

A TEMPLATE FOR COURSE OUTLINES

**RESOLVED AB01/91
APPROVED AT ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 2 OCTOBER 2001**

That the Academic Board endorses the use of the template for course handouts, as detailed in the documents presented. (File981329)

**(Minor editorial changes made at Committee on Education meetings of
8 November 2004 and 7 February 2005.**

Information for staff:

A TEMPLATE FOR COURSE OUTLINES Preamble

The Committee on Education has prepared a template for course outlines at UNSW. This template is intended as a guide for the preparation of the course outlines that are to be distributed to students enrolled in any postgraduate and undergraduate course. The categories of information that have been identified in the template should be provided to students enrolled in any course at UNSW.

The format of the template as a cover sheet and contents is not intended to be prescriptive. Some may choose to use it as it is, but others might use the information simply as a checklist. Whatever the format of course outlines, however, it is important that all the information identified in the template be made available to students in all courses. It is also important that the completed version of the course outline for any course be lodged with the Head of School.

Revised 21 July 2005



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

[SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENT]

[COURSE CODE]

[COURSE NAME]

[SESSION, YEAR]

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Aims** - (as applied to courses, or to teaching sessions): These are brief, broad statements – often a single sentence - which tell students what the overall intention of the course (or teaching session) is, and what they will have learnt by the end of it. Aims emphasise the intention of the teacher/instructor, whereas learning outcomes (see below) are written from the point of view of students. **(See Guidelines on Learning that Inform Teaching at UNSW, no. 10.)**

- **Alignment** - This term comes from John Biggs (1999, Chapter 2) and in its broadest sense describes how all the elements in your course are integrated - learning activities, teaching methods, forms of assessment – so that they work together meaningfully to support the achievement of the expressed learning outcomes, and engage students actively in their own learning.

Aligned Assessment requires finding suitable *forms* of assessment (which might not be traditional exams, multiple-choice tests, essays, and so on) that allow students to demonstrate the achievement of specific learning outcomes. **(See Guideline no. 15.)**

- **Graduate Attributes** - The knowledge, skills, qualities and attitudes a university agrees its students will develop during their program of study. UNSW has a list of 12 Graduate Attributes. The means for developing Graduate Attributes in students should be integrated into the curriculum. No single course can account for all Graduate Attributes, but during the course of an overall program, students should have the opportunity to develop the whole range of Graduate Attributes.

Individual disciplines, or faculties, might have their own Graduate Attributes in addition to the University-wide Attributes. Graduate Attributes only become meaningful when contextualised in the field of study. **(See Guideline no. 12.)**

- **Student Learning Outcomes** - Learning outcomes help clarify the content of your course by briefly, and specifically, giving students a sense of what they will do with the content during the course and what they will be able to do with it by the end of the course. How do you want them to be different by the end of the course? What do you want them to have learned, and what do you want them to be able to do with what they have learned? Articulation of learning outcomes are typically prefaced with statements such as: 'By the end of this course, you will be able to...'
- **Teaching Philosophy** - In essence this consists of how you conceptualise student learning and teaching and how this informs the activities you design for students (including assessment tasks).

CONTENTS

	Page
Course staff	xx
Course Information	xx
Assessment	xx
Academic honesty and plagiarism	xx
Course schedule	xx
Resources for students	xx
Continual course improvement	xx
Administrative matters	xx

Information for staff:

COURSE OUTLINE CONTENT DETAILS

Course staff

- Contact details and consultation times for course convener
- Contact details and consultation times for additional lecturers and tutorial/laboratory teaching staff

Course information

- Units of credit
- Indicate if there is parallel teaching involved in this course
- How the course relates to other course offerings and overall program(s) in the discipline
- A brief statement of the learning and teaching philosophy underpinning the course, drawing on the UNSW Guidelines on Learning that Inform Teaching at UNSW where appropriate:

www.guidelinesonlearning.unsw.edu.au

- Course aims
- Expected student learning outcomes (including those related to graduate attributes)
- The teaching strategies used in the course and the ways they support student learning outcomes

Assessment

- Overall rationale for assessment components and their relationship with specific student learning outcomes (alignment); note the link between assessment components and graduate attributes where appropriate
- Details of each assessment component, the marks assigned to it, the criteria by which marks will be assigned, and the dates of submission (according to UNSW assessment policy)
- Advice regarding the relevant policy on late submission of work (provide either extracts from the policy or directions for where this information can be obtained)

Academic honesty and plagiarism

- The following extract should appear in all course outlines in unaltered form. It is recommended, however, that additional discipline-specific advice and/or material be added to assist students wherever possible:

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or work of another as one's own.* Examples include:

- direct duplication of the thoughts or work of another, including by copying material, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document (whether published or unpublished), composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, web site, Internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement;
- paraphrasing another person's work with very minor changes keeping the meaning, form and/or progression of ideas of the original;
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole;

- presenting an assessment item as independent work when it has been produced in whole or part in collusion with other people, for example, another student or a tutor; and
- claiming credit for a proportion a work contributed to a group assessment item that is greater than that actually contributed.†

For the purposes of this policy, submitting an assessment item that has already been submitted for academic credit elsewhere may be considered plagiarism.

Knowingly permitting your work to be copied by another student may also be considered to be plagiarism.

Note that an assessment item produced in oral, not written, form, or involving live presentation, may similarly contain plagiarised material.

The inclusion of the thoughts or work of another with attribution appropriate to the academic discipline does *not* amount to plagiarism.

The Learning Centre website is main repository for resources for staff and students on plagiarism and academic honesty. These resources can be located via:

www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism

The Learning Centre also provides substantial educational written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example, in:

- correct referencing practices;
- paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing, and time management;
- appropriate use of, and attribution for, a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre.

Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting, and the proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

* Based on that proposed to the University of Newcastle by the St James Ethics Centre. Used with kind permission from the University of Newcastle

† Adapted with kind permission from the University of Melbourne.

Course schedule

- A table of lecture and tutorial or practical class topics for each week, indicating the name of lecturer involved (where multiple lecturers teaching in course), online activities, such as discussion forums, and relevant readings from textbook and other reference material identified for the course

Resources for students

- Textbook details, including title, publisher, edition, year of publication and availability (in bookshop, UNSW library, MyCourse)
- List of required and suggested additional readings and availability (in bookshop, UNSW library, MyCourse)
- Additional materials provided in WebCT

- Recommended Internet sites
- In preparing the section concerning relevant resources and reference materials, staff should also note that assistance is available from the Library:

info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/teaching.html

Continual course improvement

- A brief statement informing students that periodically student evaluative feedback on the course is gathered, using among other means, UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) Process. Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback.

Administrative Matters

- Information about each of the following matters is best presented in a generic School handout, but reference should be made in every course handout to where the information can be found, and the importance of being familiar with the information
- Expectations of students (including attendance at lectures and tutorials/laboratory classes/seminars; and computer use, for example, in the use of email and online discussion forums)
- Procedures for submission of assignments and the School's policy concerning late submission
- Information on relevant Occupational Health and Safety policies and expectations:

www.riskman.unsw.edu.au/ohs/ohs.shtml

- Examination procedures and advice concerning illness or misadventure
- Equity and diversity: those students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their teaching or learning environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of, their course, or with the Equity Officer (Disability) in the Equity and Diversity Unit (9385 4734 or www.equity.unsw.edu.au/disabil.html). Issues to be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional exam and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made. Information on designing courses and course outlines that take into account the needs of students with disabilities can be found at:

www.secretariat.unsw.edu.au/acboardcom/minutes/coe/disabilityguidelines.pdf