsequent years, the link will not reflect data specific to the date of the syllabus. Most often live links were used to identify campus policies and final test dates.

Some issues noted with private lessons, in the Music Department, were that multiple private lesson sections were often combined on the same syllabus or more than one instructor was listed on the same syllabus. It was noted the Communication Disorders Department also listed more than one instructor on syllabi for clinicals and practicums.

The team noted the number of missing syllabi for Spring 2019 was less than Fall 2018. Missing syllabi were often clinical courses, independent study courses, practicums, etc. However, the number of missing syllabi for these types of courses was also fewer than what was missing in Fall 2018.

Finally, the team agrees that going forward, many of the issues referenced in this report may be resolved by use of the new Simple Syllabus software.

Questions regarding this report can be directed to Deborah Brothers, Sherry Filler, or Shanette Haarsager.