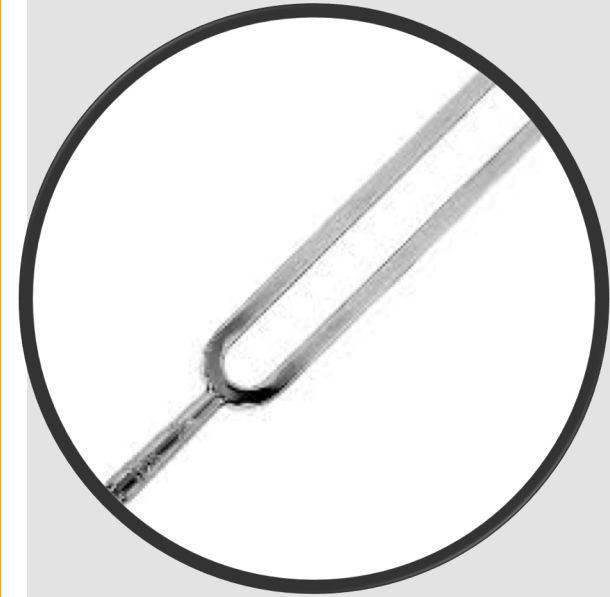


# Assignment Design to Provoke Critical Thinking

Dr. Taimi Olsen & Dr. Aubrie L. Pfirman

Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation



[GO TO and ENROLL: http://bit.ly/assignndesign](http://bit.ly/assignndesign)

# Introductions

OTEI – Aubrie & Taimi

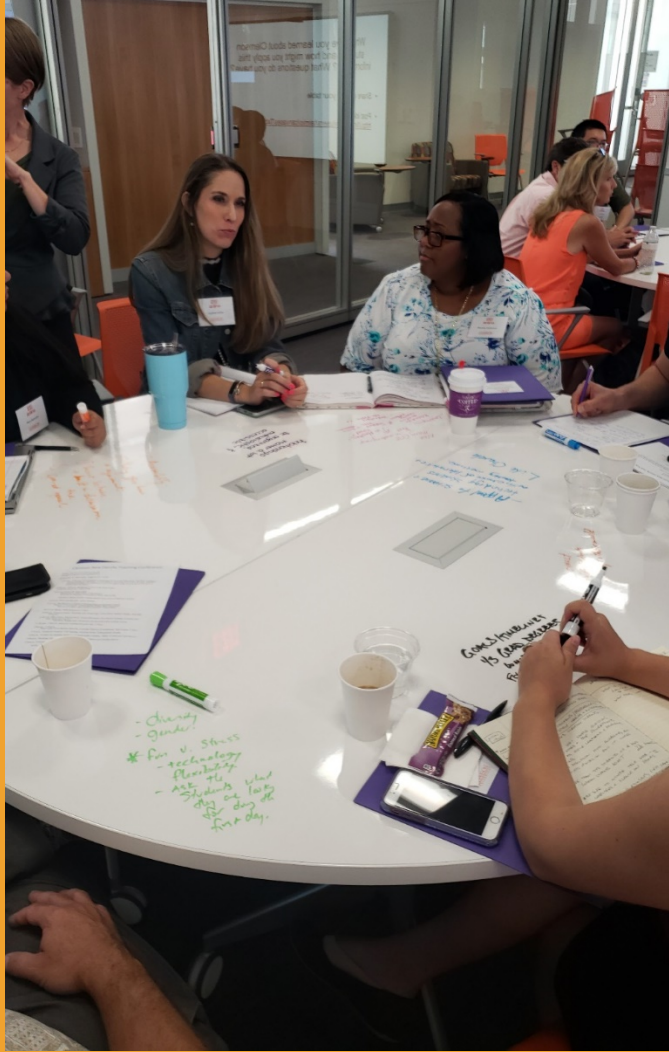
Meet your table team

<http://bit.ly/assigndesign>



At the conclusion of this workshop you will be able to:

- Identify the value of a learning-focused assignment guide for both yourself and your students
- Analyze your current assignments with the learning-focused guide
- Build high quality assignments



What are your experiences with designing assignments (and tests)?

