

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 7 – C
DATE: December 7-8, 2022

SUBJECT

New BOR Policy 2:37 – Syllabi and Learning Management System Policy (First and Final Reading)

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[AAC Guideline 5.3](#) – Syllabus and Format Guidelines

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) has been evaluating the current AAC Guideline 5.3 to ensure that the policy reflects the needs of a digital environment given the system continues to provide more hybrid, hy-flex, and online modalities. Lengthy discussions on developing a policy versus having a guideline was a critical element.

The Board of Regents manages a system learning management software solution; AAC with agreement from the Council of Presidents and Superintendents (COPS), have opted to introduce a Syllabi and Learning Management System (LMS) Policy. With this direction, a new guideline would be created to document the procedural processes. The policy will outline the required expectations for a course syllabus and the use of the LMS.

Attachment I provides the draft policy on the requirements established by leadership. The structure of the policy includes:

- Purpose
- Definitions
- Principles, Expectations and Policy Statements

The importance of this policy will be multi-factored; however, primarily the syllabus is a course contract between the faculty member and the student. The syllabus represents course content requirements and expectations, assessment, and meets the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for accreditation. The assumed practices

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20221207_7-C:

I move to (1) waive the two-reading requirement of By-Laws Section 5.5.1, and (2) approve the first and final reading of the new proposed BOR Policy 2:37, as presented in Attachment I.

(identified as factual requirements by HLC¹) require that course requirements and assessment(s) be fully articulated to students; this can be conducted through a syllabus for the course or a full written agreement for internships/clinical placements.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Many meetings have been held discussing the need for a policy versus a guideline on the syllabus and LMS. This policy will now require a syllabus to be posted no later than three working days prior to the start of the term. The use of the learning management system will now be required of all sections excluding only a finite number.

AAC and COPS have discussed and provided feedback on the development of the attached policy. On November 15, 2022, COPS approved the draft of this policy. On November 16, 2022, AAC reviewed and provided some additional information and modification for BOR approval.

The timeline for this policy will be as follows:

- First and Final Reading – December 2022 BOR Meeting
- Guideline Modification – December 2022
- Implementation – January through May 2023

The Executive Director and the Board academic staff recommend approval.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – Proposed New BOR Policy 2:37

¹ Higher Learning Commission: Assumed Practices. Retrieved November 17, 2022.
<https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>.

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Syllabi and Learning Management System Policy

NUMBER: 2:37

A. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the information to be made available to students and the associated posting requirements, ensuring students have access to accurate and timely information on the courses in which they are enrolled.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Board of Regents (“BOR”):** The constitutional body responsible for governing the Unified System of Public Higher Education in South Dakota, which encompasses its supervision, coordination, management, and regulation. Board of Regents Policy 1:0, 1:1 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.
- 2. Institution(s):** One of the six (6) universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and University of South Dakota.
- 3. Instructor of Record:** The individual assigned by the institution with overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the course syllabus, delivery of the course, and issuing grades for a given course.
- 4. Learning Management System (LMS)¹:** A comprehensive, integrated software that supports the development, delivery, assessment, and administration of courses in traditional face-to-face, blended, or online learning environments.
- 5. Course Schedule:** An outline providing students with a list of lecture topics, activities, assignments, and due dates to be used in preparation and planning of their student engagement and success.
- 6. Course Catalog:** The student information system catalog for student registration to include the course title, course subject and number, credit hours, instructor of record (if/when assigned), academic term and year, course meeting schedule, building location, delivery method, and campus.
- 7. Course Syllabus:** An academic document that communicates information about a specific course and explains the rules, responsibilities, and expectations associated with the course.

¹ 2014, EDUCAUSE. Retrieved from <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2014/4/selecting-a-learning-management-system-advice-from-an-academic-perspective>.

8. **Student Information System:** The system that manages all student information managed through the Regents Information Systems department of the Board of Regents.
9. **Textbook:** Any textbook, paperback, or electronic book required to be purchased and read for a course.

