



RED DEER COLLEGE
**Course Outline
Guidebook**

Procedures Guidebook for Course Outline Policy
Version 4.0
Revised September 2018

Course Outline Procedures

Policy: Course Outline Policy

Category: Academic Approval Date: September 2018



Procedure Owner: Academic Policy Committee (APC)

Effective Date: January 2019

Procedure Administrator: APC

Review Period: As needed

Associated Documents: Course Outline Policy

School Templates: Please Note that Schools may have specific templates for Course Outlines. Please contact your School directly for templates.

CTL Website Link

PURPOSE

To outline the Procedures for creating, reviewing, approving, and posting Red Deer College Course Outlines. These Procedures will apply to Instructors, Associate Deans, and other RDC employees involved in Course Outline creation and approval.

DEFINITIONS

Assessment: the practice of identifying student learning outcomes, measuring/observing the extent to which outcomes are achieved, and using that information to maintain or improve student learning. Assessment is used by instructors at the course level to determine a student's achievement of specific outcomes.

Course Outcomes: measurable statements, using verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy.

Course Schedule: a detailed schedule of the course, deadlines for assignments, and additional details.

Curriculum: refers to the Course Learning Outcomes, learning activities, experiences, skills, content, and assessments and evaluations used in a course and maintained in a School's Curriculum Elements Sheets.

Curriculum Element Sheets: the official documentation standard for curriculum at RDC. Curriculum Elements include a Program Map and information for each course in a program.

Learning Activities: activities that help students prepare for the Assessments that will measure whether or not they have attained the Course Outcomes. There can be overlap between Learning Activities and Assessments. Learning Activities cover a broad range of options. Please consult the Centre for Teaching and Learning for more information.

Learning Management System (LMS): the virtual learning environment for all courses. These LMS course sites allow instructors to deliver and assess learning in a virtual environment.

Midterm Feedback Date: The date, as set in the Academic Schedule ([Academic Schedule Policy](#), page 2), by which students receive feedback from instructors on assessments completed by the midpoint of the academic term. Midterm feedback is required by students to assess their performance and make decisions regarding their academic standing. Instructors determine the best method to communicate midterm feedback to students.

PROCEDURES

FOR INSTRUCTORS CREATING A COURSE OUTLINE

When creating a Course Outline, standard elements are included to provide clear and transparent information to students and to ensure that the Purpose of a Course Outline is met. The order and flow of the following standard elements may follow a designated School Course Template. Please consult directly with the appropriate School for their most current Template.

Standard Elements on a Course Outline

- Academic Calendar Information
 - Course Code and Full Course Name
 - Department, School, and Red Deer College (or use School specific letterhead)
 - Approved academic calendar entry (Course Description), including prerequisite and/or co-requisites (if any) and credit hours
 - The academic term and year of the course offering
 - Primary methods of delivery (e.g. face-to-face, blended, online) as timetabled for the academic year

- Names and pertinent contact information for all instructors involved in the section of the course. Please note, as Course Outlines are published on the RDC website, personal contact information and physical office location should not be included on the Course Outline but can be communicated to students in other ways such as through the Learning Management System.

- Preferred contact information, including anticipated response times and personal communication preferences

- Academic Schedule Dates: The following dates must be included in all course outlines as set by the [Academic Schedule Policy](#) and published in the [Academic Schedule](#), found on the RDC Events calendar, as they impact student success:
 - The date and method by which Midterm Feedback will be available to students.
 - The date to Add/Drop courses without financial penalty
 - The date to Withdraw without academic penalty
 - The dates on which the College is closed or on which there are no scheduled classes

- Required class meeting times, including required alternate learning experiences outside of scheduled class times as timetabled for the academic year

- A statement referring students to the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#) including a link to the Policy.

- A statement of procedures for making changes to the approved Course Outline and a statement about when such changes might be made.

- Curriculum Information including:

