

Designing and Improving Assignments (Pre-work for the Tuesday afternoon workshop)

1. Identify a specific group assignment that, without question, was either a “winner” or a “loser”. (Note: If you don’t have an example from your own teaching, use an example from someplace else such as a class in which you were a student, a class taught by a colleague, etc.)
2. Prepare a SHORT write-up (1-page absolute maximum) of the assignment that includes:
 - What was the teaching context (e.g. subject, class size, number of students, etc.)?
 - What was the objective of the assignment?
 - What "product" students were asked to create?
 - How, if at all, the group “products” were used as a basis for a whole-class discussion.
3. Summarize the information related to the bullets in #2 on flip chart large enough to be readable at 10 feet (e.g. 48 point Arial type or larger if you do it on your computer to be taped to a flip chart) and bring it to the session. [Note: Do NOT identify your example as being either a “winner” or a “loser” and do not put your name on it. People might react differently if they know whose example it is.]

Example from a Marketing Class at the University of Oklahoma:

- Context: Required 70-minute/class, junior-core Marketing course with 35 students (in 5 teams).
- Objective: Ensure that students can coherently weigh the factors that affect the desirability of specific sites as locations for different types of business ventures.
- Product: Students were required to decide on the ideal location for a new dry cleaning business in Norman, Oklahoma and to create and give a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation in which they identified the location they had chosen and the most compelling reason they chose that particular location.
- Class Discussion: After the 5 teams completed their presentations, the instructor conducted a 20-minute class discussion to identify the pro’s and con’s related to each of the teams’ site-location decisions.