Creating Transparent Assignments using the TiLT Framework

Webinar facilitated by Mandy McGrew, Educational Specialist for Part-time Faculty Support

Based on the work of Mary Ann Winkelmanes and the TiLT Project at UNLV
Objectives

• Describe the TiLT program and the benefits of transparency in teaching, specifically assignment creation

• Consider one of your assignments and how it meets the criteria for transparency

• Revise said assignment or create a new assignment applying the TiLT framework by including Purpose, Task, and Criteria

• Discuss your thoughts on transparent teaching and the impact it might have on our students here at KSU
What is TiLt?

End of Term: Skills, Confidence, and Belonging - Less vs. More Transparent Courses, First Generation Students

- **Amount of Transparency**
  - Less Transparent: N=246
  - More Transparent: N=188
  - ES=.80

- **Employer-valued Skills**
  - Less Transparent: N=245
  - More Transparent: N=188
  - ES=.58

- **Academic Confidence**
  - Less Transparent: N=242
  - More Transparent: N=183
  - ES=.50

- **Sense of Belonging**
  - Less Transparent: N=246
  - More Transparent: N=188
  - ES=.64

**KEY:**
- N: number of students responding
- |−|: one standard error
- Less Transparent: mean perceived transparency <3.3/4
- More Transparent: mean ≥3.3/4
- ES: effect size (Hedges' G)**


Publications and information about the Transparency in Learning and Teaching Project are at: [www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning](http://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqUQhSKmD9U&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqUQhSKmD9U&feature=youtu.be)
Transparency in Teaching

“Students who understand the purpose, tasks, and criteria of an academic assignment . . . Experience higher academic confidence, an increased sense of belonging, and greater awareness that they are mastering the skills that employers value, as well as higher rates of returning to college the following year.”

Maryann Winkelmes

TiLt Resources,
http://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning
Creating Transparent Assignments

Purpose

Criteria

Task

NEXT STEP
1. Select a professional in your prospective academic discipline and/or career field that is considered an expert in an area in which you are interested.
2. Secure an interview with the professional for a date and time that is convenient for both of you.
3. Prepare 8-10 questions to ask the professional about their knowledge of a particular academic discipline/career filed.
4. Conduct a 20-30 minute, face-to-face interview to gather knowledge that will help you make an informed decision about the major/career you are considering. You will want to audio/video record the interview with the interviewee’s permission.
5. Prepare a typed transcript of the questions and answers using the audio/video recording.
6. Write a 400-500 word reflection paper in which you address the following items:
   a. Who you selected and why?
   b. What you learned from them that is most interesting?
   c. What this assignment helped you learn about your major/career decision?
   d. What questions you still have?
7. Submit the typed transcript and reflection paper to your instructor.

What is the purpose?

What is the task?

What are the grading criteria?
Purpose:
“What’s in it for me?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxndXE5_qMc&feature=youtu.be
Task:
“What am I supposed to do?”

Mary-Ann Winkelmanes
Coordinator of Instructional Development and Research
Associate Graduate Faculty, History Department
Principal Investigator, Transparency in Learning and Teaching Project
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_DMDRUSedU&feature=youtu.be
Criteria:
“How will I be graded??”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXjR9qbvzF8&feature=youtu.be
**COLA 100E Major/Career Interview Assignment**

**Due dates:**
- Draft interview questions – September 30, 2014
- Transcript of interviews – October 15, 2014
- Report - November 17, 2014

**Purpose:** The purpose of this assignment is to help you make an informed decision about the major/career you are considering.

**Skills:** The purpose of this assignment is to help you practice the following skills that are essential to your success in school and your professional life beyond school. In this assignment you will:
- Access and collect needed information from appropriate primary and secondary sources.
- Synthesize information to develop informed views.
- Compose a well-organized, clear, concise, report to expand your knowledge on a subject in your major.

**Knowledge:** This assignment will also help you to become familiar with the following important content knowledge in this discipline:
- Issues facing professionals in a field
- Scholarly research formats for documenting in-text sources and creating reference pages (i.e., bibliographies).

