RESEARCH-BASED ASSIGNMENTS
THAT INSPIRE UNLV STUDENTS' LEARNING

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Overview

Purpose (benefits)**:**

    Knowledge: - UNLV faculty strategies
                - research findings: students' learning
                - implications for assignment design
    Skills: apply research findings to assignment design

Task (what we do; how we do it)**:**
    – (me) Review research findings
    – (you and IDR providers) apply findings to your own course activities, assignments

Criteria (how well are we doing?) Participants will leave w/
    - understanding of state of research,
    - draft assignment for one of their courses,
    - concise set of strategies for designing assignments/projects that inspire UNLV students' learning
    - plan for sequencing activities in a semester.

Research on Learning	Implications for Assignments (numbers refer to sections in the EXAMPLES handout)
Elbow, Jaschik/Davidson	Low stakes for greater creativity / risk
Richard Light	Coaching model, peer instruction (5)
Gregorc, Kolb	Varied format, equitable access, peer ins.
Treisman, (Steele)	Encourage /require peer study groups (5)
Ambrose, Bergstahl	Flexible format (1)
Bloom. Felder	Sequence skill development (2)
Colomb, Bass,	Feedback on Content vs. Format, try again Provide examples with criteria applied (4)
Perry	Target feedback to phase; Don't overwhelm
