
Analyze your Assignments

Strategies and Steps to Achieve Success

You need a clear understanding of what the instructor wants before starting on any assignment or project. Then you will want to translate assignment terms and requirements into useful clues as to what your instructor expects. When you are not sure – Always Ask the Instructor!

The first step is to read the assignment carefully as soon as you receive it.

Interpreting the Assignment

Ask yourself a few basic questions as you read and jot down the answers on the assignment sheet:

- Why did your instructor ask you to do this particular task?
- Who is your audience?
- What kind of evidence do you need to support your ideas?
- What kind of writing style is acceptable?
- What are the absolute rules for the project?

Terms that might be used

- *Identification Terms:* cite, define, enumerate, give, identify, indicate, list, mention, name, state.
- *Description Terms:* describe, discuss, review, summarize, diagram, illustrate, sketch, develop, outline, trace.
- *Relation Terms:* analyze, compare, contrast, differentiate, distinguish, relate.
- *Demonstration Terms:* demonstrate, explain why, justify, prove, show, support.
- *Evaluation Terms:* assess, comment, criticize, evaluate, interpret, propose.

Unfamiliar terms need clarification (talk to your instructor and see the [Essay and Exam Terms Learning Aid](#))

Begin with Background Content

Most assignment will be related to the materials you have studied in the course up to the point of the assignment. As you read the assignment or project requirements, start by identifying which theories, formulas, and graphics relate. Consider what research you will need to do to complete the project.

Set a Schedule

Assignment due dates need to be scheduled in advance so you can plan your work, research, and writing. Space out each part so that you do not feel rushed.

Create and Use Questions

Create questions for yourself (Who, What, Where, When, How process) based on the assignment. Use these to fill in the content required as you research and write.

Use the Rubric!

Rubrics and checklists are your friends! Do each item on the checklist/rubric and you will find that you have most of the assignment elements. You will still read and edit for flow and comprehension, but your editing process will be easier if you are sure you have done everything that has been asked for. Everything must then be referenced to ensure that you meet the specified criteria.

Check the Format

Ensure your final product is formatted and uses the required citation format before you hand it in.

Good Planning and Action Leads to Success!