**Task:** To complete this assignment you should:

1. Select two professionals in your prospective academic discipline and/or career field that are considered experts in an area in which you are interested.
2. Secure an interview with the professionals for a date and time that is convenient for both of you.
3. Prepare 8–10 questions to ask the professionals about their expertise in a particular academic discipline/career field. The questions must be based on a review of the field using 5 credible sources as defined by the librarian in our research module. Sources should be cited using APA formatting.
4. Conduct a 20 – 30 minute, face-to-face interview with each professional to gather knowledge that will help you make an informed decision about the major/career you are considering. You will want to audio/video record the interview with the interviewee’s permission.
5. Prepare a typed transcript of the interviews
6. Compare and contrast the information provided by both professionals in an 8 page (1.5 spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins) report that documents the advantages and disadvantages of a career in the selected field.
### Transparent Assignment Checklist
(adapted from UNLV’s Transparent Assignment Template at [https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Provost-StudentTransparentAssgntTemplate-2016.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/Provost-StudentTransparentAssgntTemplate-2016.pdf))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the assignment have a stated due date at the top?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURPOSE SECTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the assignment have a stated purpose that is marked in a section labeled “purpose”?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the purpose define the learning objectives in language and terms that help students recognize how this assignment will benefit their learning?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “purpose” section of the assignment state that the assignment will help the student practice specific skills essential to success in the course, in school, in the field, and/or in professional life beyond school?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “purpose” section use terms from Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, judging, evaluating, creating, inventing, etc.)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “purpose” section include a statement and/or list of the kind(s) of content knowledge the assignment will help the student become familiar with in the discipline?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TASK SECTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the assignment have a “task” section?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “task” section define what activities the student should do/perform?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “task” section list steps/guidelines and/or recommend a sequence for students’ efforts?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the “task” section include “question cues” such as those from</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poll and Discussion
Was your task clearly defined?
Was the criteria for grading the assignment clearly stated?
Did you explain the purpose of the assignment to students?
What can you do to improve the transparency in this assignment according to the TiLT framework?
How can you apply this knowledge and these practices in your courses?

Transparent Assignment Template
© 2013 Mary-Ann Winkelmes

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.¹

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:

1. Knowledge
2. Comprehension
3. Application
4. Analysis
5. Synthesis
6. Evaluation

What can you do to make your assignments more transparent?

https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency
Be explicit about your reasons for choosing to give each assignment

### Assignments for a sample business course

This chart indicates how each required assignment for the course helps you practice the disciplinary skills needed for passing the course.

| ASSIGNMENT | DUE DATE | Use of information technology | Communication abilities: oral and written | Teamwork | Understanding group and individual dynamics in organizations | Understanding domestic and global economic environments | Multicultural and diversity understanding | Analytic skills*# | Applying learned concepts to practical situations*# | Understanding of professional responsibility, including ethical reasoning regarding self, organization, and society*# | Research: locating, evaluating and selecting useful information and resources*# | Reflective/evaluative thinking*# |
|------------|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1.1        | 9/1      | +                             | +                                       | +        |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 1.2        | 8/31 NOON| +                             |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 1.3        | 9/11     | +                             | +                                       | +        |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 1.4        | 9/11     | +                             |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 1.5        | 9/18     |                               | +                                       |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.1        | 9/25     |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.2        | 9/25     |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.3        | 10/2     |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.4        | 10/9     |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.5        | 10/16    |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.6        | 10/23    |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 2.7        | 10/23    |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 3.1        | 10/30    |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |
| 3.2        | 11/6     |                               |                                         |          |                                                             |                                                          |                           |                 |                                                  |                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |                             |

Campus Programs on Teaching and Learning
www.teachingandlearning.illinois.edu
Include students in choosing/designing course content and assignments

Weimer, 2013
Help students understand the learning process and that failure is part of that process

Ambrose, Bloom, Dweck, Fink
Have students assess their own work

Ambrose, McKeachie, Weimer
Review the results of assignments and assessments in class
Model your own thinking process for students
When NOT to be Transparent

• Can you think of a time when you would not want to be transparent with your students?
Reflection

• How do you think it will impact your students?
  – Share this guide with your students or go over it together to decipher the transparency of your own assignments and to help students succeed in your course:
  
Questions, Suggestions, Ideas?
Resources and Sources

• https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning
• Google Drive of Resources: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0Bx9gwh3MRThOWHBPLWg3azB5U0k


