Equitable Assignments: A Conversation to Improve Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

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Intro/Frame

PURPOSE:
• Consider and apply strategies for designing / assessing assignments equitably

TASKS:
• Intro
• Pair work
• Group discussion

CRITERIA:
You’ll leave with
• Draft ideas and strategies for implementing on your campus
Schedule of Activities

• 20 minutes opening framing
• 20 minutes participant exercise
• 20 minutes large group discussion and debrief
• 15 minutes outline action steps and strategies for taking it back to your campus!
Equity of Access

Underrep, First Gen, Low Income: half as likely to complete in 4 years

High-achievement in HS can frustrate college success

Equity of Experience

Gatekeepers stunt research

Well-prepared novices don’t think like experts
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment

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Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment

Erick Montenegro and Natasha A. Janlowski

Occasional Paper #29

www.learningoutcomesassessment.org
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Your challenges</th>
<th>Your strategies</th>
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| **Understanding/Preparation** | • provide, discuss examples of good work  
| • little research experience | • review relevance to real life  
| • unclear assignments | • offer rubric  
| • don’t understand expectations | • begin work in class  
| | • class time for  
| | • questions/clarification  
| | • chance to redo work after feedback |
| **Motivation** | • flexible formats (audio recording, writing, etc.)  
| • fear of failure | • feedback at frequent check-in points  
| • don’t see relevance of academic work | • onsite and online follow-ups  
| • low self-esteem | • rewards, extra credit  
| • low motivation | |
| **Time Management** | • break work into smaller pieces  
| • planning and starting early enough | • regular check-ins, reminders  
| allowing enough time | • process maps, calendar plans  
| **Conflicting Meeting Schedules** | |

2017 Annual Meeting, San Francisco

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
Making Learning Outcomes Usable & Transparent

TILT
Higher Ed
Transparency in Learning and Teaching
Sample Assignments

Purpose

• Skills practiced  \(\Rightarrow\) long-term (problem-centered) relevance to students’ lives
• Knowledge gained \(\Rightarrow\) connection to learning outcomes

Task: What to do

How to do it (steps to follow, avoid)

Criteria

• Checklist or rubric in advance to help students to self-evaluate
• What excellence looks like (multiple annotated examples)
Sample Assignments

Purpose

- Skills practiced: relevance to students
- Knowledge gained: connection to LOs

Task: What to do; How to do it

Criteria

- What excellence looks like (annotated)
- Criteria in advance to help students to self-evaluate
Q & A
Pairs activity
Gather Feedback on Your Own Assignment

*Why are we doing this now?*

**Purpose**
- Knowledge: share feedback, insights; promote student success
- Skills: apply transparency; engage community of practice

**Task**
- Four steps, 2-4 min each, in pairs / 3s

**Criteria**
- Draft you can use in your course
- Helpful insights from colleagues *as novices*
Set up

1. Sit with a **disciplinary stranger**
Describe an Assignment from Your Course

- from 1st half of the term
- after students are acquainted with basic tools and terminology the course uses
- when students are starting to apply those and try them out

Describe this assignment to your partner(s) (2 minutes)
Feedback on Your Assignments, part 1 of 3

As a novice student, offer feedback on the **Purpose**

(3 minutes)

Five years after taking your course,

- What essential **knowledge** should students retain from doing this assignment?
- What **skills** should students be able to perform from doing this assignment?
- Why are these important to students?
Feedback on Your Assignments, part 2 of 3

As a novice student, offer feedback on the Task

(2 minutes)

As a novice, list the steps you’d take to do the assignment.
Feedback on Your Assignments, part 3 of 3

As a novice student, offer feedback on the Criteria

In groups, discuss and define (2 minutes)

As a novice:
- Are you confident you are doing the task effectively?
- Are you confident you are doing excellent work?
- Do you have annotated good examples?

To answer yes, what would you need?
How did we do?

Purpose
- Knowledge: share feedback, insights
- Skills: apply transparency; engage community of practice

Task
- Four steps, 4 - 6 min each, in pairs / 3s

Criteria
- draft you can use in your course
- helpful insights from colleagues as novices
- Strategies
Discussion Questions

• How does this assignment align with learning outcomes for the course? For the program? For the institution?
• How does this assignment align with the evaluative criteria? Micro to macro level
• Are those connections clear to students?