How do you Design a Case?

Plan	
Consider the purpose.	How is the case going to be used? • exam question • individual assignment • group discussion • group project • practice • learn new topics What will students gain?
Consider the objectives.	Keep in mind issues specific to your area of study • Assessment: collects, analyze, interpret data • Planning: form goals, objectives, choose intervention/services for care plan • Implementation: activate care plan • Evaluation: appraise effectiveness of intervention and professional competence Allow students to explore primary areas in your discipline, • Clinical • Education • Administration • Research • Policy • Ethics Match the case to the course objectives and course level .
Consider level of difficulty.	Should the case be straightforward or complex? What level of content/theory should be addressed?
Consider what level of thinking you want from the students. 1. Knowledge/Comprehension 2. Application 3. Critical Thinking: analyze, synthesize, evaluating, recommending	To cultivate high-level thinking: • One course or activity is not sufficient, build in several opportunities. • It takes time, so it is better to build activities into a whole program, so that it can develop over time, through experience with challenging content. • Students should be aware of the expectation.
Prepare	
Imagine situations.	Think of several real situations, then pick the best. • go talk to people: colleagues, clients • examine current events • video clips • government decisions or policies
Find necessary details	Sometimes it is necessary to go and find out details. Students need sufficient background to be able to identify with the situation. • relevant details about people: such as age, gender, culture, socio-economic status • relevant details about the environment (ex. Private, Public) • if appropriate, details about how the problem arose
Consider teaching methods to prepare students.	Will you need workshop, activities or handouts? • Are the students used to this kind of learning?

	• Do they know the benefits of this kind of learning, for them? • Will they be expected to work in groups? • Do they have experience working in groups?

Write

Choose the point of view.	Usually write the case from the point of view of the decision maker
Choose what facts to include.	Include relevant facts needed to understand the situation and make a decision. • Do not distort real facts, but do disguise real people.
Choose the writing style.	Use the 'active voice' because it is more dynamic, and takes less space. • "She did it." rather than "It was done."
Decide how the case will be delivered.	Will the case be given all at once? Will the case be divided up and given one part at a time?
Decide if you will include any materials.	• Resources (materials, suggested readings, websites) • List of Learning Goals (it may be best to give these after they have worked on the case) • Instructor's Guide: if more than one person is using the case to teach the same thing, it gives the objectives, the main anticipated issues, possible questions
Choose a title.	This will make it easier to refer to the case.
Decide how the student will be assessed and write clear instructions.	How much is it worth in grades? How much time should it take? • Exam: multiple choice or short answer • essay, research summary • presentation, group work

Revise

Revise.	• Remove unnecessary words or phrases to make the case more clear and exciting, avoid jargon. • Label charts, tables and appendices and identify them in the case. • Make sure that it is clear to the student what is an opinion and what is a fact. • Change any real names and locations. *(see checklist for additional points)*
Present to the students. Revise again!	• You will only know if it is a good case after you have given it to your students!

Adapted by Erika Kustra, McMaster University (2008) from resources including:

Erskine, J., Leenders, M. & Mauffette-Leenders, (1998). *Teaching With Cases.* Richard Ivey School of Business; The University of Western Ontario, London.
Leedners, M. & Erskine ,J. (1978). *Case Research: The Case Writing Process*. School of Business Administration, The University of Western Ontario, London.