

CHECKLIST FOR CRAFTING EFFECTIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS¹

Use the following checklist to ensure that your objectives and expectations are clearly communicated to students. Not all options will apply to each assignment. In designing or revising an assignment, make sure you can answer the following questions.

How does the assignment fit in with the goals and objectives of the course?

What is the purpose of this specific assignment?

What writing abilities will students need in order to successfully complete this assignment?

- Have you identified how this assignment fits into the overall course plan?
 - *Clearly state the specific purpose(s) of this assignment near the beginning of the assignment.*

- Use precise verbs to identify concrete tasks that you want students to perform.
 - *Clearly state which CBS writing abilities the assignment targets), and define those abilities that students will need in order to complete the assignment.*
 - *Define how you want students to use their research / data (summarize to compare it with evidence from other sources, synthesize evidence from various sources to support generalizations and prove a point, extrapolate issues to draw conclusions -inductively or deductively)*

- Define the tone/voice for the assignment.
 - *Audience*
 - *Student's purpose in addressing audience (e.g. to teach, to persuade)*
 - *Style (e.g. formal, informal, 1st person, 3rd person)*

- Describe the product you envision.
 - *Length (min/max # of words or pages, specify if this limit includes figures, tables, and references)*
 - *Specific format (e.g. lab report, proposal) or organization (e.g. introduction, body, conclusion)*
 - *Expected content of sections*
 - *Format for citations and references (e.g. APA, CBE, MLA, a specific journal format)*
 - *Resources you expect students to use (type and number of sources)*

- Outline the process or series of tasks required.
 - *Help students budget their time*
 - *Build in staged tasks (e.g. proposed research question, annotated bibliography, outline, first draft) with required lengths and due dates*
 - *Explain options for revision and instructor or peer review*

- Explain your grading criteria.
 - *Identify the major requirements or bases for your evaluation*
 - *Determine the relative weight or importance of the major requirements*
 - *Develop a grading checklist or rubric specifying how criteria are weighted, and ensure that the rubric reflects the assignment purpose and the relative weight of requirements (deliver with assignment)*
 - *Include the due date(s) and late policy*
 - *Include the Regents scholastic dishonesty definition: "Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic*

¹ Developed by EEB

achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis." Scholastic dishonesty is grounds for disciplinary action.