

## **Equitize Syllabi Rubric**

The equitized syllabus rubric is a tool to assess the degree to which the syllabus achieves the 7 equitized syllabus practices that reframe the document as a learning and communication instrument. The development of the Equitize Syllabi rubric was done in collaboration between [Achieving the Dream](#) (ATD)'s Teaching and Learning team and [Digital Promise](#) to guide educators through the process of revising syllabi in alignment with [USC's Center for Urban Education's Syllabus Review Tool](#). The rubric focuses on seven Equitize Syllabi practices: (1) Welcoming, (2) Representing Diversity, (3) Demystifying, (4) De-stigmatizing Support Services, (5) Creating Partnerships, (6) Validating Students, (7) Deconstructing the Norm.

The tool provides a description of each practice discussed in ATD's Equitize Syllabi workshop, including an additional practice that ATD incorporates – De-Stigmatizing Support Services. Descriptions of the Equity-minded practices and corresponding indicators are included in the rubric alongside areas to note evidence or examples of each practice. The practices do not map onto any particular section of the syllabus, instead, users are encouraged to consider the entire document during their assessment. The rubric also includes a scoring guide that can be used to assess the degree to which each practice is integrated throughout the document. The Equitize Syllabi Rubric can be used in a variety of ways including self-assessment, peer assessment, and pre- and post-comparisons. For more information on the Equitize Syllabi Rubric, please contact [teachingandlearning@achievingthedream.org](mailto:teachingandlearning@achievingthedream.org)

### Equitized Syllabi Rubric

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present	Evidence Description
<p><b>Welcoming</b></p> <p>Description: The syllabus includes welcoming through caring and inviting language and tone that values the student. It also conveys sensitivity to students' entering skill level and the instructor's willingness and availability to offer support. The syllabus establishes a culture of respect and inclusion with class norms like including a class anti-discrimination policy and communicating a commitment to talking through racist and discriminatory comments or behavior that arise in class or on campus.</p>	Uses language and tone that makes students feel cared for and valued	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Faculty acknowledges their role and describes ways in which they will support students and their success in the course	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Language validates and recognizes students' entering academic abilities and skill level, notes that aspects of the course can be challenging, and suggests that it is acceptable and beneficial for students to seek help, whether or not they are struggling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Faculty convey a willingness to work individually with students who need additional support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Presents norms and guidelines that create community and an inclusive environment that allows for respectful class discussion and discourse of differing perspectives, ideas, and opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Include a class anti-discrimination policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Communicates commitment to talking through racist and discriminatory comments or behavior that arise in class or on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that aligns with the listed indicators. There is no evidence in the syllabus of equity-minded practices as it relates to this practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that aligns with the listed indicators. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to this practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing, 10+</b>	There is substantial and specific examples throughout each aspect of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, and inclusion of a range of student identities in mind throughout the document, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present	Evidence Description
<p><b>Representing Diversity</b> Description: Representation in the syllabus is demonstrated through including a range of racial/ethnic experiences and backgrounds in the syllabus document including images and quotes from historically marginalized groups. This practice communicates the value of students' racial/ethnic backgrounds as assets and sources of learning and knowledge. Representation is also seen in readings, activities, and assignments that are culturally relevant and inclusive.</p>	Includes language that validates, affirms, and embraces students' cultures, identities and lived experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Communicates students' racial and ethnic backgrounds as assets to learning and knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes a range of racial and ethnic experiences and backgrounds in assignments and assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes assignments and assessments that are culturally relevant, inclusive and sustaining	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes assignments and assessments that ask students to draw on their experiential knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes assignments and assessments that ask students to draw on knowledge from their communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes assignments that encourage students to investigate real-world problems and solutions that are related to their lived experiences and cultural backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other evidence:		
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing, 10+</b>	There is substantial and specific examples throughout each aspect of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, and inclusion of a range of student identities in mind throughout the document, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present	Evidence Description
<p><b>Demystify</b></p> <p>Description: Instructors demystify by presenting information in such a way that a first-time college student can easily make sense of the syllabus. The information is written clearly, in plain language, with limited academic jargon. Furthermore, it is formatted and ordered in a way that highlights what students need to know to maximize their learning and success.</p>	Includes instructor contact information and office hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Written clearly, in plain language, with limited academic jargon	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Formatted and ordered in a way that highlights what students need to know to maximize their learning and success	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Maps connections between the objectives and major assessments (i.e., each major assessment activity is mapped to one or more learning objectives)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	State how class and course objectives will help students succeed in future academic work, and advance career and life goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Course-level learning objectives are clearly articulated and use specific action verbs to describe in measurable terms what students will be able to do, value, or know at the end of the course	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Course-level assessments are in a labeled section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The grading scheme is in a distinct section	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The grading scheme aligns with the learning objectives and supporting assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The basic features of major summative assessment activities are clearly defined	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Syllabus offers fully articulated and logically sequenced course schedule, listing topics/readings/questions chronological order along with assignment due dates, allowing for flexibility where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Evidence in the assessment descriptions or in the course schedule that complex assignments build slowly over the semester or are continually re-examined with the introduction of new material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Suggests effective work and study habits	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other evidence:			
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing, 10+</b>	There is substantial and specific examples throughout each aspect of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, and inclusion of a range of student identities in mind throughout the document, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present	Evidence Description
<p><b>De-stigmatize Support Services</b></p> <p>Description: To destigmatize support services, the syllabus introduces students to assorted services, describes campus and local resources in plain and non-judgmental language, and includes information on how to access support services.</p>	Includes contact information and links for department, campus, and community resources and support services for academic needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes contact information and links for department, campus, and community resources and support services for basic needs (food, housing, clothing, transportation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes contact information and links for department, campus, and community resources and support services for health and wellness and counseling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes language that highlights the benefits of accessing support services and destigmatizes help-seeking behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other evidence:		
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing, 10+</b>	There is substantial and specific examples throughout each aspect of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, and inclusion of a range of student identities in mind throughout the document, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present?	Evidence Description
<p><b>Creating Partnerships: Faculty-student Relationship</b></p> <p>Description: The syllabus articulates how students and faculty will work in partnership to ensure student success. Language in the syllabus communicate the shared commitment and expectations between students and faculty. There are clear statements about what students can expect from instructors and what is expected of student learners. The syllabus articulates faculty's willingness to receive feedback from students about their teaching practices, and a willingness to use a variety of teaching approaches to foster learning. The syllabus language reflects respect for students as autonomous, critical, and reflective learners.</p>	States what the instructor expects of students as learners, and what students can expect from the instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Articulates a willingness to receive feedback from students about the instructor's teaching practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Articulates a willingness by the instructor to use a variety of teaching approaches to foster learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Articulates respect for students as autonomous, critical, and reflective learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Indicates opportunities for students to choose how they demonstrate their understanding of the course content	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Indicates that there is flexibility around assignment deadlines or criteria when students are facing personal difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other evidence:		
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Advancing, 10+</b>	There is substantial and specific examples throughout each aspect of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, and inclusion of a range of student identities in mind throughout the document, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present?	Evidence Description
<p><b>Validating Students</b> Description: The syllabus communicates the belief that all students are capable learners. Language validates the knowledge they bring into the learning environment. The syllabus has different types of assignments and forms of assessment that give students multiple ways to demonstrate their learning and strengths.</p>	Instructor uses language that reflects a strong expectation for students to succeed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Students are told that they are capable of obtaining their educational goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Students are encouraged to bring their own language and lived experiences into various projects reflecting instructors belief that their identities matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Meaningful Peer-to-peer interaction and student-instructor interaction are central to course design	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Students are given the opportunity to choose a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning and knowledge in a manner that supports their confidence and sense of competence	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Other evidence:		
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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<b>Opportunities Within Reach:</b>			

