

## Requirements for MCRO Course Syllabi

### UNC Compliant Syllabi Must be Available by the First Day of Classes

UNC policy is that all course syllabi must contain certain specific elements (outlined below) and must be provided to students no later than the first day of classes each semester. The Department of Microbiology & Immunology imposes additional requirements on syllabi for MCRO courses (described below). As a matter of academic integrity, UNC requires that all departments retain copies of all course syllabi for at least four years.

To meet university and department requirements, course directors should submit syllabi to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval sufficiently far in advance of the first day of classes to allow for exchanges of edits and revisions until each syllabus is suitable for distribution to students.

### UNC Syllabus Requirements

Required elements of all UNC syllabi are declared in Faculty Council Resolutions 2012-11 and 2020-6. Required elements include:

#### Course specific elements:

- Course Identifiers
- Instructor Identifiers
- Target Audience
- Course Prerequisites
- Course Goals and Key Learning Objectives
- Course Requirements
- Dates
- Grades
- Course Policies
- Course Resources
- Course Schedule/Calendar

#### UNC common elements:

- Attendance Policy
- Honor Code
- Syllabus Changes
- Accessibility Resources & Services (ARS)
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Title IX Resources

The Syllabus Guidelines website at <https://curricula.unc.edu/syllabus-guidelines/> describes the course specific elements, provides text for the UNC common elements, and many other suggestions for composing syllabi.

## MCRO Syllabus Requirements

- All MCRO syllabi must contain a clear statement of the consequences that will result from late submission of any assigned coursework (e.g., exams, papers, projects) without explicit prior permission from the course director.

Syllabi for all MCRO courses must contain clear guidelines for permissible and impermissible uses of generative AI. Specific policies such as exam format, the methods of evaluating students, allowing or prohibiting the use of generative AI in specific aspects of the course (the Honor Code applies) are at the discretion of each course director. However, every MCRO course syllabus must also include the following five general guidelines regarding the use of generative AI, which may change as generative AI changes and we gain more experience with generative AI.

- **Do Not Outsource Your Brain.** Generative AI is a useful tool but cannot replace your critical thinking skills.
- **Missed Educational Opportunities.** Generative AI is likely to become a valuable tool for many tasks. However, before you choose to use generative AI for specific tasks, think carefully about the educational opportunities that you might miss as a result of your choice. In particular, you will continue to need scientific writing and thinking skills that are unlikely to be replaceable by generative AI anytime soon.
- **(In)Accuracy.** Generative AI predicts the most likely next words in a block of text but cannot distinguish fact from fiction. In its quest to create plausible text, generative AI therefore “hallucinates” by making up both false “facts” and fake references to apparently support its claims. Carefully check the accuracy of any claims made by generative AI. You are solely responsible for the accuracy of material in your assignments – you cannot blame the software for false assertions or nonexistent citations.
- **Biases & Limitations.** The results of generative AI models reflect the biases, limitations (e.g., inability to access content behind paywalls), and toxicity of the internet data upon which the models were trained. Furthermore, the training has an end date prior to public release, so results do not include recent knowledge.
- **Attribution.** You must provide honest attribution of how the work you submit was accomplished. If generative AI was used to help complete an assignment, then provide a brief statement identifying the software employed and how it was used (e.g., I used ChatGPT to suggest possible research topics; I used Bard to edit my writing, etc.).

## Note on Course Director Responsibility for Grade Integrity

Although not part of the syllabus, it is the responsibility of the course director when designing the course to ensure that actual student accomplishment is evaluated rather than the work of generative AI. This is a matter of academic integrity. Options include written material prepared in class without the help of computers, oral presentations or exams, or take home exams that cannot be satisfactorily answered by generative AI. To distribute the work of creating exams, each faculty member in the course should submit their exam questions or assignments to a generative AI program such as ChatGPT,

assess the quality of the resulting answer, and revise their questions/assignments until generative AI cannot produce satisfactory answers. If course faculty do not ensure that their exam questions cannot be answered correctly by generative AI, then the course director must do so.