

Create Engaging Assignments With Accountability

There are a variety of ways to keep students engaged in course content and help them focus their attention on what is most important. We can also use a variety of practices to assess how well students are learning and making key connections.

As these online assignments may be new to your students, providing clear directions, examples, and rubrics can help them feel more confident in meeting your expectations. Better yet, take a quick video of yourself completing the task to help students know exactly what you are looking for. Try a few of these strategies to identify the processes that work best for you and your students.

Encourage Engagement in Readings and Microlectures

- *Provide guiding questions.* Create a series of questions that students should be able to answer as they engage with a reading or microlecture. Asking students to pause a microlecture video to answer a question can keep them engaged and help them monitor their own learning. Ask students to submit an electronic version of their responses.
- *Have students annotate the reading.* Ask students to highlight, insert comments, or add questions as they read. To hold them accountable, they can either snap a picture of their responses and upload it or consolidate their questions and comments in a document that they submit for credit.
- *Prepare for discussion forums.* Have students respond to a prompt about the reading(s) prior to the discussion forum focused on the reading(s). Create questions that are very challenging to respond to without having done the reading. Use the setting in your discussion forum that prevents students from seeing other responses until after they have posted. If students post, they get a few points; if not, they do not earn extra points.

Keep Students Organized

- *Give students a skeletal outline to complete for each module.* Providing a skeletal outline helps students focus on the important elements, questions, and key ideas of each module's lectures, readings, resources, discussions, and activities. By taking notes in the outline, students will better learn the information presented and how it is connected to the module learning outcomes. It will also help students to keep their notes organized.
- *Prepare for discussion forums.* Have students contribute a question from the reading or lecture to a discussion forum.
- *Share calculations.* If you typically require that students engage in problem-solving, have students snap pictures of their calculations and upload them to an assignment space.