Estimator Guide

Individual course estimates should use the data below as a starting point with adjustments made depending on the expectations of the course. Consider the effort a student would likely need to expend to meet the learning goals. (E.g., what level of reading is anticipated to extract the understanding from an article needed for the course assessments or what level of preparation is required to be successful on a quiz).

The information in this guide comes from the [Rice Course Workload Calculator](#).

Course Materials

Readings

Use the table below for all assigned readings - Textbook, peer-reviewed articles, websites and content.

Depth of Reading	Amount of New Concepts	450 Words/page (General Public)	600 Words/page (professional text)	750 Words/page (Dense reading)
Survey	None - Few	67 pages/hr.	50 pages/hr.	40 pages/hr.
Survey	Some	47 pages/hr.	35 pages/hr.	28 pages/hr.
Survey	Many	33 pages/hr.	25 pages/hr.	20 pages/hr.
Understand	None - Few	33 pages/hr.	25 pages/hr.	20 pages/hr.
Understand	Some	24 pages/hr.	18 pages/hr.	14 pages/hr.
Understand	Many	17 pages/hr.	13 pages/hr.	10 pages/hr.
Engage	None - Few	17 pages/hr.	13 pages/hr.	10 pages/hr.
Engage	Some	12 pages/hr.	9 pages/hr.	7 pages/hr.
Engage	Many	9 pages/hr.	7 pages/hr.	5 pages/hr.

Video

For shorter videos (under 20 min.), estimate 3x's the playing time to allow for note-taking, pausing, and reviewing. For longer videos, estimate 2x's the playing time.

Images

Consider the educational function of any images included in the course, particularly those embedded within content modules or learning activities - particularly if the image is informationally dense, like a graph or table, and whether understanding that information is important to completing learning activities or preparing for assessments.

Interactive

Use the table above as a rough estimate for the amount of written content presented. Include any embedded videos within your estimate. See the quiz guidelines below to include for any interactive questions (graded or not) that are included.

Simulations

Simulations may have guidelines provided by the creator to build on. Use the general guidelines above around complexity of writing, research, reading, and engagement with any team members to create your estimate.

Assessments

Written Work

Use the table below for all written work - assignments, blog posts, discussions, journals. It includes the writing time and the preparation time.

Purpose	Drafting Expectations	250 Words (Double Spaced)	500 Words (Single Spaced)
Reflection/Narrative	None	45 min./page	1 hr. 30 min./page
Reflection/Narrative	Minimal	1 hr./page	2 hr./page
Reflection/Narrative	Extensive	1 hr. 15 min./page	2 hr. 30 min./page
Argument	None	1 hr. 30 min/page	3 hr./page
Argument	Minimal	2 hr./page	4 hr./page
Argument	Extensive	2 hr. 30 min./page	5 hr./page
Research	None	3 hr./page	6 hr./page
Research	Minimal	4 hr./page	8 hr./page
Research	Extensive	5 hr./page	10 hr./page

Discussion

When estimating discussions, please consider the time required for planning and drafting the initial posts based on your expectations. The word counts for the pages can be a guide for aligning the above information with your expectations. For example, if the post requires citations and external sources, the research purpose would be appropriate. For an introductory forum, the reflection/narrative might apply. Also include the estimates for responses - both the time reading the posts of others and creating the expected number of replies and the level of those replies. [Note: For your reference, this paragraph and note is 100 words.]

For any content (video, article) provided specifically for the discussion, use the Course Materials information above and incorporate that time here if not captured in Course Materials estimates.

Quiz

A common use of quizzing is a low-stakes, knowledge check quiz offered weekly to bi-weekly with 10-20 questions, often multiple choice and short answer. Using this as a baseline, estimate about an hour for taking the quiz (unless there is a time limit already applied) and up to an hour of studying/preparation for it. Multiple attempts at the quiz may increase the estimate as would more complex questions.

Exam

For the purpose of this estimate, exams include any assessment of multiple questions that covers 3 or more weeks of content. Preparation for the exam would average 2 hours per week of content. Taking exam would often average 2-3 hours for an exam of primarily multiple-choice and other fixed answer questions and 5-10 hours for an exam primarily consisting of essays and other open answer questions.

Presentation

The table below equates 2 min of recorded presentation to 1 page of "written work" and follows the written work table above. This time is intended to capture research, planning, design, and practice time for the presentation. If the presentation is collaborative, refer to the collaborative area above.

Purpose	Preparation Expectations	Est. 100 words/min. (Double Spaced)
Reflection/Narrative	Moderate	30 min/speaking min.
Reflection/Narrative	Extensive	40 min/speaking min.
Argument	Moderate	1 hr./speaking min.
Argument	Extensive	1 hr. 15 min/ speak min.
Research	Moderate	2 hr./ speaking min.
Research	Extensive	2 hr. 30 min/speak min.

Other Activities

Collaborative Work

Estimating collaborative work is challenging as the approaches and requirements of collaborative work is varied. If the result of the collaboration is a single submission, estimate its time by the written work guideline above then add a communication multiplier of 1.5 - 2 times depending on the depth of interaction and the size of the team.

For peer-review style collaboration, combine the writing and reading estimates based on the requirements of the assignments.