Clearer Assignments Promote Better Student Work

Well-designed assignments promote student learning -- by making learning goals, expectations and evaluative criteria explicit.

Recent research in higher education, sponsored by the AAC&U’s Inclusive Excellence Initiative, among others, has demonstrated that transparent assignments improve the learning experiences of all student groups. Clear assignment design demystifies the learning process, improves retention and graduation rates (especially among underrepresented groups), and creates conditions for greater student success. In particular, transparent teaching and learning methods benefit those students who are unfamiliar with college success strategies by clearly explaining learning and teaching processes. Clear assignments also save faculty time when grading, as student work is more on track.

In this collegial, half-day workshop, faculty will be introduced to the principles of transparent assignment design. Participants will explore common impediments to strong student performance on key assignments. In a collaborative workshop setting, faculty will share assignments in small groups and incorporate transparency principles into the design of their own assignments. Faculty will leave with improved assignments that better promote learning by all students, and resources to guide them in the creation of clearer, future assignments.

Open to all WSU faculty and instructors. Teams welcome. Please bring an assignment you’ve used in the past and intend to use in the coming AY.

Location: CUE 518, Pullman campus

Time: 10-2, with lunch provided

Please register by May 1 at: ATL.WSU.EDU

Questions? Contact ATL (atl@wsu.edu)