TILT (TRANSPARENCY IN LEARNING AND TEACHING)

Think of your two biggest and most complex assignments/assessments for students to complete in your courses.

Do you believe they are **clear** to your students who may not have much experience in your field or higher ed?

Being **TRANSPARENT** in what we are asking students to do in our courses and why can **INCREASE** a student’s growth mindset, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging, as well as ensuring relevancy of the assignments. The following checklist provides a guide on how to make our purpose, tasks, and criteria clearer for our students.

**CHECKLIST FOR DESIGNING A TRANSPARENT ASSIGNMENT**

# PURPOSE

Does the purpose statement on your assignments indicate the relevance and/or usefulness of this knowledge, skill, ability to the students' lives: beyond the course? beyond the major? beyond college? (Think about how a student might benefit from this assignment in 5 years.)

## Knowledge

Does your purpose statement specify **content knowledge** that students will gain from doing this assignment?

Does your purpose statement link that particular knowledge to the larger context of the course, the discipline, and/or college outcome?

## Skills & Abilities

1. Does your purpose statement specify **a skill or skill set** that students will practice while doing the assignment?
2. Does your purpose statement link that particular skill/skill set to examples/contexts where this skill is important in this course, major, or beyond?
3. Is there relevance and/or usefulness of this skill/skill set to the students' lives, course, major, work?
4. Would this assignment benefit from segmenting it into several assignments, each focused on a discrete set of skills that should be mastered to insure students’ successful completion of the next assignment in the sequence?

# TASKS

1. Does your task list identify the very first thing students should do when they begin working on the assignment? The very next thing they should do?
2. If this assignment requires students to ‘struggle’ through ambiguity, have you indicated

that in the purpose statement?

1. Does your description of the tasks help students to avoid wasting their time on unnecessary steps and unproductive time expenditure?
2. Does your description help students to focus their time efficiently on producing the highest quality work possible in the time given?
3. Would students benefit from some practice exercises (in the form of a pre-task) in class to prepare them to perform the task outside of class on the graded assignment?

# CRITERIA FOR GRADING

1. Can students use the criteria while they are working on the assignment to determine whether they are completing the assignment efficiently and effectively?
2. Do the criteria take the form of a checklist or rubric students can use to evaluate the quality of their efforts while they are working on the assignment?
3. If so, does the checklist or rubric specify characteristics of high-quality work for this assignment?
4. Can you help students apply the checklist or rubric to evaluating some sample work in class, so they understand how each criterion would look in practice?
5. Does the rubric provide an amount of information that helps students at this phase in their learning (this point in the quarter, this level in course sequence)?
6. Does the rubric provide an overwhelming and counterproductive amount of information for students at this phase in their learning?
7. Did you provide examples of good work, annotated to identify exactly where and how this work satisfies your criteria?
8. Can you provide students with examples in class so they and you can test out your criteria checklist or rubric to be sure students know how to apply the criteria to multiple examples of work and eventually their own work?



This work “TILT (TRANSPARENCY IN LEARNING AND TEACHING)” has information modified from “Checklist for Designing a

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