# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

# STANDARD COURSE OUTLINE TEMPLATE

# INSTRUCTIONAL COVER SHEET

* **To be used for new courses and changes to existing courses.**
* **Please note that some sections have additional work for GE course proposals.**
* **Do not include this page with your SCO submission.**
* **Begin SCO on the next page.**

*Purpose and Instructions: The SCO is a document written by faculty to describe the learning objectives and pedagogy of a specific course. It is an instructional tool to be shared among faculty teaching the course. Unlike syllabi, which are detailed and more specifically geared toward student audiences, an SCO provides information for the faculty teaching the course, acting as a set of guidelines to instruct and to assist all present and future faculty of a course.*

*A well-balanced SCO will provide both rigor and flexibility. Sufficient rigor refers to requiring consistent criteria and standards to be adhered to across sections and semesters of teaching the course. Flexibility allows faculty members to align those requirements according to their distinct teaching styles. It is not advisable to use a syllabus to create the SCO; rather, the SCO should inform and foster the design of all future syllabi. An SCO also serves as an agreement: all syllabi should conform to its specifications about what the course is designed to provide students as part of the curriculum as well as the methods by which those learning goals are accomplished.*

*A carefully crafted SCO should also serve as the foundation and design tool for course- level assessment planning, an integral component of discovering and implementing curricular change for enhancing students’ mastery of the learning objectives. An SCO should also acquaint faculty with university policies on instruction, such as those regarding class attendance, grading, and textbook selection. Make your SCO specific enough that it contains instructions to those who will teach it in the future and general enough that it does not limit future instructors unduly. For instance, it is generally not a good idea to list specific textbooks or grade breakdowns without some disclaimer that you are only offering an example—you don’t want to limit future instructors to specific texts or other rules. The SCO should be seen as a type of contract with which all future professors teaching the course can feel comfortable.*

*Required sections for the SCO are given on the following pages, each denoted by a roman numeral. For most sections, “samples” are provided.* ***Please see the GE webpage for additional guidelines related to the GE Policy 12-00.***

*[Note: Items that appear in* **Bold type** *are intended to serve as a template and must appear in the SCO. Items appearing in Italics are meant as guides for faculty completing SCOs and syllabi.]*

# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

# DEPARTMENT OF XXX

**STANDARD COURSE OUTLINE**

**POSC XXX**

**Is this course proposed as General Education Course? ☐ Yes ☐ No**

**Is this course proposed as a Cross-Listed Course? ☐ Yes ☐ No**

**I. General Information**

**A. Course Number:** *[Consult with the curriculum chair if necessary about numbering new courses.]*

**B. Title:**

**C. Units:**

**D. Prerequisites:**

**E. Responsible Faculty:**

**F. SCO Prepared by:**

**G. Date prepared/revised:**

**II. Catalog Description**

*Give a brief catalog description (should be no more than 40 words). Prerequisites, fieldwork hours, service learning, clinical experience, course-related fees, “consent of instructor,” designation of the course as “credit/no credit” or “letter grade only [A-F],” or other requirements that do not describe the content of the course are not included in the 40 word limit.*

**III. Curriculum Justification**

*State the need for the course in the department and how it fits in with existing curriculum.*

*GE Courses Only: For GE Course proposals, please provide the requested GE Category. See GE Policy (PS 12-00) for classification criteria. Refer directly to GE policy and describe clearly the ways that the course applies and fits in each classification being requested.*

**IV. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes, Evaluation Instruments, and Instructional Strategies for Skill Development**

*For All Courses: Provide a bulleted list of Student Learning Outcomes specific to your course (typically, no more than 5 outcomes). Student Learning Outcomes should include both Content-based outcomes (addressing the topic area of the course) and Skill-based outcomes (addressing the primary essential skills identified for the course).*

*Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Courses: Include specific additional goals for graduate students if this is an undergraduate/graduate course. For example: Are the assignments different for the graduate students? Are their presentations and participation of a different nature (leading class discussions, etc)? Are there higher-level concepts that they will be working with?*

*For Evaluation Instruments, one could say, “Typically measured by:” followed by the assignments used to measure whether students have achieved the learning outcomes (essays, presentations, etc.).*

*For Instructional Strategies, one could say, “Skills developed by:” followed by activities in or outside of the classroom (class discussion, assignments, etc.).*

*Sample:*

*Upon completion of this course, students will know and be able to:*

*SLO 1. Demonstrate understanding of the three branches of the American federal government. Typically measured by midterm and final examinations and essays.*

