

Checklist* for Designing Transparent Assignments

This updated checklist incorporates revisions by faculty at the University of Houston, Downtown and staff at the Center for Teaching and Learning at Indiana University Indianapolis.

*Students are the best judges of how transparent an assignment is. Invite them to parse the purposes, tasks and criteria for the assignment before they start working. This will help you to make the assignment even more transparent for them.

TRANSPARENT ASSIGNMENT CHARACTERISTICS			<i>If you select yes, explain how your assignment satisfies the criteria. If you select no, identify changes you will make to incorporate the criteria.</i>
Does the assignment have a stated due date(s) at the top?	YES	NO	
PURPOSE SECTION			
Does the assignment have a stated purpose that is marked in a section labeled "purpose"?	YES	NO	
Does the purpose define the learning objectives in language and terms that help students recognize how this assignment will benefit their learning?	YES	NO	
Does the "purpose" section of the assignment state that the assignment will help the student practice specific skills essential to success in the course, in school, in the field, and how the skills can serve in students' professional lives beyond school?	YES	NO	
Does the "purpose" section use terms from Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, judging, evaluating, creating, inventing, etc.)?	YES	NO	
Does the "purpose" section specify what content knowledge the assignment will help the student become familiar with in the discipline?	YES	NO	
TASK SECTION			
Does the assignment have a "task" section?	YES	NO	
Does the "task" section define what activities the student should do/perform?	YES	NO	
Does the "task" section list actions/guidelines and/or recommend a sequence for students' efforts?	YES	NO	
Does the "task" section include "question cues" such as those from Anderson and Krathwohl's revision of Bloom ?	YES	NO	

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS SECTION			<i>If you select yes, explain how your assignment satisfies the criteria. If you select no, identify changes you will make to incorporate the criteria.</i>
<i>Does the assignment have a “criteria for success” section?</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Does the “criteria for success” section define the characteristics of the finished product?</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Does the “criteria for success” section provide multiple specific examples of what these characteristics look like in practice?</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Will the instructor and students have collaboratively analyzed an example of good work before the students begin working? (Perhaps not stated on the assignment, but done in class prior to distribution)</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Will the students have identified how excellent work differs from adequate work before they students begin working? (Perhaps not stated on the assignment, but guided by teacher in class discussion prior to distribution)</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Does the “criteria for success” section include either: 1) a checklist of characteristics, along with real-world examples of varied quality, to help students know if they are doing high quality work? 2) or a rationale for how students’ learning will benefit from the uncertainty caused by the lack of information about characteristics of successful work?</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Will students use a checklist to provide feedback on peers’ coursework? (Perhaps not stated on the assignment, but done in class at some point after assignment distribution)</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Does the “criteria for success” section indicate whether this task/product will be graded and/or how it factors into the student’s overall grade for the course?</i>	YES	NO	
<i>Will the instructor ask students to reflect and comment on their completed, graded work, to identify changes to their learning strategies that might improve their work? (Perhaps not stated on the assignment, but done in class at some point after assignment distribution.)</i>	YES	NO	