

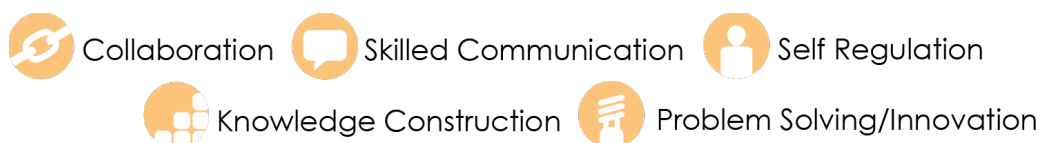
Higher Education Learning Activity Types Taxonomy^{1, 2}

The scholarship of teaching and learning provides an extensive exploration into instructional practices and outcomes in higher education. This literature base provides faculty with a wide range of teaching approaches. However, there are no comprehensive collections of the full range of learning activities currently available to faculty. This Higher Education Learning Activity Types Taxonomy is an effort to present such a collection of learning activities in a format that may help both novice and experienced faculty to expand or enhance their teaching practice.









The following taxonomy was derived from a multi-step process that included a review of the scholarship of teaching and learning literature, formalized feedback from expert faculty, faculty developers, and participants in conference presentations at teaching conferences. This process is similar to the approach used to develop a series of Learning Activity Types taxonomies in nine different K-12 curriculum areas (Harris, et, al., 2010). Many of the learning activity descriptions were based on or informed by these K-12 taxonomies (activitytypes.wm.edu).










To make the taxonomy easier to navigate as well as to provide faculty with a strategic entry point to the learning activities, it is divided into six categories based on the revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Each learning activity is categorized by the relative level of cognitive activity required of students (i.e., remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, create). Therefore, each of the learning activities is framed from the student's perspective, rather than the instructor's.

An additional way to explore the learning activities is to consider how they connect with students' skill development. The 21st Century Learning Design framework is one way to consider the skills that will benefit students as they continue in their studies and/or transition to their careers. The 21CLD framework was developed by SRI International with support from Microsoft as a means to identify the core skills students need to thrive in the 21st century (ITL Research, 2012). The framework consists of six skills, five of which are listed below. Each learning activity in the taxonomy is "tagged" by the relevant icon(s) below according to the 21st century skill(s) they support.



	Learning Activity Name	Description	Supporting Technologies
REMEMBER	Read Text	Students extract information from textbooks, Web-based content, historical documents, data sets, etc.; both print-based and digital formats	Web-based content, ebooks, audiobooks
	Take Notes	In order to remember and process information, students record information from readings, lecture, presentation, and group work	Note taking tools (e.g., Evernote, OneNote), word processing software
	Attend to a Lecture	Students acquire information from instructors, guest speakers, and peers; synchronous/asynchronous; oral or multimedia	Presentation software, videoconferencing, video creation software,

	Learning Activity Name	Description	Supporting Technologies
U N D E R S T A N D	Discuss/Debate 	Students engage in dialogue or debate with their peers in small or large groups; face-to-face or virtual; synchronous/asynchronous; structured or unstructured	Videoconferencing software, instant messaging, learning management system
	Conduct an Interview 	Face to face, via audio/videoconference, or via electronic communication students question someone on a chosen topic; may be digitally recorded and shared	Videoconferencing or audioconferencing software, digital audio or video recorder, wiki site for sharing
	Explore a Topic 	Students gather information or conduct basic background research using print-based and digital sources; individually or in small groups; structured or unstructured	Web search, note taking tools (e.g., Evernote, OneNote), concept mapping tools
	Write/Respond 	Students author a brief response, report, paper, essay, journal, thesis on a topic in traditional or more creative format using text or multimedia elements; individually or in small groups	Word processing software, wiki, video production software
A P P L Y	Complete a Quiz/Test 	Students demonstrate their knowledge through paper-based to computer-generated and/or scored assessments; formative or summative; traditional format or performance assessment	Learning management system, Web-based assessment platforms
	Engage in Role Play or Simulation 	Students interact with a particular role or with live or digital simulations that enable students to explore course topics in simulated experience; individual or collaborative; face-to-face or online; linear or divergent	Web-based simulations, paper-based/analog simulations
	Participate in Field Work 	Students engage in work in the field or workplace where they apply course concepts or skills in authentic settings; individually or in groups; structured or open-ended; formal or informal	Digital devices for data collection, note taking tools (e.g., Evernote, OneNote), digital audio or video recorder
	Engage in Service Learning 	Students learn in the context of a service or civic action experience; individually or in groups; structured or open-ended; formal or informal	Digital audio or video recorder

	Learning Activity Name	Description	Supporting Technologies
ANALYZE	Perform an Experiment/ Procedure 	Students explore a variety of types of evidence related to a course topic or question; individually or in small groups; guided or independent	Spreadsheet software, specific course-related software and devices (e.g., SPSS, digital probeware, video production equipment)
	Engage in Problem Based Learning/Case Study 	Students work alone or collaboratively to solve an authentic/simulated real-world problem or case study	Web search, note taking tools (e.g., Evernote, OneNote), spreadsheet software, database software
	Conduct Inquiry/ Research 	Students gather, analyze, and synthesize information using print-based and/or digital sources; individually or collaboratively; guided or independent; structured or open-ended	Web search, spreadsheet software, concept mapping tools, word processing software
EVALUATE	Compare/Contrast 	Students analyze and synthesize information to understand multiple characteristics, evidence, and/or perspectives on a course topic; individually or collaboratively; structured or open-ended; formative or summative	Concept mapping tools, presentation software, 3-D visualization software
	Reflect 	Students assess their own understandings, questions, and connections, drawing on course readings, materials and activities	Concept mapping tools, blogging tools, word processing tools
	Conduct Peer or Self-Assessment 	Students use strategies to evaluate or assess their own work or that of their peers to enhance their understanding; face-to-face or virtual	Word processing software, Web surveys or rating tools
CREATE	Develop a Model 	Students develop a conceptual model of a course concept/process; physical or digital format; formal or informal; individually or collaboratively	Concept mapping tools, presentation software, 3-D visualization software
	Construct an Argument 	Students create an evidence-based interpretation of a course concept; formal or informal; guided or independent; structured or open-ended	Presentation software, word processing software
	Teach/Instruct 	Students share their understanding with others through teaching, presentation or leading a discussion; oral or multimedia approach; face-to-face or virtual; synchronous or asynchronous	Presentation software, video creation software, learning management system

¹ Suggested citation: Hofer, M, (2015, August). Higher Education Learning Activity Types. Retrieved from <http://luminaris.link/taxonomy>

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