Doyle, Felder, Winkelmes	Specify content goals, skills goals, criteria to enable self-monitoring (3)
Winkelmes Yeager, Walton	Explicate assignments' purpose, rationale Engage students in applying your criteria (6) to develop ability / belonging

UNLV Instructors' Responses: Challenges and Successes

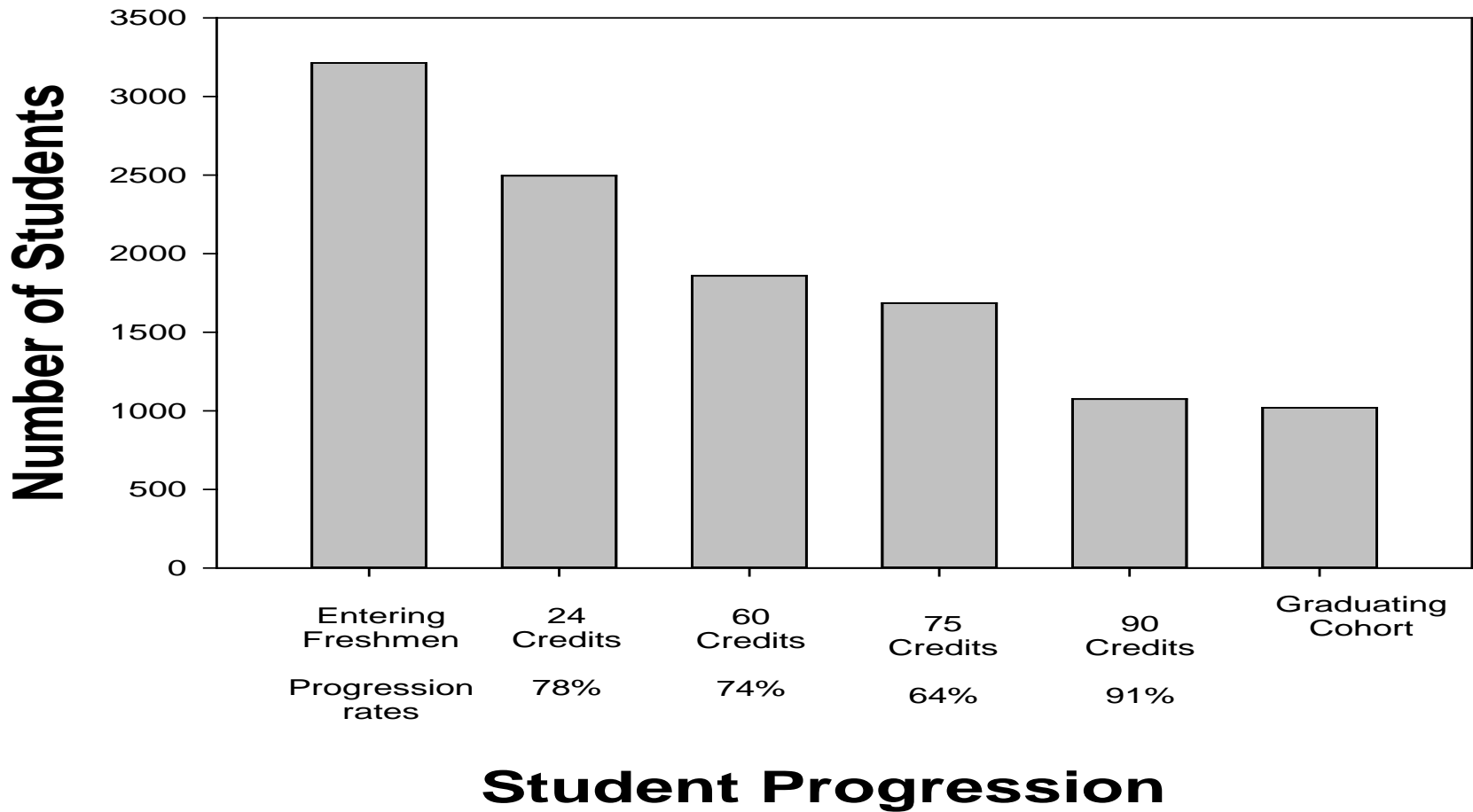| Please identify any challenges or barriers to UNLV students' successful completion of assignments	What are the key characteristics of assignments that you have found to be effective in your work with UNLV students?
Discomfort applying new knowledge	• Apply class concepts to new situations (real-world) during class
Lack of critical thinking skills	• In class (with peers) practice in higher order thinking, especially evaluating reliability of info • Portfolios enhance students' awareness of skills
Scattered focus Procrastination	• Small, frequent assignments • Structured, relevant assignments • Staged assgts connect w/exams, projects, world • Varied multimedia projects
Lack of models Ambiguous rubrics / success standards	• Explicit rubrics, annotated examples
Inadequate time for prof's quality feedback	• Peer feedback (structured) in/out of class
Motivation: Individual, and teams with full participation	• Define assignment's contribution to students' learning; • Choice of topic leads to ownership/motivation; • Variety and choice of format offers equitable opportunities to excel

