Connect

Assignments Guide

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WHAT IS AN ASSIGNMENT?

The Connect Assignment tool is a type of Assessment and can be used for assignment submission. Assignments may ask for text, to attach a file, enter comments, or a combination of these actions for submission.

Use the Assignment feature to:

• Turn in papers
• Submit group projects

The Assignment tool provides you with:

• One-click way to download all submitted assignment files to your computer.
• Easy identification of whose submission the file is from, as downloaded assignments are appended with student's username and student ID.
• The option to grade and comment on assignments without even downloading them.
• Assignment Grades are automatically entered into the Grades Centre
• A way to post more sophisticated assignments, such as side-by-side pictures.

WHY USE ASSIGNMENTS?

An assignment can help gauge student understanding of specific sessions within your course. It can also be a method to provide opportunities for students to practice what they have learned. You also have the flexible option in having all submissions in one place online or in one downloaded file. Based on the 7 principles of *How Learning Works*, using assignments in Connect can:

1   Assist and enhance student's organization of knowledge while learning.

2   In combination with other tools such as Discussions, Journals, Wikis, and Blogs, you can create unique assignments meant to develop, practice, and apply skills and knowledge organizations.feedback.

3   Motivate students to learn by creating assignments that facilitate student formation of positive expectancies and value of course learning.

4   Help students develop mastery by creating assignments that build fluency and facilitate integration of skills and skill transfer.

5   Provide feedback for assignments to enhance learning.

6   Give assignments to students to allow for proposals, strategizing, analyzing, implementation, and reflection.

HOW TO RESOURCES

Explore Assignment Resources and more at: elearning.ubc.ca/connect/resources/
Create Assignments
Download Assignments
Grade Assignments

STRATEGIES

Strategy **#1** Motivate students to learn

As students in university have greater autonomy over what, when and how they study and learn, motivation plays a critical role in guiding the direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of learning behaviours they engage in. When students find positive learning value in a learning goal or activity, expect to successfully achieve learning outcomes, and perceive support from their environment, they are likely to be strongly motivated to learn course material. Create and utilize assignments that will motivate your students in accomplishing learning outcomes.

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

Example: Use multimedia

Use multimedia in assignments to enable and encourage learners to actively process the information. Adding relevant graphics and media to words is a powerful way to help learners engage in active learning and help students build mental connections. Check out studies done with the modality effect to understand how using auditory narration can help with learning. Both printed and spoken words suiting the context are recommended to help with engagement in learning and increasing memory.

Example: Provide Rubrics

When creating an assignment, provide rubrics and detail the organization of the activity in the activity description so your students can conceptualize how the content and component skills fit within the whole course. Include guiding questions and a rubric to your task descriptions when creating an assignment. Providing rubrics can help facilitate student positive expectancies in a course.

Example: Provide Targeted Feedback

Providing targeted, specific feedback can enhance student motivation. Clear, specific feedback allows students to understand exactly how and where to improve in their learning progress. You can do this by:
- Providing frequent short tasks.
- Providing feedback at the group level.

Strategy **#2** Assignments to expose and reinforce component skills

To develop mastery, students must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned in various contexts. Component skills include the ability to analyze, problem solve, recognize, plan, formulate, and evaluate in a scenario. Create assignments in which students practice integrating and applying component skills.

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

Example: Concept Map Assignments to facilitate analysis of knowledge organizations

Create an assignment asking students to submit a concept map representing a knowledge organization and emphasize the sorting of course concepts to expose and enhance knowledge organizations. By doing so, such an assignment can help reveal and enhance knowledge organizations.

Strategy #3 Enhance self-directed learning

Students may engage in a variety of metacognitive processes to monitor and control their learning whether it's being able to assess the task at hand, self-reflect on strengths and weaknesses, plan and adjust their approaches, apply various strategies. When students engage in self-directed learning they gain effective learning habits and can improve on their performances. Implement assignments that involve reflections and allow students to monitor and control their learning process.
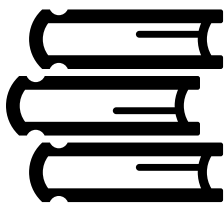
EXAMPLE: Reflection activity assignment organizations

Allow students to upload a reflective sheet on an assignment. Reflection assignments, blogs or learning journals, can assist students integrate course concepts and develop a better understanding of how they learn (metacognition).

Strategy #4 Reveal and enhance knowledge organizations

Students naturally make associations between pieces of knowledge. When those knowledge structures are accurately and meaningfully organized, students are better able to retrieve and apply that knowledge effectively and efficiently. In contrast, when knowledge is connected in inaccurate or random ways, students can fail to apply and retrieve knowledge appropriately. Create assignments where students can build, expand, and enhance their knowledge organizations.

STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE: Group assignments to allow sharing & building of knowledge organizations

Create Groups where students can share and build knowledge organizations together. For these assignments, you can create or suggest group work to include using powerful LMS tools such as Discussion Boards, Wikis, and Blogs. For example, in GEOG 350, students groups are asked to analyze an urban landscape on the a wiki page starting with the knowledge they know at the beginning of the term. Throughout the course, they are tasked to revisit their wiki pages and apply new knowledge in their analysis. This is an excellent use of the Wiki as a repository of knowledge, and allows group members to participate and apply their knowledge in a tangible method.

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