

What is a Signature Assignment?

When sections of the same course are offered by multiple faculty members with varied pedagogies, the signature assignment enables the program to collect common data across the course sections for program evaluation and review.

Designed collaboratively by faculty, a signature assignment is an assignment, activity, project, or exam purposefully created or modified to collect evidence for the assessment of specific student learning outcomes. With the goal of measuring the culmination of what a student has learned in the course for particular outcomes, coursework should build toward the signature assignment.

Three universal features of a signature assignment: (1) specific learning outcomes are targeted, (2) the project is embedded in the course, and (3) the assignment includes a metacognitive component.

Advantages

- promotes faculty discussions of student learning, pedagogy, and assessment
- provides significant data sets to use in documenting program impact
- yields insights specifically about achievement of student learning outcomes
- engages students in important learning activities

Disadvantages

- requires time for development
- may be translated as rigid or confining re: curriculum or pedagogy
- requires faculty agreement

Results of the Signature Assignment Team

1. signature assignment checklist
2. student reflection component: prompts

Timeline for Signature Assignments

1. Faculty members identify FYW program objectives. (complete/spring 2015)
2. Faculty discuss and agree upon what WR 135 requires students to demonstrate and how that maps/links to the program objectives. Faculty members create student learning outcomes for WR 135. (complete/spring 2015)
3. Link outcomes to [AAC&U Value Rubrics](#). (complete/spring 2015)
4. Faculty review current course work that could be used as a signature assignment. (complete/signature assignment team/11 September 2015).
5. Faculty members determine if a new assignment will need to be developed for use as a signature assignment (complete/signature assignment team/11 September 2015).
6. Faculty members agree upon the nature and major components and guidelines for the signature assignment prior to the start of the term. (FYW retreat/September).