UNLV Student Progression

Over 1/5 of 1st year class stops (700+ students)

Number of Students (y-axis): 0, 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000, 3500

Category	Progression rates
Entering Freshmen	Progression rates
24 Credits	78%
60 Credits	74%
75 Credits	64%
90 Credits	91%
Graduating Cohort	

Student Progression

UNLV Students' Views on Learning

Transparency Project Findings (To join the Transparency Project or find out more, see: http://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning)

1st-year and intro-level students:
below moderate confidence in ability to succeed

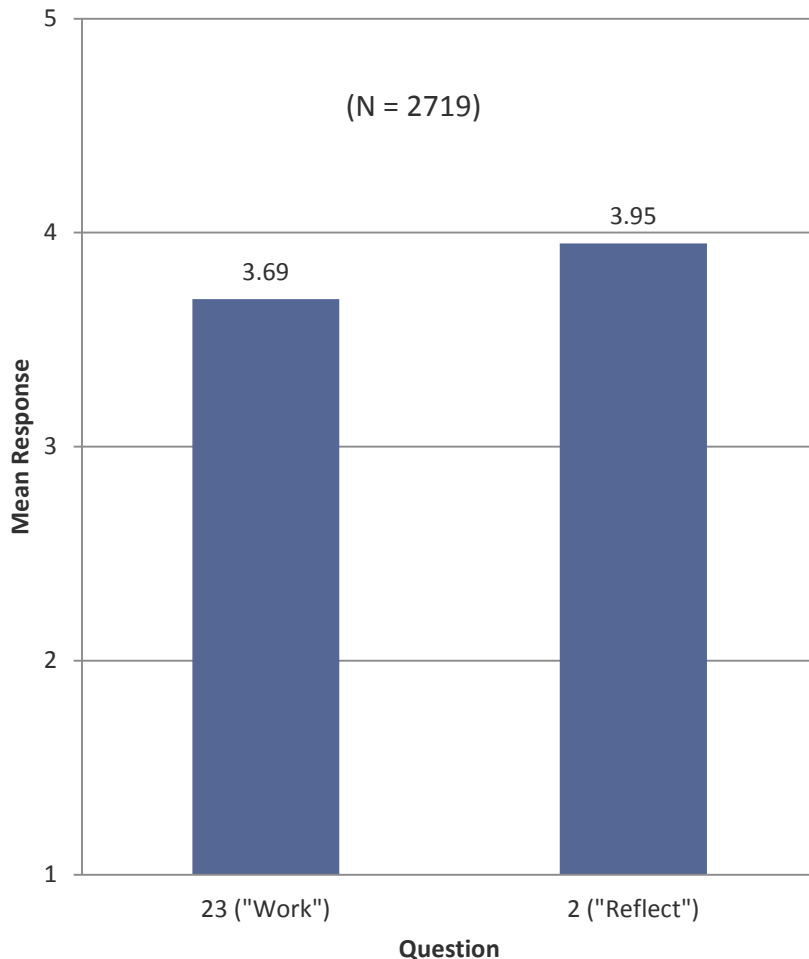(N = 2719)
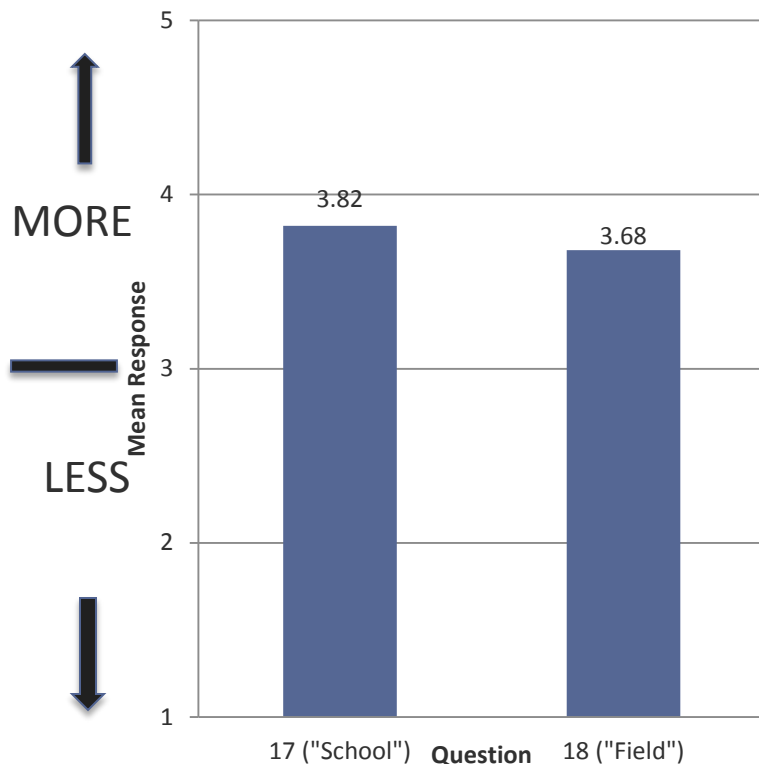
As a result of taking this course:

17) are you more or less confident about your ability to succeed in school,

18) are you more or less confident about your ability to succeed in this field, …?

UNLV Students' Views on Learning

Transparency Project Findings

1st-year and intro-level students:
moderate understanding of successful work

(N = 2719)

23) How well do you understand what constitutes successful work in this course?

2) How accurately does your submitted work for the course … reflect your understanding of the course content?

