Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT)

Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT) is a teaching framework that emphasizes clear communication of how all components of a course align, both with the educational goals of the course and with the knowledge and skills students will need to work in specific careers. It moves away from simply the "what" of teaching to place emphasis on the "why" and "how," improving the educational experience of students and faculty.

How:

Using the TILT framework, instructors provide an explanation to students about how each piece of content and each assignment helps them to achieve specific learning outcomes, and how acquiring relevant knowledge and skills will aid them in their professional life. For assignments, instructors working toward transparency clearly delineate what students must do (tasks), align the tasks with learning outcomes, and indicate the criteria by which the students' success will be measured. See the CITL template for transparent assignments and the CITL checklist for designing transparent assignments.

Why:

This evidence-based teaching framework improves the academic confidence of students. Rather than being forced to intuit why completing a particular assignment is valuable to them, or assuming that an assignment is just busy work, students understand the learning goals and relevance of content and assignments, increasing their valuation of the learning process, and resulting in longer retention of content and employer-valued skills. When grading criteria for assignments are clearly delineated in a detailed grading rubric, students do not have to guess about what would constitute a "good" assignment, thereby reducing anxiety. When the learning targets are made clear, students are more confident that they can hit them. This greater confidence results in an improved sense of belonging, reductions in imposter syndrome, and increased persistence in college.

The TILT teaching framework is equally empowering for instructors. It pushes them toward production of well-aligned courses, in which all elements work together to help students achieve specific learning outcomes. Employment of the TILT framework weeds out busy-work, and focuses grading on achievement of course learning outcomes. As students better understand what is expected of them, instructors gain back the time they might normally spent clarifying expectations with students one-on-one. Detailed rubrics allow them to provide feedback to students without spending a great deal of time, and thereby speed grading. Transparent rubrics also make grading more consistent and less likely to be biased. Finally, because the students are learning more, value assignments more, and better understand what to target in assignments, the quality of their work improves, reducing time spent grading even more.

References and Resources

[Tilt Higher Ed](#) website