

5 General Tips from IWU Faculty and Staff about Prompts

1. Include **on-campus resources** the students can use. Put in a reminder to check out the writing center for help during the writing process. Let students know they can go to the librarians during the research process. You can also share when your office hours are. Additionally, remind them it's normal to feel stressed about the process of creation, and that Counseling services offers useful techniques for combating college anxieties. Being aware/reminded of these resources makes students more likely to take advantage of the full array of what campus can offer.
2. **Make the due date very clear.** We've noticed some professors leave a blank after the due date and make students write it in, thus committing that information to memory. Other professors bold it, highlight it, or otherwise make the date stand out.
3. Use **special paper** to print your prompts. If you're feeling it, sometimes printing the prompt in **different colors**, a **distinct font**, or a special color of paper makes it easier for students to remember, read, and hold on to.
4. **Put your prompts online** as well as print them out. Students lose things, just like faculty and staff do. Make them not have to memorize your prompt or jump through hoops to get a new copy. Put it online to save them, and yourself, the trouble.
5. Hold **office hours specifically to discuss the prompt.** Tell students that time is for them to come in, or e-mail you, with questions regarding the prompt so you can 1) see commonalities in where they might all be struggling and 2) clarify concerns before they appear in the final drafts.