UNLV Students' Views on Learning

Transparency Project Findings

1st-year and intro-level students:
below moderate: recognize when you need help

(N = 2726)
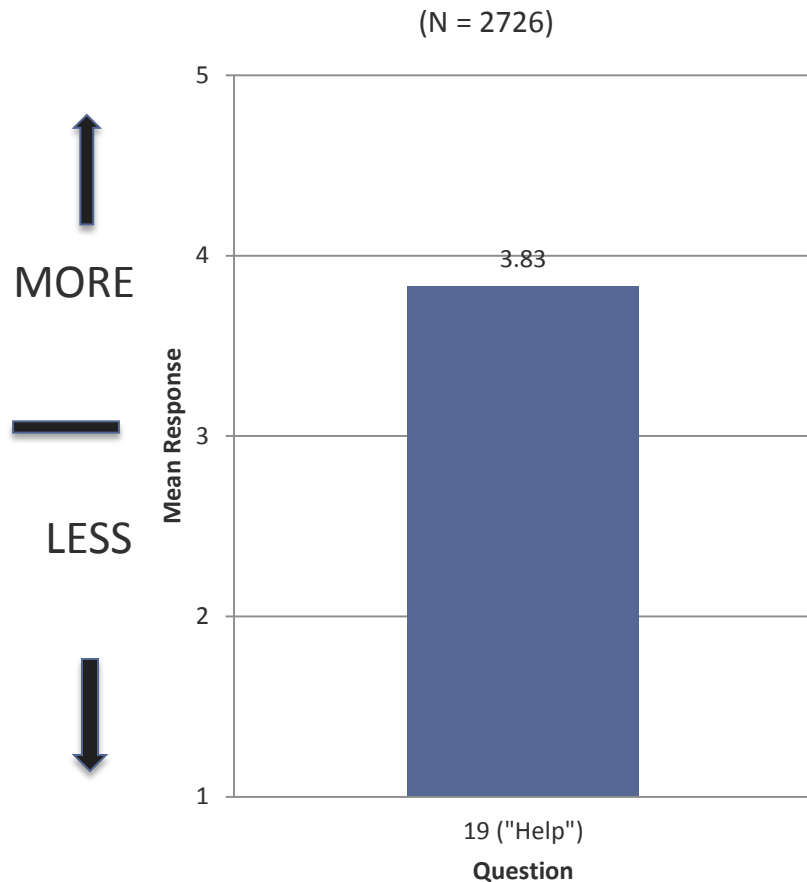
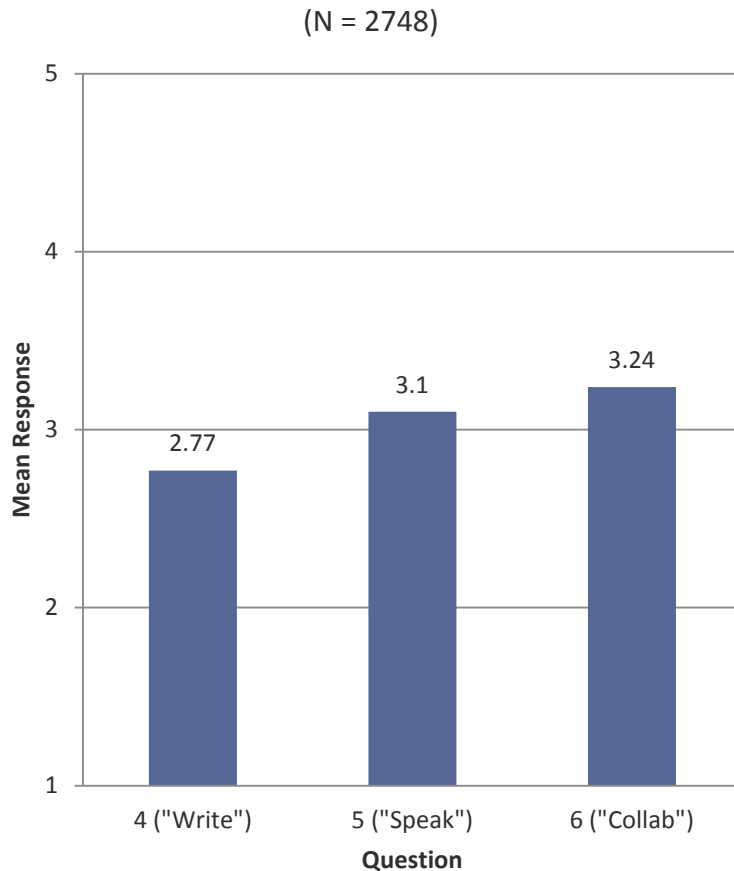

As a result of taking this course:

19) are you better or worse at recognizing when you need help with your academic work, …?

UNLV Students' Views on Learning

Transparency Project Findings

1st-year and intro-level students:
below moderate help with communication skills

(N = 2748)

How much has this course helped you in:

4) writing effectively?

5) communicating your ideas effectively in your spoken statements?

6) collaborating effectively with others?

Students' Views on Learning (national study)

Transparency Project Findings

Transparent methods benefit students who are unfamiliar with college success strategies by explicating learning/teaching processes. Transparent methods benefit high-performing students by affirming their learning strategies.

Transparent Assignment Design benefits students
at intro level in all disciplines:

– felt valued as student
– recognize when need help
– confidence to succeed
– perceived content mastery
– perceived skills development (UULOs)

Areas where UNLV students lack confidence

To join the Transparency Project or find out more, see:
http://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning)

How would I design a Transparent Assignment?

