

## UOCC: Committee guidelines on syllabi class policies and procedures

The committee reviews the tone of various class policies and procedures such as "Email Policies" and "Classroom Rules" that are described in the syllabus. We feel it is important that syllabus policies and procedures be thoughtful, inclusive, and welcoming. Issues of poor tone will likely deter students from reaching out when they need support or assistance. Please consider tone when writing syllabi to express clear structure and expectations, while still fostering "an environment conducive to learning . . . where the rights, safety, dignity and worth of every individual are respected" as our Code of Conduct affords both students and instructors alike. Best practices should avoid ableism, and, instead, foster universal design, empowering students of all abilities to succeed in our courses.

<https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code>

The UOCC may return syllabi with comments to improve tone if we feel that improvements are needed. Examples of syllabus language that we find concerning would be:

- Using full capitalized words. These can be read as yelling among this social-media-informed generation.
- An excess number of restrictive rules about how to reach out to instructors.
- Overly restrictive requirements about what students may or may not say to instructors.
- Disrespect towards student efforts, even in jest. Such as "if students do the following, their work will be burnt (or worse)."
- Language, even in jest, that disrespects inclusivity of students. Since "Our university community rejects . . . racist, homophobic, misogynistic, or anti-Semitic views" (Schill, Open Mike), attention should be given to crafting language that supports a safe and welcoming environment for diverse student populations.
- Rules that differentially impact one subset of students, including but not limited to LGBTQIA+ students, people of color, women, alter-abled students, etc. For example, prohibiting bathroom access during class would disadvantage both women and students with many medical conditions.
- Ableist rules that exclude accommodations or, otherwise, unduly impede accessibility for all students.