

A boring yet technically important note on course syllabi at Texas Tech:

As I mentioned during class last weekend, this was the first time I have completed a course syllabus prior to meeting an EMBA class.

The reason for not finalizing a syllabus in the past relates to the need for (and value of) 'incomplete contracts' in certain settings (a topic mentioned briefly last weekend... and one we will discuss more fully in September).

At yesterday's accounting faculty retreat, the associate dean informed the faculty that recent administrative pressure to complete and distribute syllabi on the first class day involves some sort of 'rules miscommunication' (which is somewhat ironic).¹ Specifically, rules that apply only to undergraduate classes (e.g., a "first day" syllabus rule) had been communicated as being applicable to graduate classes as well.

In retrospect, I wish I would have retained permitted flexibility regarding our course syllabus (i.e., it would have been better to finalize the syllabus *after* our first weekend concluded).

As we learned this past weekend, the vast majority of the class is not in a position to complete a major project involving Microsoft Access. We can discuss the value and risk of modifying contracts & goals (with a tie to accounting) when we meet in September.

Anyway, the facts of our current situation are (1) I distributed a syllabus that contained no flexibility for modification then (2) that contract was modified via a revised syllabus (see the related web-link).

Regarding your rights as a registered Texas Tech student, if you believe this change in 'syllabus contract' harms you in any way, please let me know in the next few weeks (there is likely a formal process to deal with such situations... but if no one objects, we'll proceed with the 'revised' syllabus).

Best regards,
Steve (8/26/09)

¹ In this case, the miscommunication involves rules established by TTU's regional accreditation body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).