



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

OVERALL GUIDELINES

- Show that each component of the course outline is rooted in the basic theory and concepts of the discipline.
- Integrate all components throughout the outline:
 - Objectives should meet the stated objectives in the course description
 - The Outline of Topics should cover all the objectives
 - The Methods of Evaluation should match the objectives and show how students will demonstrate that all of the objectives have been met
 - The Methods of Instruction should show how the course will enable students to achieve the objectives
 - The Reading, Writing and Outside Assignments should relate specifically to the course

COURSE NAME AND NUMBER

- Course names and numbers must be approved by the President or Vice President of Instruction.
- When considering a course number, allow yourself enough flexibility to consider the possibility of adding related classes both before and after this one to maintain a logical pedagogical sequence.
- Ensure that you specify a long and short version of your course title.
- Accurately indicate the course content in the title.
- The district recommends a limitation of 30 characters in the course title, due to constraints of the software program they use.

COURSE UNITS

- 1 hour lecture | 3 hours lab = 1 unit
- Regular course = 3 units
- Course with lab = 4 units



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

- Write a short paragraph of approximately 100 words that summarizes the objectives and content.
- Description must be in complete sentences and in the present tense.
- Identify the need for the course and/or outcome students will receive.
- The course description is an exact replica of the course description in the catalog.
- Include any special requirements and any unusual aspects of the course.
- Include general statement that identifies the target audience, e.g., students who would benefit from taking the course.
- *(References to repeatability and variable units)*

LECTURE HOURS PER WEEK

(See units above)

LAB HOURS PER WEEK

(See units above)

PREREQUISITES, CO-REQUISITES, ADVISORIES

- For **prerequisites**, list course(s) students must complete successfully before enrolling in this course.
- For **co-requisites**, identify courses that must either be previously completed or taken concurrently.
- An **advisory** recommends previous completion or concurrent enrollment in a course, but does not require it.



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs; see Appendix B – Student Learning Outcomes Defined) express the course objectives in a format that is precise, repeatable, able to be tracked, and measurable.

- The hundreds of specific learning objectives of the course must be grouped into sets which share commonalities. Each statement is really a collection of objectives rather than, a single objective.
- Some objectives must reflect critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation), as opposed to the more basic cognitive outcomes (knowledge, comprehension, application).
- List verbs that demonstrate specific, observable, measurable outcomes. Place the verb at the beginning of the objective (reference Appendix A - Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Adequately cover theory, principles and concepts. All of these should relate in concept and language to the **Course Description** (above) and the **Outline of Topics** (below).
- Be concise and complete. As a general guideline, the average number of SLOs for a three-unit course is 7 to 15.
- All courses must have content specified in the **Outline of Topics** to fulfill the course objectives.

COURSE TOPICS

- Must be in outline format, but contain measurable, repeatable content. The minimum standard requires topic and subtopics. Additional subtopics are encouraged.
 - Content emphasis may be indicated by the amount of sub-headings listed under a given topic.
- All identified topics must correlate to the Course Objectives.

RECOMMENDED READING AND SUPPORT MATERIAL

- Textbooks and other readings should relate specifically to the topics in the outline.
 - At Least one textbook or other college level publication is required.
 - Author's last name, first name, middle initial. *Title of Book*. ISBN-13 number. Location of publication, Publisher, most current date.



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

- List examples of the kinds of reading assignments that will achieve the SLOs.
- Identifying specific articles is not required, nor advised, as it is too restrictive.
- It is required to list specific additional materials required, such as software programs, their approximate costs, and possible sources.

LECTURE TOPICS

Lectures drive the instructional content of the course, supported by assignments, discussion threads, and quizzes/exams. For each course week, a minimum of at least two lectures must be provided; suggested topics must be listed here.

DISCUSSIONS

For each course week, at least two discussion topics must be provided.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments should be thought-provoking, requiring the student to perform some independent analysis, comparison, inference, application, creation, design, formulation, and evaluation, and therefore not have only one right answer.

