

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS - SECONDARY

The student is the center and heart of the learning process. Therefore, students are expected to assume responsibility for their own learning. They will work in partnership with the instructor and peers and contribute to classroom activities and discussions. They will complete all assignments according to instructor specifications, deadlines, and evaluation criteria. Additionally, they will revisit work in a timely manner when standards and expectations are not achieved. As part of this process, students will play an active role in monitoring their own progress, including tracking formative and summative assessment data to understand their individual progress in achieving standards proficiency.

Rather than being passive recipients of information, students must take an active role in constructing meaning for themselves in response to the content they are studying—including asking probing questions to ensure that they truly understand the subject matter. Ideally, students will demonstrate analytical and critical thinking in all aspects of their learning. In their classroom, students will demonstrate efficacy and responsibility, continually affirming their active and direct role in their own learning process. As a result of these commitments, students will graduate with proficiency in the five ACPS College Preparation Competencies: *Reading Complex Text, Writing in the Content Areas, Discourse within the Disciplines, Data Analysis and Interpretation, and Effective Speaking and Listening.*

Course assignments can provide an essential communication link between the school and the home. One measure of a program or course is the quality of the work completed by the student. A sound program of course assignments can greatly enhance a strong home-school partnership, with many lasting benefits for the individual student and his/her family. In addition, course assignments can be an important tool in developing independent thought, self-direction, and self-discipline. They can assist the student in developing good work habits and in the wise use of time.

Guidelines for course assignments include:

- 1) Teachers shall provide assignments after introduction and thorough explanation of the skills necessary to successfully complete the assignment.
- 2) Teachers shall construct assignments in such a manner that both the expectations and the purpose of the assignment will be clearly understood by all students.
- 3) Assignments, including reading assignments, shall serve a valid purpose and be clearly aligned to course skills and content standards. Specifically, course assignments should function as assessments of students' progress towards standards mastery in accordance with Policy IFA [Assessment and Evaluation] and its regulations.
- 4) Teachers shall consider a student's access to resource materials and instructional objectives when making assignments.
- 5) Teachers shall evaluate student work-products promptly and provide constructive feedback to the student. Teachers shall recognize effort and competency.
- 6) Teachers should seek to determine the cause if a student regularly fails to complete assigned work. Teachers should not avoid giving assignments because they believe students will not do the work.

- 7) Teachers should avoid excessive course assignments.
- 8) Teachers shall not require completion of assignments for disciplinary purposes.
- 9) Teachers and administrators shall take appropriate steps to communicate with parents/guardians regarding the division's course assignment policy and to solicit their support.

Adopted: January 9, 1997
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Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § [22.1-78](#)

Cross Ref: IFA: Assessment and Evaluation
IFA-R: Assessment and Evaluation Regulations