Exemplary Syllabi
Students were asked which syllabi were what they would deem 'exemplary' and the reasons why they are considered exemplary. (Links to those syllabi mentioned are available at the end of this document.) Syllabi from other LIS schools have been requested, and it is anticipated that this document will expand, based on that analysis. After an informal analysis of the provided syllabi, the following characteristics were noted as common to all.

Common characteristics of exemplary syllabi:
- consistent and simple layout
- both week at a glance and all weeks views
- assignments with descriptions on separate pages, dates for assignments on schedule
- detailed and concise language
- explicit URLs for external resources (students often print course syllabi)
- detailed and concise course expectations, requirements, and timetable

It is preferred to have the timetable, readings, etc. all clearly articulated for the entire semester by the first day of class, but some instructors prefer to adjust readings etc. throughout the semester. When this approach is taken, it is important to clearly mark final syllabus drafts as **FINAL** to ensure that students are not working from earlier versions, and to communicate clearly to the students that anything posted is not final unless so marked.

Standards for exemplary online syllabi:

1. Policies, due dates, and requirements for assignments are clearly posted in a concise, prominent, and easy-to-read format.

2. Scrupulously up-to-date with immediate email and/or bulletin board notification when changes to assignments and/or due dates are made. When in doubt, the syllabus should be updated first.

3. Links to required readings are consistently available in ONE place. Individual links to readings are appreciated, but a master list of all assigned readings should be posted.

4. Site maps should be provided for large syllabi.

5. Bulletin boards that include feedback sections and samples of a work.

Basic layout of an exemplary syllabus:

Course Name and Number
Semester

Instructor Name
email address; phone number
office address

Synchronous sessions or office hours:
On-campus session:

Course overview.
"Overview of … Detailed consideration of … Advanced training in …"

Text:

Evaluation: course grade based on …. Students enrolled for 1 unit will complete ….
Students enrolled for 1/2 unit will complete …

Assignments (links to "Assignments" page)
(point values for students taking the course for half/full credit and due dates given in
parentheses; * designates assignments to be completed only by those enrolled for full
credit):

Assignment 1 with point values and due date, links to Assignments page which contains
full description.
Assignment 2 and so on …

Schedule
Date
Live session: Time [Topics]
Reading assignment:
    full citations and locations

Written assignment:
By [date], post some brief notes to the [name of] bulletin board to introduce yourself to
other members of the class. Notes may include such details as academic background, work
experience, and reasons why you are interested in learning more about [subject of course].

All other weeks in the semester listed, as above.

Resources:

Appendix A
Exemplary Syllabi and Rationale

In a December 2004 bulletin board post, LEEP students were asked to discuss online syllabi they had received during their coursework. The following are their comments regarding exemplary LEEP syllabi. Links to the syllabi are provided, as well as course and instructor information.

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LIS 412LE Science Information Sources and Reference Services, Spring 2004, taught by Linda Smith:
http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/spring04/LIS412LE/index.html

This syllabus presents assignments as separate links and also entries in the week-by-week schedule. The dual listing made it easy to look at the overall assignments at a glance, but also to integrate the assignments with the class sequence. Also, Linda's language is both detailed and concise. Finally, I like her use of explicit URLs and e-mail addresses for external resources (rather than hyperlinked descriptions); the explicit text makes the URLs useful even on a printed copy of the syllabus.

Comments from another student:
This syllabus is very organized and resourceful. I like the "Schedule" part of the syllabus the most since it gives an overview of what will be discussed in class, what the assigned readings are, and what assignments are due in each session.

LIS 424 Government Publications, Spring 2002
taught by Marilyn Moody
http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/spring02/LIS424LE/index.html

Several students mentioned this syllabus, but no comments were given.

LIS 525 LE Government Publications, Fall 2004
taught by Eric Forte and Sherry DeDecker:
http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/fall04/LIS525LE/index.html

I liked the consistent and simple layout of this syllabus. I also suspect that the webpage structure and separate URLs for each week permitted easier (and

therefore more timely) management of the syllabus by the instructors.

Comments from another student:
I like it because it's very clean, organized and resourceful. The "Course Overview" page provides detailed descriptions/objectives of the course, something about the instructors, how they can be reached, grading scale (Yes!), and a brief explanation on the structure of the class' homepage! If you go to the Schedule Index table and click on one of those "week", that particular week's readings, sources, and assignment are all on the same page. In other words, students don't need to go back on forth on the syllbus. It also provides information on when is the page last updated or if it is "finalized" before class, etc.

LIS407LEA Cataloging and Classification I, Spring 2004
taught by Pat Lawton
http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/spring04/LIS407LEA/index.html

I like this syllabus since it's very organized, informative, and resourceful. The "Overview" page gives students an idea of what the course is all about, expectations from the instructor, how the class is structured, etc. The weekly schedule part of the syllabus is my favorite since it gives information on what the session's topics are, the links and readings, etc. so students can plan ahead. I find the "Do" and "Due" part very unique and useful. The syllabus is fun to read.

LIS410LE Adult Public Services, Summer II 2004,
taught by Lori Bell
http://leep.lis.uiuc.edu/summer204/LIS410LE/index.html

I like this syllabus since it contains a brief description of the course, information on the instructor, and the grading scale. Like the previous syllabi, 410LE's syllabus also contains information on what topics will be discussed, assigned readings, assignments due, etc. in each session so students can plan ahead accordingly.