WRITING/CREATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

- List specific types of assignments, such as essays, lab reports, technical reports, journals, research papers, critiques, summaries, presentations, drawings, programs, ..., and indicate the relevance to the SLOs.
- Written examinations are not considered to be assignments and should be cited in Methods of Evaluation.
- Indicate the kind of thinking required for completion (e.g., synthesizing, drawing comparisons, contrasts, and conclusions, determining cause and effects, ...)
- Term projects are encouraged. Describe them here in detail, associate their deliverables with SLOs.
- Specific outside preparation requirements should be listed here, including contributions to discussion threads. Specify length, frequency, and required pattern of contribution.
- For the different types of assignments covered here, provide 1-3 examples each.



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

METHODS OF EVALUATION

- Provide grading matrix and correlate evaluation activities with SLOs.
- Include at least one formal exam.
- Include at least one formal written report (or equivalent assignment, if technical/art class) of at least five pages.
- Assignments and discussions must be graded using appropriate rubrics; rubric must be in this outline, but can be customized by the professor.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- Adhere to the standard instructional best practices embraced by Belair Online (Appendix C – Instructional Best Practices)
- Use methods appropriate to achieve the Student Learning Outcomes.
- Specify measurements to ascertain professor compliance with addressing course SLOs effectively.



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

APPENDIX A - BLOOMS' TAXONOMY

Cognitive

knowledge

1. Recall data
2. Understand
3. Apply (use)
4. Analyse (structure/elements)
5. Synthesize (create/build)
6. Evaluate (assess, judge in relational terms)

Affective

attitude

1. Receive (awareness)
2. Respond (react)
3. Value (understand and act)
4. Organise personal value system
5. Internalize value system (adopt behavior)

Psychomotor

skills

1. Imitation (copy)
2. Manipulation (follow instructions)
3. Develop Precision
4. Articulation (combine, integrate related skills)
5. Naturalization (automate, become expert)



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

APPENDIX B – STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs) DEFINED

Student learning outcomes are defined in terms of the acquired knowledge, new skills, and developed abilities that students have attained as a result of their active involvement in a course and its associated learning activities. SLOs can be divided into general education LSO and course/program-specific SLOs.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME AREAS

(from San Diego Mesa College; must not be included with each course outline)

- **Critical Thinking:** Ability to analyze problems, conceptualize theses, develop arguments, weigh evidence, and derive conclusions. This outcome includes both inductive and deductive logical reasoning and methodological processes.
- **Communication:** Ability to articulate the critical thinking outcomes in writing and/or speaking or by other modes of communication.
- **Self-awareness and Interpersonal Skills:** Ability to analyze one's own actions, to see the perspective of other persons, and to work effectively with others in groups.
- **Personal Actions and Civic Responsibility:** Ability to understand one's role in society, take responsibility for one's own actions, make ethical decisions in complex situations, and participate actively in a diverse democracy.
- **Global Awareness:** Ability to articulate similarities and contrasts among cultures, times and environments, demonstrating understanding of cultural pluralism and knowledge of global issues.
- **Technological Awareness:** Ability to understand the applications and implications of technology and to use technology in ways appropriate to the situation. This outcome includes information and competency skills.

COURSE-SPECIFIC STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Example for Programming with Visual Basic.NET:

“Develop a software program with Visual Basic.NET that simulates the following calculator functions correctly for integer and decimal numbers: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Include user input validation/error handling and a properly formatted user interface.”



COURSE OUTLINE GUIDELINES

APPENDIX C – INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Belair Online defines a number of instructional best practices to ensure that all its courses meet minimum educational standards. These standards must be followed by its professors, because they ensure course value for students and prepare the school for future accreditation.

- Focus on discussion interaction and content excellence and relevance.
 - Professors must provide at least two discussion topics/week of instruction.
 - Professors must actively lead each discussion topic and interact at least four days/week.
 - Discussion content must be accurate, grammatically correct, and of good style.
 - Student participation in discussion must be rigorously monitored and directed, and properly graded using a rubric approach.
- Every course topic must be supported by a well-constructed lecture delivered as a written document, and optionally supported by a PowerPoint presentation.
 - The professor must provide at least two formal lectures per week on the week's topics.
- Professors must set up an ungraded Q&A discussion topic to address any questions and provide directions for the entire course.
- Professors must provide an ungraded introduction topic where they and students introduce themselves to the class.
- Professors must deal with individual student questions and issues via confidential email, not discussions and must comply with FERPA (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>) confidentiality requirements at all times.
- Student interaction must be supportive, constructive, and forward-oriented.