Course Assessment Planner

The course assessment planner will guide you through a systematic process of developing or adapting a major summative assessment in your course that is effective and well-structured for your course delivery format.

*Major summative assessment may include exams, individual and/or group projects, papers, portfolios, and performances (presentations, demonstrations, role-plays etc.).* This guide will also help you ensure that all of your students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning successfully and are graded fairly.

**This planner does not address low-stakes quizzes, discussions, or homework assignments as major summative assessments.**

The planner consists of five parts:

1. Connect your assessments and course learning outcomes
2. Identify a major summative assessment that you’d like to develop or adapt for your in-person, online, or hybrid course
3. Determine the extent to which your major summative assessment is effective, well-structured, and student-centered
4. List specific changes needed to improve your assessment and resources available in the learning experience to assist making these changes
5. Complete wrapper on course assessment planner

#  Connect your assessments and course learning outcomes

Complete this table to map out your major summative assessments and the course learning outcomes they are used to assess.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Course Learning Outcome – underline the action verb in the outcome | Major Summative Assessment (s) e.g., project report, presentation, portfolio, exams, demonstration, etc. | Percentage of course grade |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Note: If you have “understand”, “appreciate” or other verbs that are not explicitly measurable, consider revising your outcome. Check out this resource on writing measurable learning outcomes to help with your revision. You can also review these revised learning outcome examples

**Original outcome**: Students will understand pertinent statutes and case law.

**Revised outcome**: Students will analyze the pertinent statutes and case law to recommend the most effect legal course of action.

**Original outcome**: Student will be able to appreciate the aesthetic characteristics of visual art in terms of color, form, line, style, etc.

**Revised outcome**: Students will be able to articulate their visual analysis of a representative art work in terms of color, form, line, style, etc. through an oral presentation

# Identify a major summative assessment that you’d like to develop or adapt for your in-person, online, or hybrid course

Based on the types of assessments you have identified in the table above, select **one major summative assessment** that meets one of more of the following criteria:

* you are concerned or anxious about using it in the new course delivery format
* your students typically have had difficulties and/or performed poorly on it
* you plan to use it to assess more than one course learning outcome

The major summative assessment you have selected is

# Determine the extent to which your major summative assessment is effective, well-structured, and student-centered

We have created three categories of major summative assessments – (1) exams; (2) individual projects, papers, performances (presentations, demonstrations, role-plays etc.), and portfolios; (3) group project, papers, and performances.

A checklist of items based on best practices for assessment design is provided for each category. You will use it to verify the extent to which the assessment is effective, well-structured, and student-centered. Pay attention to specific items that you do not check and reflect on if and how you can incorporate it.

Based on the major summative assessment you have identified in part 2, complete the appropriate checklist. You can check the boxes represented by [ ]  by clicking on them - [x]

[ ]  Checklist A: Exams

[ ]  Checklist B: Individual projects, papers, performances, and portfolios.

[ ]  Checklist C: Group project, papers, and performance

## **Checklist A: Exams**

### Assessment effectively measures learning outcome (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Objective questions (multiple choice, matching, true/false) capture the learning outcome action verb accurately.

[ ]  Short answers questions capture the learning outcome action verb accurately

[ ]  Essay questions capture the learning outcome action verb accurately

[ ]  Problem-solving questions capture the learning outcome action verb accurately

### Assessment is well-structured for your course delivery format (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Question types and exam time are commensurate

[ ]  Number of question and exam time are commensurate

[ ]  Question types and point values are commensurate

[ ]  Percentage course grade assigned is reasonable with respect to content assessed

[ ]  Questions test multiple levels of learning: recall, application, evaluation, etc.

