

## Lecture I : introduction to syllabus design

A syllabus is a basic contract between the instructor and students, laying out the responsibilities and expectations on both sides. It is also a road map that shows the general contours of the course, important milestones, and the landmarks that will let students know they are on the right road.

### 1. Definition of syllabus design

According to main scholars, syllabus design is defined as follow:

Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 80)

syllabus at its simplest level "as a statement of what is to be learnt"

Widdowson (1990, p. 127)

"the specification of a teaching programme or pedagogic agenda which defines a particular subject for a particular group of learners . . . a syllabus specification, then, is concerned with both the selection and the ordering of what is to be taught"

Wilkins' (1981)

syllabuses are "specifications of the content of language teaching which have been submitted to some degree of structuring or ordering with the aim of making teaching and learning a more effective process.

Breen (1984)

"a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning".

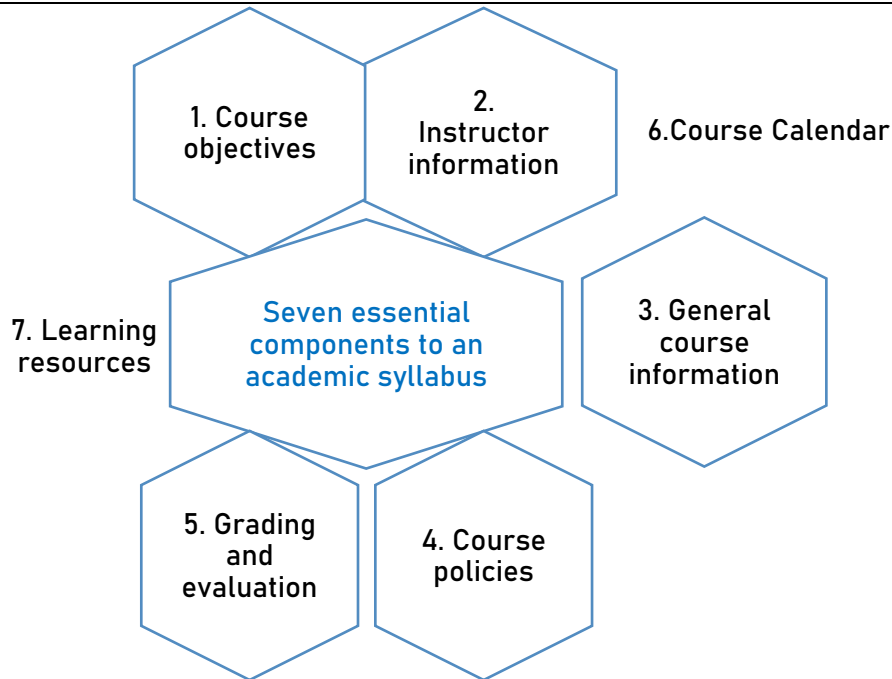
Nunan (1999,73)

"a syllabus consists of list of content to be taught through a course of study. key tasks for the syllabus designer are the selection of items and their sequencing and integration"

Accordingly: defining the concept of a syllabus is problematic; each definition covers a specific point. All in all, a syllabus can be considered an expression of opinion on the nature of language and its learning. It can be considered a guide for the teacher and their learners. A syllabus provides learning objectives and planning for the semester or the year.

A syllabus (/ˈsɪləbəs/; plural syllabuses or syllabi) or specification is an academic document that communicates information about a specific course and defines expectations and responsibilities. It is descriptive (unlike the prescriptive or specific curriculum). A syllabus may be set out by an exam board or prepared by the professor who supervises or controls course qualities.

## 2. Components of syllabus



## 2. The terminology used in Syllabus design literature

### Syllabus

- A syllabus is an outline/plan/list of a specific course prepared by the instructor. It includes the topics to be covered, their order, often the required and suggested reading material, and any other relevant information.

### Curriculum

- Curriculum refers either to all of the courses offered by an educational institution or to the courses offered in a specific program. For example, you can refer to the "English Language curriculum" when you are talking about the series of courses that English Language Teachers must take as undergraduates in order to become teachers.

### Courses

- a **course** is a unit of teaching that typically lasts one academic term, is led by one or more instructors (teachers or professors), and has a fixed roster of students. A course is usually an individual subject. Students may receive a grade and academic credit after completion of the course

**SUBJECT**

an area of knowledge that is studied in school, college, or university.e.g. English, History..

**Major**

A plan of instruction covering a specific theme of a subject, like in the subject of English, we find English Literature, applied linguistics ...

**LECTURE**

A lecture (from the French lecture, meaning reading) is an oral presentation intended to present information or teach people about a particular subject, for example by a university or college teacher. Lectures are used to convey critical information, history, background, theories, and equations.

**LESSON**

a section into which a course is divided, especially a single, continuous session of formal instruction in a subject. A lesson plan is the instructor's road map of what students need to learn and how it will be done effectively during the class time.

**UNIT**

An effective unit is comprised of carefully designed, interrelated lessons that collectively support and guide students in reaching specific learning objectives. A unit can range from a few to several lessons and can span days or weeks.

**TEST VS. EXAM**

- Tests are worth less than exams because tests are designed to test your knowledge of a specific point; usually a number of chapters recently covered in the book, whereas exams cover everything you learned in class up until that point, from day 1 to yesterday.

**EVALUATION**

evaluation is concerned with making judgments about instruction, a curriculum, or an educational system

**ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is thus the process of collecting information about students from diverse sources so that educators can form an idea of what they know and can do with this knowledge.

**TESTING**

testing can be considered as a form of assessment. Tests should meet some basic requirements, such as validity and reliability

### 3. Further terms

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**DRILL** is familiar to all educators. It "promotes the acquisition of knowledge or skill through repetitive practice." It refers to small tasks such as the memorization of spelling or vocabulary word.

The word "**PRACTICE**" is a word that describes doing an activity repeatedly in order to become more skillful at it.

A **TASK** is normally defined as follows  
It is something that learners do, or carry out, using their existing language resources or those that have been provided in pre-task work.

The term **ACTIVITY** is more general and refers to any kind of purposeful classroom procedure that involves learners doing something that relates to the goals of the course. **For example** singing a song, playing a game, taking part in a debate, having a group discussion, are all different kinds of teaching activities.

An **EXERCISE** is a teaching procedure that involves controlled, guided or open ended practice of some aspect of language. A drill, a cloze activity, a reading comprehension passage can all be regarded as exercises.

#### TASK:

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**What is the relationship between Syllabus design and ESP contributions?**

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