

*Revamp Your Assignments with Transparent  
Teaching:*

*A Collaborative Workshop*

Instructor Development Week

January 2025

Dr. Woden Teachout

# AGENDA



**TRANSPARENT  
TEACHING  
FRAMEWORK**



**ASSIGNMENT  
WORKSHOP**



**DEBRIEF**

Tell a story about an assignment that you were supposed to do and you had no idea how.

- What did the instructor/course/resource do or not do?
- What did you need to be successful?



**TRANSPARENT  
TEACHING  
FRAMEWORK**

**The goal of  
Transparent  
Teaching is to make  
learning processes  
explicit and equally  
accessible for all  
students.**



Transparent assignment design involves sharing three critical pieces of information with students

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# Purpose

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# Task

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# Criteria for Success

# Purpose

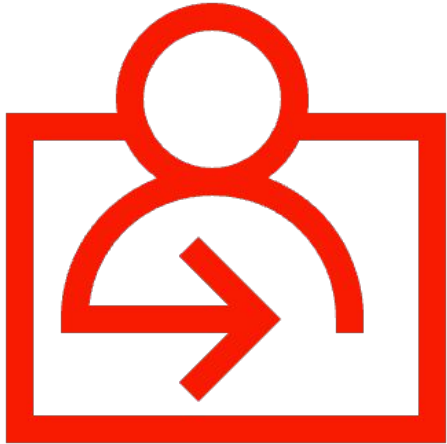


Describe why students are completing an assignment and what knowledge and skills they will gain from this experience.

Connect the assignment to any learning outcomes you have for the course.

Explain how this knowledge and skill set are relevant and will help the students in the future.

# Task



List any steps or guidelines, or a recommended sequence for the students' efforts.

Specify any mistakes to be avoided.

If there are pedagogical reasons for withholding clear instructions, include a statement like this:

*"The purpose of this assignment is for you to struggle while you test your own approach to..."*



# Criteria for Success



**Criteria:** Explain the criteria for success through a checklist or rubric or other clear statement.

**Examples:** Show the students what successful submissions look like using real-world examples.

## Transparent Assignment Template

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*This template can be used as a guide for developing, explaining, and discussing class activities and out-of-class assignments. Making these aspects of each course activity or assignment explicitly clear to students has demonstrably enhanced students' learning in a national study.<sup>1</sup>*

### Assignment Name

Due date:

**Purpose:** *Define the learning objectives, in language and terms that help students recognize how this assignment will benefit their learning. Indicate how these are connected with institutional learning outcomes, and how the specific knowledge and skills involved in this assignment will be important in students' lives beyond the contexts of this assignment, this course, and this college.*

**Skills:** *The purpose of this assignment is to help you practice the following skills that are essential to your success in this course / in school / in this field / in professional life beyond school:*

*Terms from Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives may help you explain these skills in language students will understand. Listed from cognitively simple to most complex, these skills are:*

- o understanding basic disciplinary knowledge and methods/tools*
- o applying basic disciplinary knowledge/tools to problem-solving in a similar but unfamiliar context*
- o analyzing*
- o synthesizing*
- o judging/evaluating and selecting best solutions*
- o creating/inventing a new interpretation, product, theory*

**Knowledge:** *This assignment will also help you to become familiar with the following important content knowledge in this discipline:*

- 1.*
- 2.*

**Task:** *Define what activities the student should do/perform. "Question cues" from this chart might be helpful: <http://www.asainstitute.org/conference2013/handouts/20-Bloom-Question-Cues-Chart.pdf>. List any steps or guidelines, or a recommended sequence for the students' efforts. Specify any extraneous mistakes to be avoided.*

### Criteria for Success:

*Define the characteristics of the finished product. Provide multiple, annotated examples of what these characteristics look like in practice, to encourage students' creativity and reduce their incentive to copy any one example too closely. With students, collaboratively analyze examples of work before the students begin working. Explain how excellent work differs from adequate work. It is often useful to provide or compile with students a checklist of characteristics of successful work. This enables students to evaluate the quality of their own efforts while they are working, and to judge the success of their completed work. Students can also use the checklist to provide feedback on peers' coursework. Indicate whether this task/product will be graded and/or how it factors into the student's overall grade for the course. Later, asking students to reflect and comment on their completed, graded work allows them to focus on changes to their learning strategies that might improve their future work.*

# TRANSPARENT ASSIGNMENT DESIGN....

**Improves Student Success**



**Advances Equity in Education**



**Reduces Misunderstandings**



**Supports Self-Regulated Learning**



**Provides Faculty Benefits**



**ASSIGNMENT  
WORKSHOP**



**Role:**

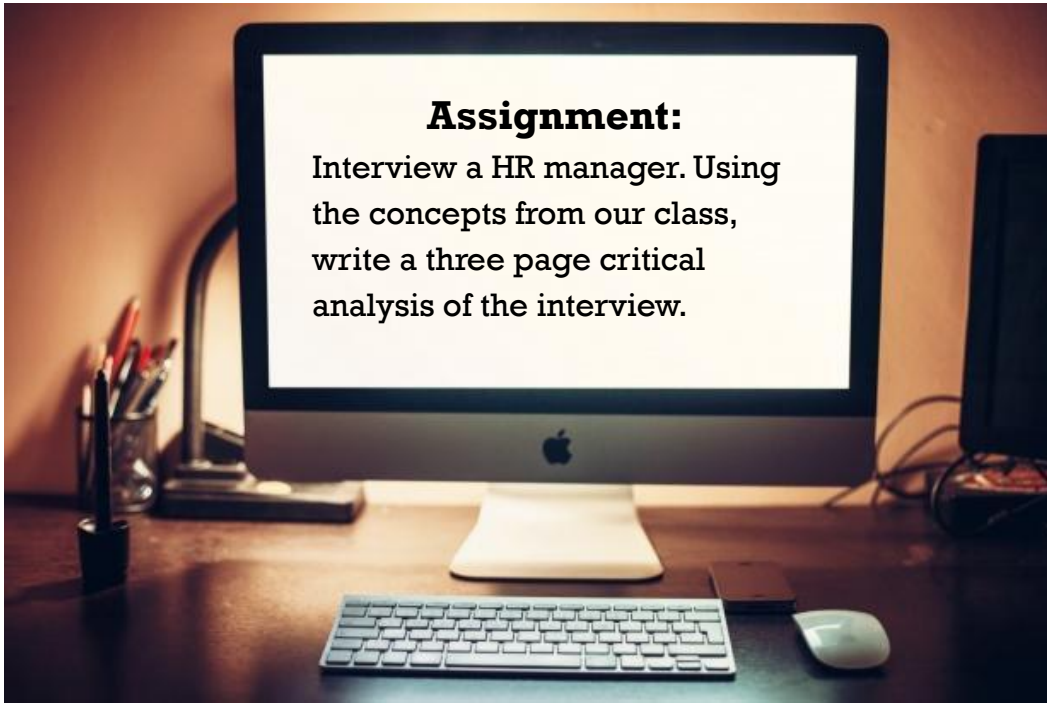
You are a DCE instructor with years of experience.

**Situation:**

I am a colleague and friend who has approached you for help with this assignment.

**Task:**

Your job is to use the Transparent framework to help me think through and revise it.



- 1) Read the assignment.
- 2) Tell me what you think the **PURPOSE** is. Help me state it explicitly.
- 3) Tell me what you understand the **TASKS** to be. Help me state them clearly.
- 4) Tell me what you think the **CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS** are. Help me state them clearly.



**DEBRIEF**