

# Assignment description template

## WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

Just like the USC Curriculum Office has a template for course syllabus design, there is a recommended template to follow for outlining every course assignment given to students. This template ties an assignment to the course learning objective it is meant to measure, briefly describes the assignment essentials, outlines the steps to complete the assignment, and references the grading rubric that will be used to assess the assignment.

## HOW DO I USE IT?

Once you have made sure that your course assignments measure your course learning objectives, choose one assignment to start outlining using the provided template format. At the top of the page, indicate the course learning objective the assignment measures, add a narrative paragraph description giving an overview of the assignment, and write down the steps students will follow to complete the assignment. Give this assignment description to students, along with the grading rubric that will be used to score the assignment, when you first introduce the assignment. For assistance, please [contact CET](http://cet.usc.edu/online-teaching/).

### **Descriptive assignment title**

(Matches assignment title in syllabus)

### Learning objective

Copy and paste the learning objective that this assignment measures.

### Assignment description

This is a half-page paragraph in narrative form that describes the assignment purpose, background, main elements, expectations, required format/length, and points possible. Many professors stop at the assignment description paragraph and expect students to be able to pull out the requirements. However, preferred assignment descriptions also contain more specific steps to guide the student and information about the grading rubric that will be used to score the assignment.

### Steps

1. The first step is often a preparation step or a “getting organized” reminder.
2. The second step can be choosing a topic, gathering data or information, researching, etc.
3. By the 3rd step, students are usually organizing gathered data or starting to draft.
4. More steps can be added as necessary to suit the level of students and complexity of the assignment.
5. The second-to-last step usually involves a reminder to proofread, and check APA style.
6. The last step usually involves how to submit the assignment (i.e., upload to Blackboard by a certain time/date).

### Grading

Include a phrase and direction similar to “Your instructor will use the attached rubric to grade this assignment.”

### Additional notes

Some professors add tips, FAQs, or where to find assistance during the assignment (i.e., USC Libraries contact info, TA contact, office hours, etc.)