Assignment Revision Checklist

If you don't have time to share your assignment with us or would prefer to revise alone for the moment, we have put together a checklist to help guide you through revision. If you answer "No" to any of the checklist questions, consider revising that element of your assignment.

Tip 1: Think
Put the same amount of thought into writing and revising assignments that you hope students will put into completing them.

Yes	No	
		Does the assignment reflect my goals for it? *If yes, how? If not, what needs to change?*

Tip 2: Write (and Read)
Put the assignment in writing, and read it with students.

Yes	No	
		Have I written out the assignment?
		Is the length of the written assignment appropriate? *One page is recommended.*
		Have I made arrangements to provide the assignment in hard copy or have students print it?
		Have I made plans to read the assignment with students?
		Have I considered strategies to keep students focused while we read the assignment?

Tip 3: Format Wisely
Keep formatting consistent, and use it to your advantage.

Yes	No	
		Is the format of this assignment consistent with the format of other assignments I will give? *If yes, great. If not, is there a good reason for using a different format?*
		Does my formatting allow for student note-taking on the assignment sheet?
		Does the formatting emphasize important information?

		Does the formatting have a balance of text and other features, such as lists, charts, or diagrams?
		Does the formatting support the process for students? • Are steps that must be done in order numbered? • Is similar information grouped together, or are these details sprinkled throughout the draft?

Tip 4: Title Purposefully
Give the assignment a descriptive title.

Yes	No	
		Does the title for the assignment fully and accurately describe the purpose and content of it? *If I don't have a descriptive title for the assignment, do I have plans to engage students in generating one after we read it together?*

Tip 5: Question Carefully
Do not use a multi-question prompt unless you are prepared to teach students how to navigate it, especially if you are teaching a FYS.

Yes	No	
		Have I avoided questions or other ancillary instructions that students may confuse for part of the main prompt? *If I have not avoided them, do I have plans to teach students how to navigate the issue?*

Tip 6: Be Concrete and Clear
The directions should be as concrete and clear as possible.

Yes	No	
		Have I avoided unnecessarily abstract or subjective language?
		Do the concrete details I have included also have an appropriate level of specificity and/or explanation?

Tip 7: Use Samples, and Do So Strategically
Include samples, but be sure to contextualize them.

Yes	No	

		Do I have relevant samples (partial or complete) and/or examples ready?
		Have I considered whether to embed samples in the assignment or present them separately?
		Do I distinguish between templates (models student have to follow) and options?
		Do I have a plan in place for analyzing samples with students so they know whether the samples are good or bad and why?

Tip 8: Teach Resource Usage
Before recommending resources, teach students what they are and how to use them.

Yes	No	
		Have I built in an opportunity for students to ask questions about the assignment when they receive it?
		If students have questions later in the process, do they know the best way to ask me (e.g., e-mail, office hours, etc.)?
		If I am recommending resources on campus, have I made arrangements with the people in charge of them in advance?
		If I am recommending resources on campus, do I personally understand how to use them well enough to advise students?

Tip 9: Require Revision
Build time into the assignment for student revision.

Yes	No	
		Have I included an opportunity for revision?
		Does the opportunity for revision come at a logical time and serve a relevant purpose?
		Does the scope of the revision suit the purpose? For instance, do students need a complete rough draft to revise, or would it be better to revise just an introduction and thesis?
		Do I have a plan in place to provide feedback after the revision takes place?

Tip 10: Anticipate Problems
Consider where students are likely to get stuck, and see if you can preempt issues.

Yes	No	
		Have I eliminated or revised parts that may be misinterpreted?
		Are all necessary details included?
		Is the assignment suitable for the students' skill level?
		Have I considered what questions students are likely to have and how I can answer them?
		Have I revised or removed parts of the assignments that tripped up students in the past?
		Do I have a plan in place to check students' understanding of the assignment (e.g., assigning a quiz, summary of instructions, etc.)?
		If someone not taking my class read my assignment, would they understand it? This is easy to test—find someone who's not in your class and ask them to read your assignment!

Tip 11: Test for Problems
Test key aspects of the assignment in advance to make sure they work.

Yes	No	
		Can YOU answer your prompt?
		Can YOU find all the necessary sources?
		Can YOU follow the steps of your assignment in order?
		Do all links go to the correct sites?
		Are materials where you said they would be?
		If you are requiring Library or Center use, did you make appropriate arrangements?