Share at your table (3 min)

## Purpose of a learning-focused assignment guide

- To assess the quality of your assignment
- To identify the strong elements of your assignment
- To identify the assignment's purpose as it fits into the course objectives

*\*We have a parallel guide for test construction and implementation available on Canvas*

## Introduction to the Guide

- Originated with University of Virginia and James Madison University
- Application of the Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT), also offered through OTEI in August:
  - Purpose
  - Task
  - Criteria

Helps students succeed!

<http://bit.ly/assignndesign>

Where to find what in the CU Canvas Course  
“Introduction to Assignment Design”

How to Use  
the Guide to  
Assess  
Assignment  
Construction

Take a look at the guide as we  
walk through the example:

“Disaster Management”  
assignment

(take a minute to read the  
assignment

<http://bit.ly/assignndesign>)





**The assignment description clearly states what knowledge or skills students will gain.**

How is the assignment relevant within the context of the class?

Does my assignment describe the intended learning outcomes for students?

*Page 1 of the Assignment Guide*



An assignment clearly indicates what the students should do and how they should do it. An assignment may also explicitly indicate key tasks to completing the assignment.



How well are all of the assigned tasks aligned with the purpose?

How logical is the flow of the tasks within the assignment?

How clear are the assignment requirements?

Describes completed assignments and allows students to self-evaluate. Criteria may or may not be “grading” sheets but will indicate all aspects and indicate degrees of quality in a completed assignment.



Have I indicated the criteria by which I will assess the assignment?

Are the criteria presented in clear ways?

The assignment is not only created with diverse learners in mind but also accessible to all as a document in and of itself.



How welcoming and positive is the assignment to my students?

How does my assignment align with current guidance for accessible design?

*Page 4 of the Assignment Guide*

Try it!

## Individual work (8 minutes)

- Look at your own assignment (or test).
- Think about it in terms of the guide (or test guide).
- Write yourself notes about your assignment.
- If you want to see an example of one in your area, there are several in the Canvas modules. <http://bit.ly/assigndesign>

# Assignment Review and Guide Completion

- Find a partner at your table (8 minutes per partner)
- Walk your partner through your assignment or test, along with your notes (what you have commented on based on the guide)
- Discuss (partner offers feedback)
- Switch! 8 minutes



## *How did this go?*

- Did the assignment guide make you consider an aspect you had not previously considered in designing assignments?
- Is the guide missing an aspect of assignment design?
- Moving forward: addressing outcomes with your assignments, and aligning with rubrics

# What Comes Next

The “**Design Wrap**” session is meant to help you think about what you learned today and be reflective on your future teaching of a general education course with a signature assignment.

You have some time between the first session and the second session to think through changes.

When you meet with your group again, you will go through your assignment again based on any changes you made, and get feedback from the group on it according to the learning-focused guide.

Possible questions:

- Is this the assignment that you would like to use as your “signature assignment”? Would you rather revise or create a different one?
- Would you be ready to teach a future general education course using that assignment and be prepared to submit a sample of student work for program assessment, if asked?
- Are there additional redesign aspects you would like to incorporate or resources you would need? (Don’t forget library faculty are a great resource!)
- Do the assessment rubrics for the general education student learning outcomes make sense to you? Is there any language that you would like revised?



Taimi Olsen

[taimio@clemson.edu](mailto:taimio@clemson.edu)

Aubrie L. Pfirman

[pfirman@clemson.edu](mailto:pfirman@clemson.edu)



From Clemson  
Online:  
Allyson's Top  
Tips for  
Assignments  
in Canvas

1. Build your assignment in Assignments rather than uploading a Word document.
2. Use the textbox editor for headings, bullets, and numbered lists.
3. Enter due dates.
4. Link to files of annotated examples.
5. Make a rubric.
6. Weight your grades in Assignments.
7. Grade using a rubric.