

## **Project Proposal: Policies and Practices of Course Syllabi Distribution at BC Post-Secondary Institutions**

### **Background**

Multiple studies assessed the design of course syllabi to facilitate better learning and student engagement and retention (Eberly et al., 2001; Jones & Zhu, 2022). Previous research largely indicates that the course syllabus is usually provided to students early, if not on the first day of the course (Past Prof, 2015; Sells, 2021; UBC Academic Calendar, n.d.). A recent BCCAT study investigated course outline and syllabi policies and practices (McQuarrie, 2024); however, the timing of syllabi distribution and related institutional practices have not been a focus of research. This study aims to close this gap.

### **Purpose/ Goal**

To assess policies and practices of course syllabi distribution at BC post-secondary institutions.

### **Scope**

BC Transfer System institutions with examples from selected non-BC post-secondary institutions

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study include:

1. To review available literature on course syllabi and their influence on student registration behaviours, as well as student satisfaction and retention;
2. To review institutional policies on course syllabi distribution and content on institutional websites;
3. To assess institutional practices of syllabi distribution and the perceptions of institutional staff and students on the effectiveness of these practices; and
4. To provide recommendations and to identify areas for future research.

### **Timeline**

Dependent on start date, completion date for this project will be no later than March 2025.

### **Budget**

Maximum budget available for this project is \$25,000, inclusive of all hourly charges, travel and associated costs, and GST.

BCCAT's [Proposal Template for Research Projects](#) may be used as a guideline for submitting the proposal.

### **References**

Eberly, M. B., Newton, S. E., & Wiggins, R. A. (2001). The Syllabus as a Tool for Student-Centered Learning. *The Journal of General Education*, 50(1), 56–74.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/jge.2001.0003>

- Jones, B. D., & Zhu, X. (2022). The Effects of a Syllabus on Students' Perceptions of the Motivational Climate in a Course. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 16(3). <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijstl.2022.160303>
- McQuarrie, F. (2024). Content of course outlines at BC Transfer System members institutions: A review with recommendations to facilitate requests for transfer credit. BC Council on Admissions & Transfer. <https://www.bccat.ca/publication/courseoutlines/>
- Past Prof. (2015, January 12). Is Your First Day of Class “Syllabus Day”? *Past Prof.* <https://pastprof.wordpress.com/2015/01/12/is-your-first-day-of-class-syllabus-day/>
- Sells, L. (2021, January 15). Hopes and Fears: A first day of class syllabus activity. *Macmillan and BFW Teaching Community*. <https://community.macmillanlearning.com/t5/communication-blog/hopes-and-fears-a-first-day-of-class-syllabus-activity/ba-p/13560>
- UBC Academic Calendar. (n.d.). *Content and Distribution of Course Syllabi*. <https://vancouver.calendar.ubc.ca/campus-wide-policies-and-regulations/content-and-distribution-course-syllabi>