Creating Wicked Students

**Definition:**
Parameters of the problem and the means available for solving them were changing constantly, often unexpectedly. Examples might include non-conventional warfare in Iraq, fake news, or cell phones replacing desktops for education.

**Wicked Students**

a. Deliberate and thoughtful  
b. Able to ask the right questions  
c. Able to know when to question  
d. Open to new challenges  
e. Able to draw from multiple areas  
f. Able to adapt ideas/technologies to new settings  
g. Not afraid to fail/able to try again

**Wicked Assignments:**

a. Content + skills + sense of authority (authorship, agency) = thoughtful change in the world  
b. Design SLOs that give them agency/authorship (choose the right Bloom verbs)  
c. Ask students to mimic real work we do in our field  
d. Force decision-making amid uncertainty:  
   a. Make meaning  
   b. Integrate  
   c. Synthesize  
   d. Make decisions  
e. May be designed to encourage failure, re-try, growth, and building grit  
f. Consider ungraded and minimally-graded assignments as well

**Examples of Wicked Assignments:**

a. **Biology:** Create an informational pamphlet on an emerging infectious disease, pitched to parents of small children. Include causative agent and vector, threat to local population, and possible measures to reduce risk.  
b. **Nutrition:** The government of New York State is developing a list of recommendations regarding the lifestyles of primary-school age children. Choose a particular region of the state and develop an appropriate menu for breakfast, providing a carefully researched rationale that takes into consideration BOTH nutritional and cultural factors.

**Reference:**