

Digital Assignment Considerations

This document presents questions to consider when determining the scope and logistics for a digital assignment.



Learning Objectives



Have you determined your learning objectives for this assignment?

Deciding what you would like your students to learn or be able to do helps to frame the parameters of your assignment.

<https://ii.library.jhu.edu/2016/07/20/writing-effectivelearning-objectives>

Type of Assignment



Will there be analysis and interpretation of a topic or topics to produce a text-based and/ or visual-based project?

Consider alternatives to a traditional research paper.
<http://ii.library.jhu.edu/2016/04/08/lunch-and-learn-alternatives-to-the-researchpaper/>



Will there be a need to document objects or materials for a catalog, exhibition, or repository?

Defining meaningful metadata and the characteristics of research materials will be important considerations.

Access and Visibility



Will you want the students' work to be made open to the public, seen just at JHU, or shared only with the class?

Decide up front whether to have students' work be public or private in order to get their consent and choose the best platform for access.



Will they be working with copyrighted materials?

The fair use section of the Copyright Act may provide some latitude, but not all educational uses are fair use.

<http://www.arl.org/focus-areas/copyright-ip>

Collaboration



Will you want students to work collaboratively as a class, in small groups, or individually?

Group work has many benefits but there are challenges for assessment and in ensuring that students do their fair share of the work.

<https://ii.library.jhu.edu/2013/05/01/making-group-projects-work/>



Will you want the students' work to be visible to others in the class or private to themselves or their group?

Consider adding a peer review component to the assignment to help the students think critically about their work.

<https://ii.library.jhu.edu/2013/09/27/leveraging-peer-instruction/>

Format



Will you want the students' work to be made open to the public, seen just at JHU, or shared only with the class?

An open-ended choice of format could allow students to play to their strengths, leading to creativity. On the other hand, too many choices can be daunting for some, and it may be challenging to assess different projects equally.



What would be the ideal presentation of the student's work?

- spatially arranged content (mapping, exhibition)
- temporally arranged content (timeline)
- narrative (website, blog)
- oral presentation
- visual presentation (poster, video)

Formats for digital assignments are not limited to this list. More than one approach can be used if the result fulfills the learning objectives for the assignment.