

The number of massage and bodywork techniques described in the Massagetherapy.com glossary.

Created by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals • philosophy for instructors



THE GRAPHIC SYLLABUS: HOW & WHY

Massage and bodywork educators often talk about adapting the way we teach to accommodate different types of learners. In the traditional learning style theory, most massage therapists are a strong blend of visual and kinesthetic learners. Based on that, we recognize the importance of bringing visuals into the classroom and having students represent their notes graphically in mind maps and graphic organizers. You can take this idea even further, and help students see the big picture more clearly, by creating a graphic syllabus for each course.

The typical course syllabus has evolved into an ungainly multipage list of dates, assignments, course content, policies, and more. It's necessary information to provide for students, but the

delivery method can be overwhelming, intimidating, and confusing for some. One way to overcome the confusion and to provide students clarity is to create a graphic syllabus to accompany your traditional syllabus.

BENEFITS

The goal of a graphic syllabus is to provide a visual overview of the course content. It's not meant to replace the traditional syllabus, but supplement it. It gives students a clear and visual overview of what they'll be learning in the course and how the concepts and topics relate to one another. It allows students to see the big picture and view the course as a whole and not just a collection of seemingly unrelated topics. This is beneficial because the connections that seem obvious to us as instructors may not be as easily made for students. It also provides a way for students to get an overall sense of the flow of the course and monitor their progress throughout the semester. For some students who might get overwhelmed with a class just by looking at its traditional syllabus, a graphic syllabus can make the course seem manageable and even exciting.

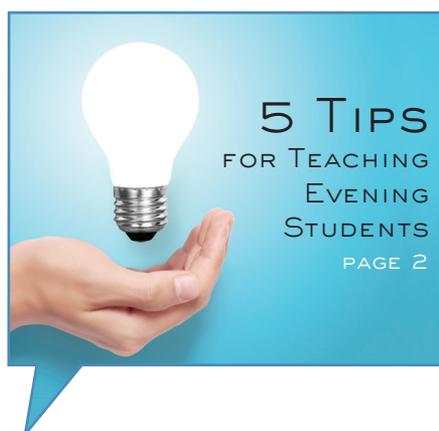
DESIGN

A graphic syllabus is a one-page visual summary of the key pieces of course content. They are flow charts, mind maps, diagrams, or some graphic representation of key course content. Often they are organized by unit or topic and may include



Words of Wisdom

What's the best way to get students excited about the content you're going to teach? Have someone else tell them how important it is. Consider using this simple and effective activity to increase student engagement and interest in course content. Ask students who are finishing your course to write advice for students who are taking the course the next term. Ask for advice on succeeding in the class or insights on how the content will serve them in the program and their career. Share these words of wisdom on the first day of class by handout, PowerPoint presentation, or videos of the former students.

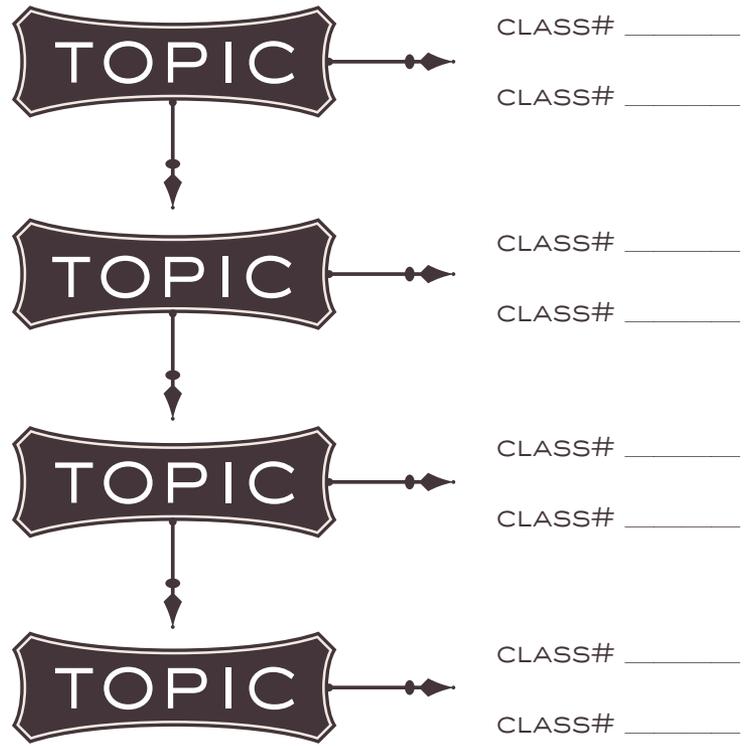


tests and key assignments. Because they are intended as a supplement to a traditional syllabus, they do not need to include all of the course information. Arrows or lines are typically drawn to indicate relationships and flow between topics.

CREATING A GRAPHIC SYLLABUS

Because there are no set rules around what a graphic syllabus needs to look like, it gives you a lot of freedom to be creative and design something that works for the subject matter and the students who will be using it. The key is to create a syllabus that is one page, easy to read, and depicts the flow of topics and relationships between concepts. It's an interesting opportunity to look at your content in a new way by organizing it visually.

