

Agenda

Key Assignment Design Working Group

Monday – Wednesday, June 19 – 21, 2017

12:30 – 2:30, San Marcos 109

Day 1

Welcome and Introductions (10 min)

Context, Rationale, Deliverables, Rules of Engagement (10 min)

Small Group Discussion Protocol (30 min total)

1. Assignment author sets up the discussion (5 min)
2. Q&A, feedback, discussion (15 min)
3. Written feedback (5 min)
4. Brief break (5 min)

Reflection (15 min)

Assignment Design Worksheet (remaining time)

Day 2

Welcome and Introduction to Protocol (10 min)

Small Group Discussion Protocol (30 min total)

1. Assignment author sets up the discussion (5 min)
2. Q&A, feedback, discussion (15 min)
3. Written feedback (5 min)
4. Brief break (5 min)

Reflections (15 min)

Assignment Design Worksheet (remaining time)

Day 3

Final Small Group Discussion Protocol (30 min total)

1. Assignment author sets up the discussion (5 min)
2. Q&A, feedback, discussion (15 min)
3. Written feedback (5 min)
4. Brief break (5 min)

Final Reflections (15 min)

Discuss Next Steps – Convocation Session Planning and Implementation (15 min)

Reflections
Key Assignment Design Working Group
June 19-21, 2017

What was this process like for you?

I really enjoyed this process. The smaller group enabled good discussion. The group was also very positive, affirming and helpful.

What ideas are you taking away?

The feedback received gives me content to reflect on to improve my class assignments in general.

What insights do you have about effective assignments?

Being clear about expectations, providing examples of what the instructor is looking for in a quality assignment and making clear to the students the "why" behind the assignment.

What will you do next and what would help you do that?

Although I believe I do a pretty good job of being clear about assignment instructions and expectations, I believe I can provide more examples of what is a "good" or "high quality" assignment as well as a clear explanation of the "why" behind the assignment.

How can others be brought into this work or benefit from it?

I believe a presentation/endorsement from faculty who have participated would be a good selling point to others.

What is most important to share?

I believe the most important thing to share is that it is our JOB to assess our teaching and to remain open to improving our methods in the classroom. Oftentimes it is easy to continue teaching the same content in the same way. I believe hearing others' teaching methods is a great way to get ideas that you can incorporate into your own teaching style. We also tend to forget that assignments/class exercises can teach us about our students if we allow for this exchange. Good assignments can also be positive reinforcement for teachers if you see that you are impacting students' outlook/critical thinking skills.

How can we entice and excite faculty to think differently about assessment?

I think providing examples of assignments that show the assignments to be 1.) easy to administer, 2.) engaging to students and 3.) meeting assessment requirements is the easiest way to entice faculty. The stipend and food provided for faculty development participation also helps!

What are your perceptions / what did you gain from cross-disciplinary discussion?

I really enjoyed learning about what and how other faculty teach in different disciplines because it reminds me of the holistic experience that we are and should be providing to our students. It also makes me feel like we are a "team," a feeling that we often overlook as we focus on our specific disciplines/departments. It also supports discussion on how we can collaborate on academic and programming efforts across disciplines.

What are your ideas for a convocation session around assignment design?

I think starting with an overview, testimonials from the participants and then having the faculty participate in one of the assignments (maybe teamwork) that is developed. This way, faculty can see first-hand how engaging and impactful a "good" assignment can be and how we assess these assignments.

Reflections
Key Assignment Design Working Group
June 19-21, 2017

What was this process like for you? What ideas are you taking away?

I enjoyed having dedicated time to work on better assignments. I am taking away the idea of tying the assignment to learning outcomes and giving students more information. I've been way too concise!

What insights do you have about effective assignments?

You can't assume students know your expectations: spell 'em out! Also, make it challenging by making it interesting to them.

What will you do next and what would help you do that?

I've revised this assignment and am reading the paper handouts you gave us for more ideas.

How can others be brought into this work or benefit from it? What is most important to share?

I think hearing from us that it went well should help! But I would also indicate how I believe this is really going to help my students do better.

How can we entice and excite faculty to think differently about assessment?

See above. Frankly, paying them a little would also help.

What are your perceptions / what did you gain from cross-disciplinary discussion?

I wanna go back to college! Seriously, I am impressed by the quality of our faculty members. And clearly we learned there is a lot of crossover between disciplines.

What are your ideas for a convocation session around assignment design?

Maybe a mini-version of what we did. And being able to show the "before" (cringe cringe) and "after" products.

Reflections
Key Assignment Design Working Group
June 19-21, 2017

What was this process like for you? It was a very positive experience. I needed help to improve my assignment. What ideas are you taking away? I need to give the students a detailed rubric on how the assignment will be graded. Perhaps, I can do an additional assignment after the main assignment to have the students work in groups.

What insights do you have about effective assignments? They need to be clear, interesting, and provoke thoughtful insight.

What will you do next and what would help you do that? I am going to work on the assignment I shared with the group and try to improve it and hone it so that it clear and appealing to the students.

How can others be brought into this work or benefit from it? I think I could collaborate with Virginia to work on assignment together. What is most important to share? It's important for students to see how content from other courses relate, so they don't think that classes contain isolated material.

How can we entice and excite faculty to think differently about assessment? Have more of the workshops. Encourage them to hone assignments already in their curriculum; emphasize it doesn't have to be a separate assignment.

What are your perceptions / what did you gain from cross-disciplinary discussion? I loved finding out what other faculty are teaching. I also was able to meet faculty that I probably would not have met.

What are your ideas for a convocation session around assignment design? Perhaps have round table group sessions and have faculty bring an existing assignment that's required in their class. Show them how that assignment can become an assessment assignment.