

Syllabus Letter Assignment

Hard copy due in my office sometime before the beginning of class on
Wednesday, August 30, 2017

A course syllabus is vitally important and conveys crucial information you will need to know throughout the semester. You will probably receive a syllabus for every course, and you need to read it thoroughly and consult it often throughout the semester. Most classes will probably have just a paper syllabus. I provide a shorter paper syllabus as a convenience, but the web-based syllabus is what we will turn to most often this semester.

To help facilitate your familiarity with this kind of document, this assignment asks you to write a letter of response to our FYS syllabus.

First, read through the **web** syllabus carefully (and put all of the important due dates on your calendar). You'll notice there are five main pages — Welcome, Course Objectives, Course Requirements, Writing, and Schedule — as well as other materials and links.

Second, craft a letter to me that contains your thoughts, questions, concerns, and comments about the course, the assignments and requirements, and the general feel you get for the course. This assignment is not a quiz; there are no specific content requirements you must fulfill. Instead, the purpose of this first writing assignment is to stress that **writing is first and foremost a form of communication.**

I'd like for you actually to communicate with me, and not just tell me what you think I want to hear.

To that end, you might want to address some of the following questions — but you don't need to address any or all of them. Make this letter your own.

- What drew you to this course? Was it your first (or second or last) choice for an FYS?
- What are your initial thoughts regarding the requirements? Do they seem like something you can do? Are you anxious about any of them? If so, why? What questions do you have about them?
- What are your initial thoughts about the outside activities? Are there any that sound particularly interesting or boring? Why?
- Are there any course policies that worry you? Why?
- Do you understand the accommodations statement? If you have a learning disability, have you been in contact with the Office of Academic Support?
- Are there any course topics or readings that catch your attention? Do any seem particularly interesting or boring?

The letter need not be overly formal, but **do not** write it as you would a text message or a (badly written) email. Please use proper capitalization, spelling, and punctuation and write in complete sentences. Please type the letter and print out a hard copy. And always use proper formatting: 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1-inch margins.