

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
Adult Education and Literacy Letter

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| ID/No: | AEL 07-17 |
| Date: | December 13, 2017 |
| Keyword: | AEL |
| Effective: | Immediately |

To: Adult Education and Literacy Grant Recipients
Adult Education and Literacy Special Project Grantees
Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors
Commission Executive Offices
Integrated Service Area Managers



From: Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Development Division

Subject: **Required Syllabus Design for Adult Education and Literacy Instruction**

PURPOSE:

To provide Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) grantees¹ with information and guidance on developing syllabi for AEL instructional programs, including specific guidance on English as a Second Language² (ESL) programs, high school equivalency (HSE) programs, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs.

This AEL Letter:

- underscores the requirement to provide class syllabi;
- defines “program of study”;
- defines the “minimum syllabus elements” required for class syllabi;
- identifies additional elements required in a syllabus for an IET program of study;
- identifies additional elements required for an HSE program of study; and
- identifies additional elements required for an ESL program of study.

RESCISSIONS:

None

¹ For the purposes of this AEL Letter, AEL grantees are entities that receive AEL funds through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

² Capitalization indicates terms that are defined in this AEL Letter or in other AEL Letters, the Adult Education and Literacy Guide, state or federal laws, or other publications cross-referenced in this AEL Letter.

BACKGROUND:

A syllabus provides information on course content, course requirements, the policies of the provider, and the responsibilities of students. AEL grantees are currently required to provide all participants with either a handbook or a syllabus. Starting on July 1, 2018, grantees will be required to provide all participants with a syllabus for each course in a program of study.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) expands and clarifies the variety of programs, activities, and services required under AEFLA, including program objectives for ESL, HSE, and IET and establishes more rigorous performance requirements.

TWC intends to use the syllabus as a means by which grantees can document how the services they deliver address the new federal requirements.

Under AEFLA, TWC must ensure that grantees align their courses with the Texas AEL Content Standards (content standards), released in 2016.

AEL Letter 01-17, “Implementing Programs, Activities, and Services for English Language Learners,” clarifies an AEFLA requirement that ESL courses must lead to high school completion, transition into postsecondary education or training, or employment. Although these outcomes might not be realized initially by students who function at lower academic levels, the instruction must be offered at all ESL levels to provide an interconnected sequence of coursework that supports the ultimate achievement of these outcomes. The ESL syllabi must explain how the course objectives, curriculum, and services fit into the sequence, lead to high school completion, and achieve transition goals using the methods outlined in AEL Letter 01-17.

WIOA performance requirements outlined in US Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) Program Memorandum 17-2, “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs,” describes requirements for reporting performance under WIOA. The memo outlines specific performance criteria for participants who attain an HSE credential. To be included in the HSE credential attainment measure for performance, participants who earn an HSE must also be employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

Syllabi for HSE preparation courses must describe how course outcome objectives address these performance criteria.

PROCEDURES:

No Local Flexibility (NLF): This rating indicates that AEL entities must comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in

this AEL Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to comply. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

Local Flexibility (LF): This rating indicates that AEL entities have local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set forth in this AEL Letter. All information with an LF rating is indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

NLF: Grantees must be aware of the following definition:

Program of Study

A program of study is a grouping of courses that deliver academic and/or career and technical education to prepare students for postsecondary education and career success.

Minimum Syllabus Elements

NLF: Grantees must provide all participants with a syllabus that includes the minimum elements; that is:

- general information about the program, including any fees or costs related to the course;
- information about the instructor, including the instructor’s name and contact information;
- the course’s location;
- the course calendar, including class hours, start and end dates, and holidays;
- the course objectives and how they align with the content standards;
- the attendance policy, including methods for making up missed classes or completing missed work;
- the expectations for course participation, homework, and outside instructional support such as distance learning;
- the methodology for evaluation and/or grading;
- a list of the necessary learning tools and resources (such as textbooks, digital resources and applications, laptop notebooks, and calculators) and information on which of these resources are provided by the program and which must be acquired by the student; and
- a list of additional forms of support for students, such as contacts for career navigators and counselors; contacts for TWC resources, such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Solutions; and contacts for services offered by collaborating organizations.

Additional Requirements for ESL Syllabus

NLF: In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, grantees must include information in the syllabus for each course in an ESL program of study showing how the course addresses the AEFLA requirements to:

- align with the content standards;
- fit into a sequence of courses leading to attainment of a certificate of HSE and/or enrollment in postsecondary education, training, or employment; or
- be part of a career pathway.

Additional Elements for HSE Preparation Syllabus

NLF: In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, grantees must explain in the syllabi for courses in an HSE program of study how, within one year after exit, the courses address the AEFLA requirement of leading to:

- employment; or
- enrollment in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential.

Syllabi for HSE preparation courses must describe how course outcome objectives address WIOA performance criteria.

Additional Elements for an IET Syllabus

NLF: In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, grantees must provide in the syllabus for a course in an IET program of study:

- a description of each of the three core components of an IET program of study, including (1) AEL activities, (2) workforce preparation activities, and (3) workforce training;
- a single set of learning objectives that identifies specific adult education content, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training competencies;
- the schedule for the IET program of study, showing how the core components are provided concurrently at points within the overall scope of the program; and
- information on the recognized postsecondary credential that participants will prepare for, including how the credential is earned and what organization administers the credential.

Syllabus Distribution

NLF: Grantees must distribute the syllabus to students on the first or second day of class—or, in the case of distance-learning participants, within one week after completing the first hour of distance learning, or the student’s first proxy hour.

INQUIRIES:

Send inquiries regarding this AEL Letter to aelpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us.

REFERENCES:

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

US Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education Program Memorandum 17-2, “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs,” issued August 23, 2017

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/octae-program-memo-17-2.pdf>

Texas Adult Education and Literacy Assessment Guide

<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/partners/texas-ael-assessment-guide-twc.pdf>

Texas Adult Education and Literacy Guide

<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/partners/texas-ael-guide-twc.pdf>

AEL Letter 01-17, “Implementing Programs, Activities, and Services for English Language Learners,” issued January 25, 2017, and any subsequent issuances
<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/partners/ael-01-17-twc.pdf>

AEL Letter 02-16, Change 1, “Implementing the Integrated Education and Training Service Approach—Update,” issued October 13, 2016, and any subsequent issuances
<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/partners/ael-02-16-change-1.pdf>

AEL Letter 04-16, Change 1, “Implementing Integrated Education and Training English Literacy and Civics Education—Update,” issued April 10, 2017, and any subsequent issuances
<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/partners/ael-04-16-change-1-twc.pdf>