*SLO 2. Conduct a field survey on local political initiatives. Skills developed by in-class activities developing surveys and fieldwork conducting surveys.*

*[What follows for the rest of Section IV. pertains to GE Course Proposals only.]*

*GE Courses Only: List the GE Student Learning Outcomes (adopted by Senate in GE Policy PS 12-00) relevant to the course. State that these outcomes should appear on all course syllabi.*

*Departments will need to report on their assessment efforts related to the outcomes for primary essential skills identified in the SCO. The faculty GE website describes each Essential Skill:* [*http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/ge/faculty/skills/index.html*](http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/ge/faculty/skills/index.html)

*The Essential Primary Skills of General Education are:*

*o Written Communication o Ethical Reasoning*

*o Oral Communication o Creativity and Discovery*

*o Critical Thinking o Foundation and Skills for Lifelong Learning*

*o Quantitative Reasoning o Social Responsibility and Civic Engagement*

*o Information Literacy o Interdisciplinary Learning*

*o Teamwork o Problem Solving*

*o Inquiry and Analysis*

*o Intercultural Knowledge*

*For EACH GE Student Learning Outcome, state:*

1. ***STUDENT PERFORMANCE BENCHMARK(S).*** *Student Learning Outcomes must be expressed into specific student behaviors that can be measured. Benchmarks are specific statements of what students are expected to learn and be able to do upon successful completion of the course.*
2. ***EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS (ASSIGNMENTS).*** *Describe procedures and measures that would be suitable to evaluate student’s mastery of course content and skills. These might include quizzes, a research paper, essay exam, oral presentation, etc. Please identify which assignments in the course are related to the specific learning outcomes. Rather than making a blanket statement of all possible assignments that might take place in the class, give a meaningful description of how certain assignments will help you reach particular outcomes*
3. ***INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT.*** *Describe what you will do as an instructor to teach the objective. For instance, teaching writing skills may involve, explaining rubrics for writing expectations both before and after the assignments, reviewing components of well-written essays with the class with examples from actual student essays, incorporating feedback on drafts with opportunities for revision, etc.*

*You may want to look up Bloom’s Taxonomy for language effectively used in the formulation of goals and outcomes.*

*In addition to general objectives and outcomes for classes in the Department of ..., these are some specific objectives for this course.*

GE Course Sample:

MEASURABLE BENCHMARK FOR WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SLO: After taking this course, students will be able to demonstrate advanced writing processes, including developing ideas, effective note-taking and drafting, formulating and revising thesis statements, outlines, and arguments.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS: Specific assignments will vary by instructor, but typical assignments include take-home essays, research papers, and in-class essay exams.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES: A writing rubric evaluating content, organization, reasoning, rhetoric, and writing conventions will be used. Standards for good analytical writing will be discussed in class before and after written assignments.

**V. Outline of Subject Matter**

*Include a suggested weekly course schedule. Also, include a disclaimer to allow for different ways of teaching the course, such as the following:*

Sample:

This is a broad outline of topics to be covered. Subject matter and sequence of topics may vary depending on the instructor, but all topics must be linked to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

**VI. Methods of Instruction**

**Check one or more modes of instruction that this course is authorized to use:  
  
 ☐ traditional ☐ hybrid ☐ local online ☐ distance education**

**[The instructor’s syllabus must contain an explicit statement describing the mode of instructional delivery. Instructors are referred to PS 03-11 and PS 11-07, available on the Academic Senate website, for descriptions of modes of instruction and for guidelines to follow for non-traditional modes of instruction. Per PS 03-11, “an existing course may be experimentally offered for a maximum of two semesters using a new instructional mode with the approval of the department chair or the department curriculum committee. The department and college curriculum processes shall be used to approve subsequent offerings of the same course in the new format.”  
  
If an instructor uses a traditional mode of instruction, all that is required in the course syllabus is the following statement, “Traditional mode of instruction.” Instructors may elaborate if they choose.]**

1. **Explain the nature of classroom activities**.