- Course Outcomes used consistently across sections as approved by School Council and recorded on the Curriculum Elements Sheets. If you do not have the current Curriculum Elements Sheets for your course, please contact your Associate Dean.
 - Course Topics
 - Learning Activities: a brief description of the types of learning activities that students may expect to encounter and that learning activities may be subject to change following pedagogical requirements (e.g. lecture, group work, guest speakers, flipped classroom, online discussions, etc.).
 - Assessment methods, including participation, attendance, or professionalism, used in the course and the weight of each as it relates to the calculation of the Final Grade. Assessments must be quantified, qualified, and provide all students with equal opportunity to achieve. Please refer to the [Assessment and Grading Policy](#) for more information.
 - Due dates for all graded Assessments using specific dates or anticipated timelines (indicated by “the week of” or “between X and Y date”) if flexible or student-driven due dates are utilized. Note that changes to due dates cannot violate the [Final Examinations Policy](#).
 - A brief description of the expectations as they relate to the grading criteria for each Assessment and/or a statement referring students to additional Assessment details and/or rubrics/marketing guides.
 - A statement of penalties and procedures for late or missed graded Assessments.
 - A statement indicating if any or all components of the Course must be either attempted or passed in order to successfully pass the Course.
 - If the course includes a Final Exam, a statement indicating that the [Final Examinations Policy](#) is followed. E.g. exams written in the last 7 days of classes are weighted at *less than* 20% of the final mark and scheduled final exams have a weighting of at least 20% and no more than 50% of the final grade.
- A list of required textbooks, equipment, and materials.
 - A list of supplemental, recommended, or optional textbooks, readings, equipment, or materials.
 - A short statement on Academic Misconduct.
 - If using a plagiarism detection tool, such as SafeAssign, that places student work in a global repository, a statement informing students must be included and students must be able to view the Originality Report.
 - A statement informing students that the following policies are in effect and that students should refer to these policies should questions or concerns not be resolved with the instructor: [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), [Appeals: Formal](#), [Appeals: Informal Resolution](#), and [Student Misconduct: Academic and Non-Academic](#).
 - A statement regarding Prior Learning with a link to the Policy: “This course may be eligible for [Recognition of Prior Learning](#). Students should refer to the RDC College Calendar for a list of excluded courses.”

- A statement informing students if, and under what conditions, audio or video recording of class is permissible (outside of approved accommodation plans).
- A statement referring students to services available on campus such as: Students are encouraged to explore the Services that RDC has to support them on the RDC Website, in Blackboard, and on the Loop. For a list of Services, see: <http://www.rdc.ab.ca/future-students/services/student-services>.

Optional Elements on a Course Outline

Instructors may include Optional Elements in a Course Outline. These elements may include, but are not limited to:

- Content or Trigger Warnings (see Sample Statements on the CTL website)
- Teaching Philosophy Statement (informing your students what you believe about teaching and learning and how this is enacted in your classroom)
- Expanded Course Description
- Rubrics and Grading Guides/Marking Guides
- Letter Grading Scale to Percentage Conversion Chart
- Explanation of Usage of the Learning Management System
- Classroom Norms
- Links to Online Classroom Websites or Online Textbook Resources

FOR SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF COURSE OUTLINES

Each School may have a particular procedure for the submission and approval of Course Outlines. Please consult with your Associate Dean or designate for additional information.

- The Instructor of the course (or the designated faculty member) creates a Course Outline that meets all elements of the Course Outline Policy.
- The Instructor of the course (or designated faculty member) checks with the School's Associate Dean for a Course Outline Template or, if no template is used in the School, for any information about School norms for Course Outline creation.
- The instructor sends the completed electronic copy to the Associate Dean or designate by the School-specific deadline for it to be reviewed and approved before the first day of classes.
- Following approval by the Associate Dean, changes to elements within the Course Outline require consultation with students. Ensure that students are aware of the process by which changes are made and what circumstances might lead to changes.
- On or before the first day of class, the instructor distributes the Course Outline electronically to all registered students.
- Instructors are to present and explain the initialed and electronically stamped Course Outline on the first day of class and provide an opportunity for discussion of it.

FOR ASSOCIATE DEANS (OR DESIGNATE) AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS:

Associate Deans, or their designate, will follow, at minimum, the following steps. If required, additional procedures will be communicated to faculty within each School.

- Provide the most current School Template for Course Outlines to Instructors.
- Thoroughly review the electronic copy of the Course Outline for completeness and consistency with associated Curriculum Element Sheets, the Course Outline Policy, the Course Outline Guidebook, additional College policies and School standards, collaborative agreements (if applicable), and term dates.
- Ensure that the Final Exam Policy is being followed if the Course has a final exam. E.g. exams written in the last 7 days of classes are weighted at *less than* 20% of the final mark and scheduled final exams have a weighting of at least 20% and no more than 50% of the final grade.)
- Review with faculty the approval process should the instructor require changes to the Course Outline after sign-off.
- Initial and electronically stamp if error-free.
- Forward the initialed and electronically stamped electronic copy of the Course Outline in PDF format to:
 - the Instructor
 - the Holder of the School's files
- The Holder of the School's files submits the approved Course Outline to the Office of the Registrar by the end of the first week of classes and publishes it to the online [database](#) of Course Outlines, sorted by term and course section, maintained by the Office of the Registrar.