Is my assignment ready for an online class?

☐ I stated a reasonable date, which is consistent with class deadlines.
Being consistent with how you give deadlines in your class reduces stress. It doesn’t matter if it is Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (perhaps the most common due date for online), or if it is Wednesday at 2:00 p.m., being very clear about when work is due reduces students’ stress and their emails to you.

☐ I have been explicit about whether this assignment is to be worked on individually, or if collaboration is acceptable.
Encourage students to ask questions about what is permitted with each assignment and to check Ball State’s academic integrity and dishonesty policy at http://www.bsu.edu/associateprovost/academicethics.

☐ I have been specific about what I want submitted.
It is helpful to document margins, requirements for discussion board posts, word counts, etc.

☐ I have ensured that students have the technology to produce what I want submitted.
If you are asking students to scan a document, or to create a video, for example, ask them to please check with you ASAP to make sure they have the equipment/technology necessary to do that.

☐ I have added the purpose of the assignment.
With which course/learning objective does this align? Why are you asking students to do this work? Does it give them a chance to show that they can apply theories to practice? Or provide an opportunity to do research in the field? Providing a rationale for an assignment helps clarify to students why it is important for them to respond with their best efforts.

☐ I am clear about how I will grade.
A rubric is often the easiest way to handle this, but if you prefer not to use rubrics, then include some detail about how you plan to grade. What are the important elements that you will use to evaluate? You could even post a video or sample assignment to show how you grade or explaining your rubric.

☐ I have stated how students should submit their work.
Should they type into a comment box/text field? Should they submit an attached document (what file type?)? Respond perhaps with an audio or video clip? Will there be additional steps, like attaching a picture of their scratch paper as well as answers? Submitting directly into Canvas is by far the simplest, but for the first few assignments, you may want to tell students how that is done. Avoid using email to receive student work.
I have carefully considered the weight of this project on the student's overall grade. If an assignment is overly critical to a semester grade calculation, it can create intense pressure on students, which can lead to academic integrity issues. If you had planned on a major paper, for example, could it be broken down into an outline grade, a rough draft grade, and a final paper grade?

I have educated my students about accidental plagiarism. Letting students know what does or does not constitute plagiarism helps to avoid academic integrity issues. In Canvas, use of the Vericite tool can give students a report, before they turn in a final copy, on what parts of their writing would be problematic. Tell your students that if they have questions, they can visit http://www.bsu.edu/associateprovost/academicethics.

I have shaped the assignment deliverables so that plagiarism is harder. Questions that require application rather than explaining knowledge move into higher-order thinking, and make it more difficult for students to cheat. For example, rather than: “Explain the basic functions of the vascular, skeletal, muscular and nervous systems,” try “A horse jumps over a fence. Describe how its vascular, muscular, skeletal, and nervous systems contributed to that act.” Or, instead of “Write a review of ‘The Walking Dead,’” try “How does ‘The Walking Dead’ reflect societal concerns related to apocalyptic events?”