*Is the course primarily lectures? Should there be opportunities for class discussion, group work, one-on-one instruction, and student presentations?*

*If the course is a large lecture, explain any opportunities for class discussion, student interaction, small group work, or other factors that would enhance active learning in this classroom environment.*

*If film or other audio-visual materials are used in the course, indicate all of the following: 1) why those particular materials are necessary for the course, 2) the amount of class time devoted to those*

*materials, and 3) a pedagogical justification for why the materials require in-class viewing/listening, rather than out-of-class preparation time.*

*This is a sample paragraph:*

*At the senior/graduate level, discussion should form an important part of any class. Individual instructors will decide on the specific methods used in this course, but it is suggested that students will participate extensively in different formats, which may include panels on texts read for the class, discussion of writing issues, and individual presentations on topics that will enhance research papers. This course may also feature recent films, music, and political texts. Historical background can be presented through lectures, though some of the contextual information can be provided by the students themselves in presentations. The course will include individual research projects and possibly a library visit.*

GE Sample:

Because this is a critical thinking course, it is expected that formal lectures will be minimized and that students will be regularly and actively engaged in practicing their thinking skills through exercises and discussions. Individual instructors will decide on the specific methods used in this course, but it is suggested that students will participated extensively in different formats for learning, including demonstrations, small-group activities, and oral presentations.

**B. Any course that uses hybrid, local online, or distance education course delivery shall explain the following issues in the course syllabus (See Course Syllabi Policy Statement 04-05, and Academic Technology and the Mode of Instruction Policy 03-11).**

**(1) how the instructor will communicate with the students and how the students will communicate with each other;**

**(2) how online participation will be assessed and graded;**

**(3) how the instructor will monitor the online activities of the students;**

**(4) how the standards of appropriate online behavior will be maintained;**

**(5) the level of technical competence required of the students;**

**(6) what the minimum computer hardware and software requirements are for the class, and what department, college, or University facilities are available to support these requirements for students who cannot afford to buy the technology;**

**(7) the alternative procedures for submitting work in the event of technical breakdowns;**

**(8) the on-campus meeting requirements, if any;**

**(9) how academic honesty will be enforced.**

**C. Extent and Nature of Use of Technology**

*State how you will use technology.*

*A sample paragraph is given here:*

The use of technology will depend on individual instructors, but may include Beach Board, should include the development of familiarity with web resources specific to the course, and may include assignments that involve the evaluation of web material on the subject. Students may be made familiar, if they are not already, with relevant search databases in the library.

*Film and video, as well as music, may be used in the classroom; however, the percentage of time used for each needs to be clarified and limited.*

**VII. Information about Textbooks / Readings**

*Ensure compliance with University Policy PS 79-08 that defines Choice of Textbooks.*

*If there is a required text for the course, state so here. If not, provide a brief list of possible textbooks and readings to be used. Include a disclaimer such as the following*:

The following is a short list of textbooks that are most likely to be used for this course. Instructors may assign one or more of these and/or include other relevant texts/readings. Instructors may be asked to justify the use of old textbooks, if updated texts are available.

**VIII. Bibliography**

*Include a one-page current bibliography of references, possibly with a disclaimer, like the following:*

This is a highly selective bibliography to provide instructors with a primary set of resource materials. For brevity, important works may be missed from this list. The list is intended to show the range of materials available to our students. Relevant course materials may also be found in periodicals, both in print and electronic form.

**IX. Instructional Policies Requirements**

*List course policies that every instructor must follow, including Course Syllabi Policy (PS 11-07). The Course Syllabi Policy specifies required content for hybrid and online course delivery. Further detail on hybrid, online, and distance education courses can be found in Academic Technology and the Mode of Instruction (PS 03-11).*

*Include a reference to University policy on instructional issues (withdrawal, absences, disabilities, etc). Make it explicit that such policies should appear on course syllabi.*

*Instructors may determine their own policies with regard to plagiarism, withdrawal, absences, and adding the course, so long as the policies are consistent with the University policies as laid out in the CSULB Catalog. Syllabi must refer to the appropriate sections in the Catalog, lay out the precise policies for the course on attendance and plagiarism, and ask students to inform instructors promptly of the need for accommodation of disabilities. It is recommended that instructors include some explanation of how they assess class participation.*

Instructors may specify their own policies with regard to plagiarism, withdrawal, absences, etc., as long as the policies are consistent with the University policies published in the CSULB Catalog. It is expected that every course will follow University policies on Attendance (PS 01-01), Course Syllabi and Standard Course Outlines (PS 11-07), Cheating and Plagiarism – Academic Integrity (PS 08-02), Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, and Final Assessments (PS 12-03).

