

Application Assignment Development Worksheet

Instructions: The purpose of this worksheet is assist you in creating group-based activities that you can use to develop students' higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills in your courses. The specific focus each of the activities will be to assess whether your students have mastered a key concept well enough so that they could use it to make choices they are likely to encounter in later course work, future jobs or in every day life.

1. Using non-technical/lay terms, please write down one of the most important concepts from a course that you teach (note: it should be a concept that is central enough that if students don't get it, they probably don't deserve credit for the course).
2. What important choice(s) does your knowledge of the above allow you to make that others either can't make at all or can't make as well because they don't know what you know? (Please try to identify something that:
a) is important to you **personally** and, b) regularly occurs in a life domain your students could identify with.)
3. Suppose you were teaching a class that was small enough -- say 6 or 7 students -- so that you could directly observe your students as they interact with each other. What choice(s) could you ask students to make that, if successful, would enable you to be confident that they had mastered the concept(s) listed in #3? This typically involves having students make an explicit decision in relation to object(s) or problem situation(s) that you bring to class yourself or have students bring to class. Thus, you should specify:
a) What object(s) or problem situation(s) you would use?
b) What decision making task that you would have student(s) engage in?

4. Suppose the class was too large to allow you personally observe students in action. What could you have them “produce” in relation to the object(s) or problem situation(s) listed in #4 that:
- a) Would enable you to be confident that they had mastered the concept(s) listed in #2?
 - b) If written, would be less than half a page in length?
5. What specific terms and/or relationships would students have to master in order to make appropriate choices described in #2, #3, and #4 (above)? (The pre-reading materials you assign should focus these concepts (and very little else). [Note: This is a case in which “less ends up being more.” In most fields, there is a lot of “stuff” that is interesting to academics but of very little use in actually *doing* something. Thus, one of the most important functions we should perform is making a professional judgment as to what is REALLY important so that students aren’t forced to wade through the clutter to get what they truly need.]