Reflections on tasks, projects and assignments for the subjects that I coordinated

- This brief presentation was written for the students to understand the overall philosophy of tasks, projects, assignments and tests which I set over the years for postgraduate subjects.
- The idea of writing (and wordings) this came up after reading a paper by Felder (2004).

  R. M. Felder 2004, Teaching engineering at a research university: problems and possibilities, Educación Química 15 (1), 40-42.

Features

- Actively engage in the learning process
- Rigorous, challenging and fair
- Tasks, projects, assignments and tests involve material in readings that have not been explicitly lectured on in class.
- Exercises: cooperative learning, problem-based learning, assignment of open-ended multidisciplinary problems, and problem-formulation
- Absolute grading criteria, 0 to 100% (i.e. no curving score)

Tasks, Projects, Assignments and Tests

- Some problems are straightforward, with one correct solution, and
- Others (majority of them) have several possible solutions that one must think of and then evaluate critically to determine the appropriate one.
- Whether or not getting the right answer is not so important;
- What matters is that one is actively involved in the search for it.

Downside

- Some students
  - Do not have enough time committed for the study
  - Do not like being held responsible for materials which have not been covered in lectures
  - Complain about having to dig things out for themselves
  - Do not want to learn cooperatively with other students

Goal

- When we go out into the real world there will be
  - No teacher
  - No lectures
  - No example problems with work-out solutions
- The goal is to learn now what will need to know then–how to use the library, the Internet, colleagues, and intellect & common sense to solve real problems.

Behind the scene

- Motivate, excite, and inspire to learn.
- Practice and feedback
- Promote the attitudes and abilities to become life long learners.

- "I do not wish to be a great teacher but wish to be an educator".
- WIIFM: self-satisfaction, hope of improving society. (WIIFM = What's In It for Me)