

Checklist for Designing Writing Assignments

INTEGRATING THE ASSIGNMENT INTO THE COURSE

- Connect the assignment to the course content.
- Determine the pedagogical purpose of the assignment.
- Use the assignment to monitor the students' progress in and understanding of the course.

WORDING THE ASSIGNMENT

- State the purpose of the assignment.
- Suggest strategies for responding.
- Design the assignment to allow for more than one "right" answer.

USING THE ASSIGNMENT FOR A VARIETY OF PURPOSES

- Design the assignment to help students synthesize and comprehend course materials.
- Use the assignment to stimulate critical thinking.
- Use the assignment to introduce discipline-specific writing or speaking conventions.
- Use the assignment to facilitate communication between student and instructor.
- Use the assignment to expand the range of the course.
- Offer students choices of topic and approaches.

ATTENDING TO THE MECHANICS

- Hand out printed copies of the assignment or show students where to find the electronic version on BlackBoard or in eDocs.
- Offer sufficient but succinct explanation.
- Give students sufficient time to consider the assignment, write, revise.
- Communicate your expectations for students' responses and your grading criteria.

---from Rebecca Moore Howard and Sandra Jamieson, *The Bedford Guide to Teaching Writing in the Disciplines: An Instructor's Desk Reference*