

# Assignments

## 1. Gather resources and plan to use them all

- Course outline/learning outcomes
- Assignment instructions
- Class notes
- Study notes
- Texts
- Handouts
- Research notes, if any
- A folder and highlighters

## 2. Be strategic

- Carefully go over assignment instructions
  - \* what is the *purpose* of the assignment? Paraphrase for understanding
  - \* how does it *relate* to your course/class work/readings?
  - \* are there multiple *parts*?
  - \* what are the *cue* words?
  - \* are there *options* for how you do the assignment?
- Create a mind map or outline of the *assignment requirements*
- Colour code the various *parts* of the assignment

## 3. Explore the problem, not the topic

- Think of the topic as a *vehicle* for learning about the problem
  - \* for example: a descriptive essay assignment is about learning how to write a descriptive essay; it is *not* about the topic you choose. The topic is less important than the process and the product.



- Always approach the problem in terms of the *whole course*
  - \* how does the assignment *fit into the course*: assessment of your understanding of a concept or topic? Integration of theory and practice? Final project?
- Generate *ideas*
  - \* brainstorm
  - \* ask yourself questions
  - \* *refer back to assignment instructions*

## 4. Make a plan

- How will you achieve your *purpose*?
- Do you have to do *research*? Peer reviewed?
- How will you *integrate* research with theory?
- What type of *approach* will you use? (analysis, reflection, summary, interpretation, evaluation, comparison/contrast, etc)
- Make a realistic *time management plan* that includes time to research, draft, rest, and edit

## 5. Do research

- Use *appropriate* sources (peer reviewed articles, databases, academic books)
- *Print* articles that you will actually use. Staple.
- Do *colour coded highlighting* according to concepts/main ideas
- Make *notes* from each source, colour coding
- Note all *bibliographical info* and web info

## 6. First draft

- Make a concept map or an outline; focus on structure and flow of ideas
- Write a thoughtful title
- Write intro: context, thesis, main ideas
- Write first draft, referring to map/outline—don't worry about grammar
- Note where citations might go
- Write a strong conclusion

## 7. Let it sit

- Think about it/mull it over
- Go *back to assignment instructions and purpose*
- Jot down ideas to incorporate

## 8. Second draft

- Incorporate changes/ideas
- Incorporate citations
- Check for flow

## 9. References/Works Cited

- Use latest edition of appropriate style guide
- Check in-text citations for accuracy
- Each in-text citation must have an entry on the works cited page
- Pay attention to the details of spacing, capitals, and punctuation
- Make a title page

## 9. Edit

- *Review assignment instructions and learning outcomes*
- Look for structure
- Look for transition between ideas and sections
- Look for originality and purposefulness
- Check grammar, sentence structure, and punctuation
- Check tone/voice

## 11. Check against assignment instructions

- Have you met the *purpose*?
- Have you done all the *parts*?
- *Have you incorporated theory and classroom learning?*