[ ]  Objective questions are well-designed ([learn more about well-designed objective questions](https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/measurement-evaluation/exam-scoring/improving-your-test-questions))

[ ]  Short answer and essay questions are well-designed ([learn more about well-designed short answer and essay questions](https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/measurement-evaluation/exam-scoring/improving-your-test-questions#essay))

[ ]  Problem-solving questions are well designed ([learn more about well-designed problem-solving questions](https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/measurement-evaluation/exam-scoring/improving-your-test-questions#problem))

[ ]  Questions can be modified slightly to create multiple versions

[ ]  Exam includes an honor pledge statement for students to sign

☐ Practice exams and/or exam study guides are provided to students

[ ]  Exam can be conducted via Canvas\* - *consider this option seriously as paper exams may be contaminated with coronavirus and students may not be able to go a testing center*

\*See Canvas implementation checklist for additional criteria to consider

### Every student in your class has the opportunity to complete your assessment successfully (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Assessment does not requires regular use of a high-speed computer that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment activities or deliverables do not require regular use of a webcam that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment instructions and resources are presented in an accessible format for students requiring accommodations

[ ]  Assessment timelines do not inconvenience students located in vastly different time zones

[ ]  Assessment expectations and policies are conducive to students who may be working part-time or full-time jobs

[ ]  Assessment does not require students to purchase expensive items, which may be difficult for students with financial constraints

[ ]  Assessment timelines and policies are considerate towards students who may be supporting families

[ ]  Assessment instructions are transparent and with clear instructions on tasks and criteria for success. Note, that this TILT format may not be applicable for objective exams.

[ ]  Assessment instructions are clear to non-native speakers of English

[ ]  Assessment rubrics or checklist do not emphasize grammar and punctuation over understanding/learning

## **Checklist B: Individual projects, papers, performances, and portfolios**

### Assessment effectively measures learning outcome (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Uses a rubric or checklist of criteria that serves as a self-assessment tool for students and captures the learning outcome action verbs accurately

### Assessment is well-structured for your course delivery format (Check all criteria that apply for your assessment)

[ ]  Students have a choice in selecting focus of assessment

[ ]  Students have a choice in the type of product they can submit as assessment deliverable

[ ]  Assessment is transparent (i.e. uses the TILT framework)

[ ]  clearly states purpose of assessment

[ ]  clearly states all tasks students need to complete

[ ]  clearly specifies criteria for success in the form of a rubric or checklist or shows exemplar student work

[ ]  Semester-long assessments are divided into of smaller chunks of student work that build towards final product

[ ]  Purpose, tasks, and criteria for each chunk is clearly specified

[ ]  Submission timeline for each chunk is reasonable and clearly specified

[ ]  Deliverable for each chunk is clearly specified

[ ]  Opportunity for instructor feedback on each chunk is present

[ ]  Students have clear directions and channels (email, Zoom, phone etc.) for interacting with instructor

[ ]  Percentage of course grade for each chunk and overall assessment is commensurate with expectations from students

[ ]  Academic integrity policies are clearly specified in assessment instructions

[ ]  Turnitin is used to help students follow academic integrity policies for any written work

[ ]  Assessment includes a graded reflection component

[ ]  Assessment includes a peer review and feedback component – *particularly helpful for large classes to foster high quality work*

[ ]  Assessment deliverables can be turned in via Canvas\* - *consider this option seriously as hardcopies on paper may be contaminated with coronavirus*

\*See Canvas checklist for additional criteria to consider

### Every student in your class has the opportunity to complete your assessment successfully (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Assessment does not requires regular use of a high-speed computer that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment activities or deliverables do not require regular use of a webcam that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment activities does not require reliable internet access for long durations (> 60 minutes), which may not be possible for some students

[ ]  Assessment instructions and resources are presented in an accessible format for students requiring accommodations

[ ]  Assessment timelines do not inconvenience students located in vastly different time zones

[ ]  Assessment expectations and policies are conducive to students who may be working part-time or full-time jobs

[ ]  Assessment does not require students to purchase expensive items, which may be difficult for students with financial constraints

[ ]  Assessment timelines and policies are considerate towards students who may be supporting families

[ ]  Assessment instructions are transparent and use the TILT framework (TILT is an evidence-based strategy that has shown to improve student success and belonging, particularly for under-represented minority students)

[ ]  Assessment instructions are clear to non-native speakers of English

[ ]  Assessment rubrics or checklist do not emphasize grammar and punctuation over understanding/learning

## **Checklist C: Group projects, papers, and performances**

### Assessment effectively measures learning outcome (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Student collaboration is critical to achieving learning outcomes (if not, individual assessment may be better)

☐ Uses a Rubric or checklist of criteria that serves as a self-assessment tool for students and captures the learning outcome action verbs accurately

[ ]  Uses a Peer review form for students to indicate individual contributions and quality of interactions with their group

### Assessment is well-structured for your course delivery format (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Students create their own groups based on common interests in topics or other criteria

☐ Instructor creates groups based on a sound rationale that is communicated to students

[ ]  Instructor creates groups in which diversity is not over- or under-emphasized (group members are neither too similar or too different, be in race, ethnicity, gender, course performance, etc.)