Transparent Assignment Template

- Purpose (2, 6)
    - Skills
    - Knowledge

- Task (2)

- Criteria for success (3, 4)

(numbers refer to sections in the EXAMPLES handout)

When would I use a Transparent activity or assignment?

When the concept is <u>crucial</u> for students to understand

Passive Learning   Active Learning

Receiving information and ideas

EXPERIENCES

Doing

Observing

REFLECTION

On *what* / *how* one is learning;

Alone, w/others

Dee Fink, Significant Learning Experiences, 2003

Sample Assignments   Sample A

Purpose

- Intellectual **Skills** (including UULOs) students practice
- Content **Knowledge** (including UULOs) students gain

Task

- What to do; How to do it

Criteria

- Characteristics of successful work (Am I on the right track?   Will I earn a good grade?
- Examples of successful work (annotated)

Strategies (Session Handout p. 2)

- Which research-based methods are used?
- Which time-savers/best practices could be used?

Sample Assignments (table groups) (B or C)

(Sample B or C in "Teaching UNLV Students" handout, p. 5-6)

Purpose

- Intellectual **Skills** (including UULOs) students practice
- Content **Knowledge** (including UULOs) students gain

Task

- What to do; How to do it

Criteria

- Characteristics of successful work (Am I on the right track?   Will I earn a good grade?)
- Examples of successful work (annotated)

Strategies (see EXAMPLES handout)

- Which research-based methods are used?
- Which time-savers/best practices could be used?

Sample Assignments   (Sample D)

Purpose

- Intellectual **Skills** (including UULOs) students practice
- Content **Knowledge** (including UULOs) students gain

Task

- What to do; How to do it

Criteria

- Characteristics of successful work (Am I on the right track?   Will I earn a good grade?)
- Examples of successful work (annotated)

Strategies

- Which research-based methods are used?
- Which time-savers/best practices could be used?

Career Interview Assignment COLA 100E Spring 2014
(EXAMPLES handout, p. 13)

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is to gain a greater understanding of a prospective academic discipline and/or career field.

Skills: As a result of completing this assignment, you will identify information necessary to make an informed decision regarding your academic and/or career path, employ basic qualitative research methods to collect and critically evaluate information from a principal source, and practice written and spoken communication as a tool for exploring possible academic and/or career options.

Knowledge: This assignment will give you knowledge of the process of informational interviewing, a tool for exploring various careers that can be used throughout your lifetime.

Task: In order to complete this assignment, (steps from p. 8)

Criteria for Success: A successful assignment will have the following characteristics:

A participant who is well qualified and relevant to your area of interest.

Interview questions that are focused and purposeful.

A concise, articulate reflection essay that covers all the key and relevant points.

A thorough, typed transcript that includes at least 5 of the questions and answers.

A critical evaluation of the information collected and how it relates to your choice of major and/or career.

A well-formatted essay that meets the page requirement, includes an introduction, a body and a conclusion, is typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, MLA style, including in-text citations and a reference/works cited page.

Submit the transcript and reflection essay via WebCampus by midnight on the due date.

Late assignments will not be accepted.

Your Assignments   (table groups; pairs)

Purpose
- Intellectual **Skills** (including UULOs) students practice
- Content **Knowledge** (including UULOs) students gain

Task
- What to do; How to do it

Criteria
- Characteristics of successful work (Am I on the right track?   Will I earn a good grade?)
- Examples of successful work (annotated)

Strategies **(EXAMPLES handout)**
- Which research-based methods are used?
- Which time-savers/best practices could be used?

Make Your Assignments Transparent
(EXAMPLES, p. 12) (table groups; pairs)

Purpose
- Intellectual **Skills** (including UULOs) students practice
- Content **Knowledge** (including UULOs) students gain

Task
- What to do; How to do it

Criteria
- Characteristics of successful work (Am I on the right track?   Will I earn a good grade?
- Examples of successful work (annotated)

Strategies **(EXAMPLES handout)**
- Which research-based methods are used?
- Which time-savers/best practices could be used?

Review: How did we do?

Purpose (benefits)**:**

    Knowledge: - UNLV faculty strategies

                    - research findings: students' learning

                    - implications for assignment design

    Skills: apply research findings to assignment design

Task (what we do; how we do it)**:**

– (me) Review research findings

– (you and IDR providers) apply findings to your own course activities, assignments

Criteria Participants will leave w/

- understanding of state of research,
- draft assignment for one of their courses,
- concise set of strategies for designing assignments/projects that inspire UNLV students' learning.