Equity-minded Practice	Indicators	Evidence Present?	Evidence Description
<p><b>Deconstructing the Norm</b></p> <p>Description: Course syllabi promote awareness and critical examination by including readings, activities, and assignments that ask students to critically examine the assumptions about different racial/ethnic and social groups, and the privileges or disadvantages they accrue by virtue of their identity that are traditionally portrayed in the discipline. The language used in the document affirms diverse perspectives, various ways of learning and engaging. The content and design of the syllabus take an inclusive and critical approach that signal to students that the course is a safe space to question dominant, racialized norms, historical perspectives, as well as identify inequalities in major social institutions (e.g., education, health, law). The structure of the syllabus disrupts the status quo of framing the document as a legal document only swerving the institution.</p>	Includes <b>readings and course materials</b> that critically examine:	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	assumptions about different racial and ethnic groups as it relates to privilege and/or marginalization of these groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	the historical experiences of people and communities that face discrimination, racism, and marginalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	the contemporary experiences of people and communities that face discrimination, racism, and marginalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	dominant, racialized norms, as well as inequalities in major social institutions (e.g., education, financial, health, law)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Includes <b>assignments and assessments</b> that ask students to critically examine:	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	assumptions about different racial and ethnic groups as it relates to privilege and/or marginalization of these groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	the historical experiences of people and communities that face discrimination, racism, and marginalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	the contemporary experiences of people and communities that face discrimination, racism, and marginalization	<input type="checkbox"/>	
dominant, racialized norms, as well as inequalities in major social institutions (e.g., education, financial health, law)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other evidence:			
<b>Practice Level</b>			
<b>Missing, 0</b>	There is no evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. There is no evidence of in the document of equity-minded practices as it relates to the indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging, 1-3</b>	There is little evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria of the indicator. The syllabus may not have been designed to be inclusive, but elements of equity and student-centeredness are apparent in some of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Progressing, 4-6</b>	There is some evidence in the syllabus that meets the criteria indicator. It is clear that the syllabus design process involved elements of equity and student-centeredness in a few of the sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Developing, 7-9</b>	There are multiple examples in parts of the syllabus that meet the criteria for this indicator. It is clear that the document was designed with equity, inclusion and a range of student identities in mind in most sections, as it relates to the indicator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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