CHECKLIST: COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE COURSE SYLLABUS
From *Tools for Teaching* (2009) by Barbara Gross Davis

**Basic Information**
- Name of university, semester, year
- Course title, number, unit value
- Course meeting times and location
- Instructor, GSI names
- How to contact instructor/GSIs:
  - In-person office hours: times and location (with map if needed); drop-in or by appointment?
  - Online office hours: times and how to access (URL)
  - Email addresses
  - Phone numbers: private office and department lines; mobile, if you wish, for text messages
  - Preferred mode of communication (email, phone, text messages, in person, instant message, through learning management system, through social networking site, etc)
  - Fax number
  - Optional: times other than office hours when instructor can be reached
- Instructor Web page URL
- Course Web page URL
- Online chat days, hours, and access address, if available
- Group mail-list address, if available

**Course Description**
- **Prerequisites**
  - Prior courses
  - Knowledge/skills needed to succeed in this course
  - Permission of instructor needed?
- **Technology requirements:**
  - Laptops for class work
  - Software
  - Clickers
  - Learning management system
- **Overview of course:**
  - What is the course about: its purpose, rationale?
  - What are the general topics or focus?
  - How does it fit with other courses in the department or on campus?
  - Who is the course aimed at?
  - Why would students want to take this course and learn this material?
- **Student learning objectives:**
  - What will students be expected to know or do after this course?
  - What competencies/skills/ knowledge will student be expected to demonstrate at the end of the course?

(Course Description continued)
- **Methods of instruction**
  - Lecture
  - Discussion
  - Group work
  - Field work
  - Other methods
- **Workload**
  - Estimated amount of time to spend on course readings
  - Estimate amount of time to spend on course assignments and projects

**Materials**
- **Primary or required books/readings for the course:**
  - Author, title, edition ISBN
  - Costs, where available
  - Availability of electronic or alternative formats, for students with disabilities
- **Supplemental or optional books/readings**
- **Websites and links**
- **Other materials:**
  - Lab equipment
  - Art supplies
  - Software
  - Other types of materials
**Requirements**

- Exams and quizzes:
  - How many
  - What kind (e.g. open/closed book; essay/multiple choice)
  - Types of knowledge and abilities tested
  - Place, date, and time of finals exam
- Assignments/problem sets/projects/reports/research papers:
  - General information on type, length, and when due (detailed information can be distributed during the term)
  - Relationship between the learning objectives and assignments
  - Criteria for assessing student work
  - Format for submitting work (online or in hard copy)
  - For research papers and projects:
    - Steps in conducting research
    - Shorter assignments that build to the research paper (e.g. annotated bibliography of primary sources, thesis statement, fact sheet, etc.)
    - Skills and knowledge students needed to complete the assignment
    - Connection between research assignments and course goals and student learning objectives
- Other requirements:
  - Attend an office hour?
  - Post comments to the discussion board?

**Policies**

- Grading procedures:
  - Describe how students will be graded: on a curve or absolute scale?
  - Clarify weighting of course components
  - Explain policies regarding incompletes, ass/not pass
  - Describe grade appeals
- Attendance and tardiness
- Class participation
- Classroom decorum
- Interrupted exams (e.g. fire alarms)
- Missed exams/makeup exams
- Missed assignments
- Late assignments/extensions
- Reporting illness and family emergencies
- Extra credit opportunities
- Permissible and impermissible collaboration
- Standards for academic honesty and penalties for infractions

**Schedule**

- Tentative calendar of topics and readings:
  - By week rather than by session
  - Or leave some sessions empty for flexibility
- Firm dates for exams and written assignments
- Dates of special events:
  - Field trips
  - Performances
  - Exhibits
  - Other special events
- Last day to switch to pass/not pass
- Last day to withdraw from the course
RESOURCES
- Tips for success
  - How students might approach the material
  - How students can manage their time
  - Tips for studying, taking notes, preparing for exams
  - Common students mistakes or misconceptions
- Copies of past exams or model student papers
- Glossaries of technical terms
- Links to appropriate support material on the Web (e.g. style manuals, past students’ projects, Web-based resources, etc.)
- Academic support services on campus
- Information on the availability of podcasts or webcasts
- Space for students to identify two or three classmates’ names and their contact information
  - In case they miss class
  - To form a study group

STATEMENT ON ACCOMMODATION
- A request that students see the instructor to discuss accommodations for:
  - Physical disabilities
  - Medical disabilities
  - Learning disabilities
- A statement on reasonable accommodation for students’ religious beliefs, observations, and practices; for students’ foreseeable conflicts because of athletic competition, medical/graduate school interviews

EVALUATION OF THE COURSE AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
- Student feedback strategies during the semester (other than quizzes and tests)
- End-of-course evaluation procedures

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- Students’ and instructor’s rights to academic freedom (e.g. respect of the rights of others to express their points of view)
- Students’ and instructor’s adherence to campus principles of community (e.g. civility in personal interactions)
- Statement on copyright protection for the contents of the course, as appropriate

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
- What to do in case of an earthquake, fire, hazardous spill, accident or injury, bomb threat, or other emergency
- Notification procedures for inclement weather
- Evacuation procedures
- Lab safety precautions

DISCLAIMER
- Syllabus/schedule subject to change