C. PRINCIPLES, EXPECTATIONS AND POLICY STATEMENTS

1. A course summary must be available in the student information system prior to the registration cycle for students of the institution to evaluate.
2. All sections for the semester will be activated (in the LMS) no fewer than three (3) working days prior to the start of the term by the instructor record.
3. A course syllabus must be available and posted (in the LMS) no fewer than three (3) working days prior to the start of the term by the instructor of record.
4. Courses that are exempt from the LMS posting requirement include internships, thesis, and dissertation sections (Student Information System Instructional Method of U Thesis/Research Sustaining, T Thesis, S Internship/Practicum). These sections will require an agreement to be completed between the institution and the student².
5. For clinical experiences, the course syllabus/agreement will be posted in the applicable clinical LMS.
6. Each course syllabus shall include the following required course elements:
 - 6.1. Course Subject, Number, and Credit Hours (as provided in the student information system);
 - 6.2. Course Title (as provided in the student information system);
 - 6.3. Instructor of Record and Contact Information;
 - 6.4. Course Description (as it appears in the course catalog);
 - 6.5. Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes;
 - 6.6. Course Meeting Time and Location (as provided in the student information system);
 - 6.7. Required Textbook(s)/Required Course Materials;
 - 6.8. Description of Instructional Methods;
 - 6.9. Course Schedule;
 - 6.10. Course Assignments;
 - 6.11. Attendance/Make-up Policy;
 - 6.12. Evaluation Procedures (i.e., tests, projects, assignments, grading policy, etc.);
 - 6.13. A link to the required BOR statements and required institutional statements

² Higher Learning Commission: Assumed Practices. [Criteria for Accreditation \(CRRT.B.10.010\) | Policies \(hlcommission.org\)](https://www.hlcommission.org)

6.13.1. Certain areas are governed consistently across all institutions, warranting common clauses or statements applicable to all students. To ensure consistency in verbiage, interpretation, and application, the following topics shall be addressed by way of required BOR statements, the specific verbiage of which shall be set forth in AAC guidelines and incorporated verbatim at every institution. The required BOR statement areas include:

- Freedom in Learning
- ADA Statement
- Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct
- Acceptable Use of Technology
- Emergency Alert Communication

6.13.2. Certain areas are governed consistently across each institution, warranting common clauses or statements applicable to all students at a given institution. To ensure consistency in verbiage, interpretation, and application, each institution shall implement required institutional statements covering the following areas:

- Complaint Procedure
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Student Success Services and Supports

7. The course syllabi may be supplemented with additional elements deemed appropriate by the instructor of record, and in accordance with the institution's procedures, which could include but isn't limited to, supplemental course material, classroom decorum/expectations, communication etiquette, and/or optional content/material.
8. Courses that are added to fill a course enrollment management need (See BOR Policy 2:35) may post the syllabus after the three (3) working day requirement, but not later than the first full week of classes.
9. Courses that have a change in the instructor of record may post the syllabus after the three (3) working day requirement, but not later than the first full week of classes.
10. If a change in the instructor occurs due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., medical leave) during the semester, the institution will work with the students and the new instructor to ensure the syllabus is properly updated.
11. The instructor of record may modify the course schedule throughout the semester as necessary and appropriate to adjust to changing circumstances, provided students are given sufficient and prompt notice of any such changes and such changes do not unduly penalize students. See AAC Guidelines for the procedures related to course schedule modification.
12. Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed to dictate course content or instruction. What constitutes appropriate content or instruction for a given course is a matter of academic freedom, governed in accordance with BOR Policy 1:11 – Academic Freedom and Responsibility.

13. Copies of all syllabi distributed to students and posted in the applicable LMS, in accordance with this policy, must be provided to the institution by the instructor of record in accordance with the institution's procedures.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

[AAC Guidelines 5.3 Syllabus Policy and Common Format Guidelines](#)

SOURCE:

BOR December 2022.