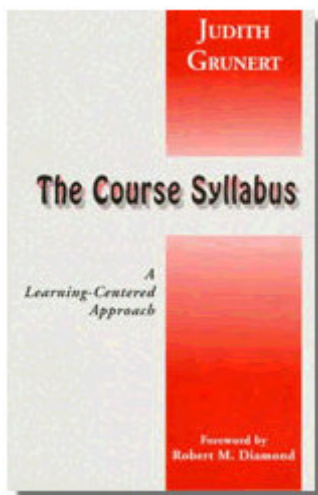


Book Review



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[The Course Syllabus: A Learning Centered Approach](#), by Judith Grunert, Boston, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 1997, 97 pp, \$17-20.

For those in an academic setting, a short book is available which jibes with the principles of Dialogue Education™ as developed by Dr. Jane Vella. The book encourages writing a syllabus which makes learning the central focus of the course. "The learning-centered syllabus... responds to the question: What do students need to know in order to derive maximum benefit from this educational experience" (pg. viii).

The author promotes the preparation of a syllabus that goes beyond stating the purpose of a course, the required readings, rubrics, and policies. This syllabus provides the teacher's beliefs about education, all logistics, a calendar, most handouts, a delineation of responsibilities of both teacher and student, and more. The benefit of all that effort? "The learning-centered syllabus can be an important learning tool that will reinforce the intentions, roles, attitudes, and strategies that you will use to promote active, purposeful, effective learning" (pg. 3).

Though not a Dialogue Education™ practitioner, Judith Grunert's approach reflects the twelve principles Jane Vella describes in [Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach](#) (2001). Following her encouragement would especially help teachers to plan for in Accountability and Sound Relationships. Part I gives the implications of a learning-centered approach and syllabus. Part II offers examples. Part III includes suggested readings.

The author briefly notes in Part III that the learning-centered syllabus can go a long way towards developing a teaching portfolio. This aspect could be a special benefit to those learning to use Dialogue Education™. A detailed syllabus would provide a natural platform for notes on what worked and what didn't. Perhaps, those notes could result in a story, article, or book documenting advances in Dialogue Education™. As J. Vella once remarked, "I really believe we should put more effort into documentation of the development of Dialogue Education" (conversation, June 2007).

