

ASSIGNMENTS

Summary of Key Points

- Assignment examples, if provided, should reflect coverage of all objectives and content.
- Assignment examples can include supplemental reading materials beyond the required text(s).
- Optional and alternate assignment examples can and in some cases should be included. (e.g. an alternate assignment allowed in lieu of a required field trip or a cost-bearing assignment such as theatre tickets).
- In addition to listing graded assignments, the developer of the course outline should give the basis for grading, and relate assignments to skills and abilities in objectives. For example, say "written assignments that show development of self-criticism." Attach examples if needed.
- Out-of-class assignments must be sufficient to show independent work.
- The difficulty standard for degree-applicable credit courses requires that assignments must reflect college-level effort, particularly in terms of critical thinking.

Overview and Principles of Effective Practices

Title 5 §55002(a)(3) requires assignments in the course outline but does not mandate a comprehensive list. Rather, the outline must "specify types or provide examples." The assignments used by the instructor are to be consistent with but not limited by these types and examples. In all cases, the assignments should be presented in a manner that reflects both integration with the stated objectives and a likelihood that they will lead to students achieving those objectives.

Example of Course Objectives	Assignments
The student will be able to: Define and demonstrate an understanding of general theatre terminology.	Textual analysis in discussion and writing: required study of assigned dramatic texts, including works representative of diverse gender, ethnic, and global perspectives. 1. Participation in class discussions about plays 2. Preparation of group projects in which major analytical questions are discussed and a major project designed around issues related to play interpretation in performance 3. Presentation of written criticism around assigned topics 4. Written reviews of live performance
Observe and analyze the various components of a theatrical performance.	Analyses of several live performances of amateur and professional theatres presented during the academic quarter 1. Attendance at required performances 2. Participation in discussions of performances

Interpret and compare dramatic texts as both written plays and in live performance, including works by a variety of playwrights which represent the influence of diversity (such as of gender, cultural background, class, sexual orientation, and historical period).	Readings from class text on theatre appreciation 1. Application of terms and theories in class discussion 2. Application of concepts in written analyses
Differentiate between the play as literature and the play as performance.	Listening and viewing 1. Study of plays on videotape (DVD) and audiotape 2. Preparation for participation in daily analyses of texts and performances
Evaluate the effectiveness of theatrical techniques in performance.	Interpretative analyses of published critical reviews of performances and plays

For many areas of study the organization or sequence of learning is very important. While it is not required that the example assignments be so organized in the course outline, giving some thought to this can promote an implementation strategy that leads to a more effective learning experience.

There are several key features regarding assignments in an integrated course outline.

- The purpose of each assignment is included. Rather than just stating "group project" the course developer goes on to add "Preparation of group projects in which major analytical questions are discussed and a major project designed around issues related to play interpretation in performance."
- The out-of-class assignments are clearly sufficient to meet the minimum study time hours of work per week beyond class time for each unit of credit.
- For degree-applicable credit courses, it is clear that critical thinking is expected of students, taught to them in class, practiced in outside assignments, and evaluated as the basis for their grade in the class.

Regulatory Requirements—Title 5

Units §55002(a)2B

The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course also requires a minimum of three hours of student work per week, including class time for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term, extended-term, laboratory and/or activity courses.

Intensity §55002(a)2C

The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that requires students to study independently outside of class time.

Difficulty §55002(a)2F

The coursework calls for critical thinking and the understanding and application of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.

Level 55002(a)2G

The course requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.

The quality and quantity of time spent by a student in completing various assignments should reflect these standards at levels that would be appropriate for most students. While Title 5 specifically suggests the use of examples, these should reflect sufficient yet reasonable amounts of coursework assignments appropriate to these standards. The writing skills of students vary relative to their developmental level. For example, lower level courses would typically require fewer or less difficult writing assignments than would an advanced course of equal units. This also applies to other types of assignments.

References

A Transfer Discussion Document (Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates, 2006)

California Articulation Policies and Procedures Handbook (California Intersegmental Articulation Council, 2006)

Critical Thinking Skills in the College Curriculum (ASCCC, 1988)

Information Competency in the California Community Colleges (ASCCC, 1998)

Information Competency: Challenges and Strategies for Development (ASCCC, 2002)

Joint Review for Library/Learning Resources by Classroom and Library Faculty for New Courses and Programs (ASCCC, 1995)