[ ]  Team building activities are part of the assessment instructions

[ ]  Conflict management and resolution plans are included in the syllabus and assessment instructions

[ ]  Groups have a choice in selecting focus of assessment

[ ]  Groups have a choice in the type of product they submit as assessment deliverable

[ ]  In-person group activities required for this assessment follow physical distancing protocols

[ ]  In-person group activities are not required for students to successfully complete this assessment

[ ]  Assessment is transparent (i.e. uses the TILT framework)

[ ]  clearly states purpose of assessment

[ ]  clearly states all tasks students need to complete

[ ]  clearly specifies criteria for success in the form of a rubric or checklist or shows exemplar student work

[ ]  Semester-long assessments are divided into of smaller chunks of group work that build towards final product

[ ]  Submission timeline for each chunk is reasonable and clearly specified

[ ]  Deliverable for each chunk is clearly specified

[ ]  Opportunity for instructor feedback on each chunk is present

☐ Groups have clear directions and channels (email, Zoom, phone etc.) for interacting regularly with instructor

[ ]  Group members have clear directions and channels (email, Zoom, phone etc.) for interacting with one another

[ ]  Percentage course grade for each chunk and overall assessment is commensurate with expectations from students

[ ]  Academic integrity policies are clearly specified in assessment instructions

[ ]  Turnitin is used to help students follow academic integrity policies for any written work

[ ]  Assessment includes a graded reflection component

[ ]  Assessment includes a team member peer review component

[ ]  Assessment deliverables can be turned in via Canvas\* - *consider this option seriously as hardcopies on paper may be contaminated with coronavirus*

\*See Canvas checklist for additional criteria to consider

### Every student in your class has the opportunity to complete your assessment successfully (Check all criteria that apply to your assessment)

[ ]  Assessment does not requires regular use of a high-speed computer that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment activities or deliverables do not require regular use of a webcam that some students may not be able to access

[ ]  Assessment activities does not require reliable internet access for long durations (> 60 minutes), which may not be possible for some students

[ ]  Assessment instructions and resources are presented in an accessible format for students requiring accommodations

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[ ]  Assessment timelines and policies are considerate towards students who may be supporting families

[ ]  Assessment instructions are transparent and use the TILT framework (TILT is an evidence-based strategy that has shown to improve student success and belonging, particularly for under-represented minority students)

[ ]  Assessment instructions are clear to non-native speakers of English

[ ]  Assessment rubrics or checklist do not emphasize grammar and punctuation over understanding/learning

# List specific changes needed to improve your assessment and resources available in the learning experience to assist making these changes

Review your responses to the checklist you completed. If you did not select certain criteria, was there a specific reason they do not apply to your assessment? Or how can you modify your assessment to incorporate those criteria? Based these considerations:

1. Make a list of specific changes you need to make to your assessment to improve its effectiveness, structure, and/or student-centeredness.
2. Make a list of specific resources from this module or learning experience you can use to make these changes.

# Complete wrapper on course assessment planner

[Wrappers](https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/examwrappers/index.html) are short worksheets that are designed to enhance students’ metacognitive skills. Wrappers can be completed at the end of a course activity or assessment to self-assess their performance, confidence with their learning, and set goals on how to improve. We model a wrapper below that you can complete based on your work in the Course Assessment Planner. Consider using this strategy in your own assessment plan!

1. To what extent was the course assessment planner helpful in developing or adapting a major summative assessment in your course?
2. Based on your checklist responses and the changes you plan to make, how confident do you feel about using your assessment successfully in your course?
3. To what extent do you feel prepared about developing or adapting additional summative assessments in your course?
4. What questions do you still have?