Need some inspiration to get started? You'll find a wealth of examples from an Internet search on the phrase "graphic syllabus." There are also helpful examples and information in Linda Nilson's book, *The Graphic Syllabus and the Outcomes Map: Communicating Your Course* (Jossey-Bass, 2007).



The flow of content and classes is clear in this simple one-page design.



5 TIPS FOR TEACHING EVENING STUDENTS



Instructors need to develop different teaching strategies to successfully teach evening students.

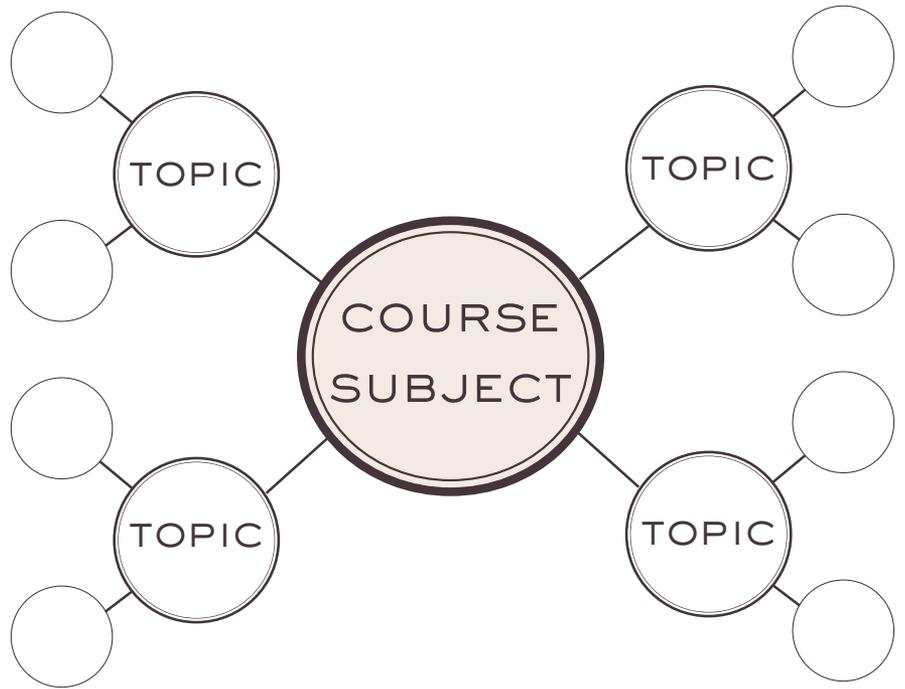
Often these students are coming to class directly from day jobs or taking care of their kids and they're frazzled, tired, and ready to drop. How do you address these challenges while still covering the class content productively? Use these tips to keep you and your students awake and engaged:

1. Lighten Up on Food Policies

- 💡 Teach your students to eat for learning and alertness: eat a bigger lunch and less right before class. The evening meal should include lean proteins and fewer carbohydrates, sugars, and processed foods. Advise them not to skip this meal, even if time is tight!
- 💡 If possible, allow food in the classroom, especially during the first hour of class.

It might also be interesting to make it an assignment or bonus project for students finishing the course to create a graphic syllabus based on how they think the course material flows and fits together. You may get some really creative examples from those visual learners who have experienced the course. You may also discover the areas of the course that are still confusing for students and then alter how you teach and structure the content accordingly.

This small addition to your course packet can make a huge impact on how your students understand and embrace your course content. Schools can take this concept to the next level by creating a graphic syllabus for a whole program that new students receive in orientation and is posted in a common area. This graphic program syllabus would show flow of courses from semester to semester and relationships between concepts and courses. 🍏



This comprehensive mind map graphically depicts the topics and sub-topics within a course. Arrows can be added between circles to show the teaching order.



Pedagogy \ *noun* \ the art, science, or profession of teaching

Andragogy \ *noun* \ the art or science of teaching adults

Source: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

2. Rethink Your Class Structure

- 💡 Cover the most important concepts at the beginning of class.
- 💡 If possible, lecture at the start and then use the end of class for practice and hands-on time.
- 💡 Incorporate conversational instruction methods, rather than straight lecture. Get your students as engaged as possible in the content.

3. Offer Extended Breaks

- 💡 Schedule your first break sooner and longer than you would for a day class to allow time for students to eat, check in with school personnel, etc.
- 💡 A common complaint evening students have is a lack of access to key personnel—like financial aid and career placement—in the evening. Have staff members stay through the first break on a regular basis.

4. Create Activities for Engagement

- 💡 Have a short opening activity each class to help students transition from their daytime responsibilities to your classroom.
- 💡 Increase the number of activities to one every 1.5 hours.
- 💡 Incorporate movement as often as possible, even if it's just having everyone stand and move around the room while you ask review questions.

5. Bring Your “A” Game

- 💡 Students feed off of your energy and attitude. Even if you're a morning person who's been teaching since 8 am, come to class with a positive attitude and enough energy to carry everyone through to the end.

Evening students are a wonderful group to work with; they often bring to the classroom a wealth of life experience and dedication to learning. Enjoy the opportunity to work with these students and create an environment conducive to making them, and you, successful in the process. 🍏



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