

Empowerments for Student Learning

Exclusively for Adjuncts

**Honoring learner-centered teaching activities and supportive teaching environments
in a changing paradigm of higher education**

Expand your knowledge. Broaden your resources. Spark students' inspiration.



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Many instructors assign student projects in courses. **The Six A's of Designing Projects** offers suggestions how to support deep learning for students.

Authenticity

- Does the project emanate from a problem that has meaning to the student?
- Is it a problem or question that might actually be tackled at work or in the community?
- Do students create or produce something that has personal and/or social value, beyond the college setting?

Academic Rigor

- Does the project lead students to acquire and apply knowledge central to one or more discipline or content areas?
- Does it challenge students to use methods of inquiry central to one or more disciplines? (e.g., to think like a scientist)
- Does it help students develop higher-order thinking skills and habits of mind? (e.g., searching for evidence, taking different perspectives)?

Applied Learning

- Does the learning take place in the context of a semi-structured problem, grounded in life, real-world work, and the college setting?
- Does the project lead students to acquire and use competencies expected in high performance work organizations (e.g., teamwork, appropriate use of technology, problem solving and communication)?
- Does the work require students to develop organizational and self-management skills?

Active Exploration

- Do students spend significant amounts of time doing field-based work?
- Does the project require students to engage in real investigations, using a variety of methods, media, and sources?

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- Are students expected to communicate what they are learning through presentation and/or performance?

Adult Relationships

- Do students have an opportunity to meet and observe others in the workplace with relevant expertise and experience?
- Do students have an opportunity to work closely with at least one person in the workplace?
- Does the project lend itself to input of design and assessment of a person in the workplace?

Assessment

- Do students regularly reflect on learning using clear project criteria that they have helped set?
- Can other people from outside the classroom help students develop a sense of real world standards for this type of work?
- Will there be opportunities for regular assessment of student work through a range of methods, including exhibitions and portfolios?

Excerpted from Steinberg, Adria (1997). *Real Learning, Real Work*, Routledge, New York, 1997.

With Best Regards,

Becky Pugh, QEP Winter Haven Campus Liaison, rpugh@polk.edu
863.298.6811, fax: 863.298.6814

Dr. Lynda Wolverton, QEP Lakeland Campus Liaison, lwolverton@polk.edu
863.669.2885, fax: 863.297.1034