DQP
DEGREE QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

Resources for Developing Effective Assignments

The *Degree Qualifications Profile* encourages faculty members to develop assignments that contribute to learning and assessing that learning is taking place. There are many resources that support the development of effective assignments, several of which are outlined below.

An obvious starting point is the NILOA Occasional Paper by Peter Ewell, an author of the *DQP* and a long-standing national authority on assessment:

Ewell, P. (2013, January).*The Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP): Implications for Assessment.* (Occasional Paper No.16). Urbana, IL: University for Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

University libraries routinely post guides to the development of effective *research* assignments. Because the *DQP* emphasizes active, applied learning, **much of the advice these guides provide can be applied to assignments in general**.

Here are sites emphasizing research assignments:

• Berkeley - http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/assignments.html
• Pace - http://www.pace.edu/library/library-services/instructional-services/creating-effective-research-assignments
• University of Maryland - http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/assignment
• University of Washington - http://www.lib.washington.edu/help/guides/design.html
• University of Texas - http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/creatassignment.html
• University of Illinois - http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/instructors/assignments.html

Some sites go beyond research assignments to focus more broadly on *writing* assignments in general. Among the most helpful may be the following:

- MIT - http://writing.mit.edu/wcc/resources/teachers/createwritingassignments
- UTEP - https://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=65817
- Brandeis - http://www.brandeis.edu/writingprogram/writing-intensive/index.html

This university website offers some useful advice on creating effective *online* assignments. Nearly all this advice is applicable to assignments in any course:

- Towson University - http://www.towson.edu/provost/provost/oai/ISD/effectiveassignments.asp

Some sites address assignments more broadly:

- Division of Undergraduate Education & Student Affairs at Texas Tech - http://www.tlpd.ttu.edu/teach/TLTC%20Teaching%20Resources/CreatingEffectiveAssignments.asp
- University of New Hampshire - http://www.unh.edu/teaching-excellence/resources/Assignments.htm
- University of Alaska Southeast - http://www.ketch.alaska.edu/library/services/effective-assignments.html
- Washington Center at The Evergreen State College - http://www.evergreen.edu/washingtoncenter/projects/assesslrngassmts.html

AAC&U provides resources in its quarterly publication, *Peer Review*, and newsletter:

- Peer Review – Designing and Implementing an Integrative, Collaborative, Problem-Solving-Based General Education Capstone
- Peer Review – Reflection Builds Twenty-First-Century Professionals
- Peer Review – Portraits of Learning: Comprehensive Assessment through E-Portfolios in the Metro Academies Project
- AAC&U News – Signature Assignments Become a Signature Practice at Salt Lake Community College

The Multi-State Collaborative Initiative (supported by AAC&U and SHEEO) offers resources designing assignments:

• Webinars - http://www.sheeo.org/node/754

• Sampling Protocols and Assignment Design Parameters - http://www.sheeo.org/node/774

Finally, these books, articles, websites, and presentations may prove helpful:

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., Norman, M. K. (2010). *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bean, J. C. (1996). *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Blumberg, P. (2014) *Assessing and Improving Your Teaching: Strategies and Rubrics for Faculty Growth and Student Learning.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boice, R. (1996). *First-Order Principles for College Teachers: Ten Basic Ways to Improve the Teaching Process.* Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Diamond, R. M. (2008). *Designing and Assessing Courses and Curricula: A Practical Guide.* (3rd ed.) San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Eble, K. E. (1988). *The Craft of Teaching: A Guide to Mastering the Professor's Art* . San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fink, D. L. (2003). *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Grunert, J. (1997). *The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach.* Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Hanstedt, P. (2012). *General Education Essentials: A Guide for College Faculty.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lee, V. S., Ed. (2004). *Teaching and Learning Through Inquiry: A Guidebook for Institutions and Instructors*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publications.

Melzer, D. (2014). *Assignments Across the Curriculum: A National Study of College Writing.* Boulder, CO: Utah State University Press.

Meyers, C. & Jones, T. B. (1993). *Promoting Active Learning: Strategies for the College Classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Parini, J. (2005). *The Art of Teaching*. Oxford University Press.
Stanley, C. A. & Porter, M. E. (2002). *Engaging Large Classes: Strategies and Techniques for College Faculty*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Tagg, J. (2003). *The Learning Paradigm College*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company.

Tewksbury, B. (2008). *Achieving Course Goals by Creating Effective Assignments and Activities* (PowerPoint slides). Retrieved from: http://www.sencer.net/Symposia/pdfs/SSI2008/EffectiveAssignmentsPlenary.pdf

Winkelmes, M. (2008). Building Assignments that Teach. *The Journal of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, 19*(8), n. pp.

If you have suggestions or additional resources for making this list more useful, please contact Paul L. Gaston (pgaston@kent.edu)