Sample:

**X. Course Assessment**

*If the course has mandatory assignments (e.g., term paper, in-class essay final exam, 3 oral presentations) or mandatory formatting of assignments (e.g., multiple-choice questions should comprise no more than 50% of the total point value of exams), identify them here. Each course should provide a bulleted list of assignments with approximate percentages of course grade breakdown for various assignments. If the course is a double-numbered one that includes undergraduates and graduates, make clear how the graduate students will be assessed differently from the undergraduates.*

A *disclaimer can clarify expectations, as below:*

All sections of the course will have a syllabus that includes the information required by the syllabus policy adopted by the Academic Senate. Instructors will include information on how students may make up work for excused absences. When class participation is a required part of the course, syllabi will include information on how participation is assessed. When improvement in oral communication is an objective of the course, syllabi will include a rubric for how oral communication is to be evaluated.

The exact set of course assignments will vary depending on the instructor. University policy requires that no single evaluation of student achievement may count for more than one-third of final grade. Appropriate assignments may include…

**A. Description of Assessments.**

*[The Standard Course Outline should contain a description of key assessments that measure student performance on course SLOs. The number of the corresponding SLO(s) should appear in parentheses after relevant assessments. The description of these assessments should be sufficient to allow course instructors to incorporate them in course syllabi. Course instructors may have additional assessments that are explicitly linked to SLOs. The following matrix is an example of how to display course assessments linked to SLOs.]*

**Assessment in Course XXX:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment Description** | **Linked to SLO** | **% of Course Grade** |
| Assignment # 1 (brief descriptive title and/or description) | SLO #3 | xx% |
| Assignment # 2 (brief descriptive title and/or description) | SLO # 2 | xx% |
| Assignment # 3 (brief descriptive title and/or description) | SLO #1 | xx% |
| Assignment # 4 (brief descriptive title and/or description) | SLO # 4 | xx% |
| Assignment # 5 (brief descriptive title and/or description) | SLO #5 | xx% |

**B. Grading Policies and Procedures.**

*[Grading policies and procedures and the percentage of the course grade associated with each assessment must be explicit on each instructor’s syllabus. Instructors must develop scoring guidelines for assessments, which must be made available to students. In compliance with university policy, final grades will be based on at least three, and preferably four or more, demonstrations of competence. In no case will the final examination grade count for more than one third of the course grade.]*

**C. Grade Scale.**

*[The final course grade will be based on a descriptive scale such as the following:]*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *90-100%* | *=* | *A* | *mastery of the relevant course standards.* |
| *80-89%* | *=* | *B* | *above average proficiency of the relevant course standards.* |
| *70-79%* | *=* | *C* | *satisfactory proficiency of the relevant course standards.* |
| *60-69%* | *=* | *D* | *partial proficiency of the relevant course standards.* |
| *Below 60%* | *=* | *F* | *little or no proficiency of the relevant course standards.* |

**XI. Consistency of SCO Standards across Sections**

*Part of the usefulness of an SCO is derived from the need for consistency of standards, across sections (for multi-sectioned courses) and semesters (for ALL courses). Present and future instructors of the course should follow the instructions given in the SCO to ensure consistency of pedagogical practices. This section outlines possible activities for the course coordinator(s) to measure consistency.*

*Additionally, this section should state that all future syllabi must conform to the SCO.*

Bloom’s Taxonomy\*

Benjamin Bloom created this taxonomy for categorizing level of abstraction of questions that commonly occur in educational settings. The taxonomy provides a useful structure in which to categorize test questions, since professors will characteristically ask questions within particular levels, and if you can determine the levels of questions that will appear on your exams, you will be able to study using appropriate strategies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Competence | Skills Demonstrated |
| **Knowledge** | * observation and recall of information * knowledge of dates, events, places * knowledge of major ideas * mastery of subject matter * *Question Cues:* list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc. |
| **Comprehension** | * understanding information * grasp meaning * translate knowledge into new context * interpret facts, compare, contrast * order, group, infer causes * predict consequences * *Question Cues:*  summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend |
| **Application** | * use information * use methods, concepts, theories in new situations * solve problems using required skills or knowledge * *Questions Cues:*  apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover |
| **Analysis** | * seeing patterns * organization of parts * recognition of hidden meanings * identification of components * *Question Cues:* analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer |
| **Synthesis** | * use old ideas to create new ones * generalize from given facts * relate knowledge from several areas * predict, draw conclusions * *Question Cues:* combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite |
| **Evaluation** | * compare and discriminate between ideas * assess value of theories, presentations * make choices based on reasoned argument * verify value of evidence * recognize subjectivity * *Question Cues* assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize |

\* Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain. New York ; Toronto: Longmans, Green.

*For additional resources see www.csulb.edu/ge/faculty*