Break

- 5 min

RESEARCH-BASED ASSIGNMENTS
THAT INSPIRE UNLV STUDENTS' LEARNING
PART 2

MARY-ANN WINKELMES
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Students' Views on Learning (national study)
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Transparent methods benefit students who are unfamiliar with college success strategies by explicating learning/teaching processes. Transparent methods benefit high-performing students by affirming their learning strategies.

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Transparent Assignment Template

- Purpose Develop a sequence for course activities, assignmts
  - Skills
  - Knowledge

- Task Work with colleagues on sequence; experience activities

- Criteria for success

  Leave with a draft sequence, colleagues' insights

When to include an activity or assignment?

When the concept is <u>crucial</u> for students to understand

Passive Learning   Active Learning

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Alone, w/others

Dee Fink, Significant Learning Experiences, 2003

What does that look like in a whole course?

TASK	DATE	*Use of Information technology	*Communication abilities: oral and/or written	Understanding *group and individual dynamics in organizations	*Multicultural and diversity understanding	*Analytic skills	Analysis of *domestic and global economic environments of organizations	*Ethical understanding and reasoning abilities	Research: locating and selecting useful information and resources	^Teamwork: ability to collaborate successfully with others	+Leadership: ability to lead, gather resources, coach and allow others to lead	Assessing professional, *ethical and legal responsibilities in [self,] organizations and society	#Evaluation: assessing resources and ideas	*Reflective, [self-evaluative] thinking skills
Resume	9/1	+	+											
Bonanza	9/2 & 9/3		+	+	+									
Symp	9/11	+		+		+								
Co. Resch	9/11	+										+		
Fair	9/15		+											
Reflect'n	9/	+	+	+		+								+
Resch Pres				+	+									
Interview									+					
Codes					+	+				+				
Reflection							+							
Presentat'n						+	+	+		+				
	10/30						+	+				+		
Group proj	11/6		+	+			+	+		+	+			
	11/6						+					+		
	11/13									+	+		+	
Group proj	11/18									+	+		+	+
	12/4									+	+		+	+
Presentat'n	12/4		+									+		+
Presentat'n	12/11											+		+

* from AACSB "Assurance of Learning Standards," in *Eligibility Procedures and Accreditation Standards*...

from Benjamin Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*

^ from Hart Research Associates and Association of American Colleges and Universities, *Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success,* April 2013.

Shaded assignments are submitted; most of these are graded. Unshaded assignments are activities that happen in and out of class

How to get there?

In pairs or 3s:

Discuss and define:

Three years after taking your course,

- What essential **knowledge** should students retain?
- What **skills** should students be able to perform?

==

Record and list in sequence (simplest to most complex

See: Bloom chart (EXAMPLES handout, p. 2); UULOs ("Teaching UNLV Students" handout, p. 2)

Why/how are we doing this assignment?

Purpose (benefits)**:**

    Knowledge: - ID skills crucial to your course, to others'
                     - A plan for your course assignments
    Skills: - group collaboration
                    - note aspects to be used/avoided

Task (what we do; how we do it)**:**
– Answer questions   (5 min)
– List skills (to be used by all of us after) (5 min)

Criteria (measures of success; what you leave with):
     - ID'd several skills crucial to your course
     - A list of skills in sequence (to be used by you and all)

In pairs or 3s at tables:

Discuss and define (pairs, 5 mins)**:**

Three years after taking your course,

– What essential **knowledge** should students retain?

– What **skills** should students be able to perform?

===

List in sequence (simplest to most complex)

(pairs, 5 mins)

See: Bloom chart (EXAMPLES handout, p. 2); UULOs ("Teaching UNLV Students" handout, p. 2)

Sequence of Course Assignments

1st:	Prof-response
2d:	peer-response in class?
3d:	peer-coached revision
4th:	Prof-response

1. Basic tools, data mastery

2. Application, analysis

3. Evaluation

1. Invent,
   create original contribution

Map Your Assignments in Sequence

For one crucial skill/concept indicate:

- LEARNING GOAL(s) (Bloom (EXAMPLES, p. 2) / UULOs)
- ACTIVITY
- CUES (Bloom (EXAMPLES, p. 2, far right column) /Felder)
- ASSESSMENT FROM
- STAKES (High/Low % of course grade)
- TIME-SAVERS (EXAMPLES/best practices handout)