

Using Rubrics to Assess Student Work

Sponsored by the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Notre Dame
Thursday, January 30, 2014 - 3:30-4:20 pm – Notre Dame Room, LaFortune

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RUBRIC – *a document that articulates expectations for an activity by listing assessment criteria and describing levels of quality.*

Rationale

- Tell learners what is expected of them – provide a "target"
Communicate high expectations
- List criteria for "what counts"
Help learners achieve a top grade
- Reduce bias and increase objectivity in grading
- Decrease time spent in scoring – less feedback on peripheral items

Usage

- ❖ Major assignment – high stakes activity
- ❖ Multiple graders – consistent assessment across sections, TAs
- ❖ Repeated activity – multiple uses in a single semester or re-used each semester

Development

1. Define the assignment – topic, process and product
2. Articulate learning goals – observable outcomes
3. Establish standards of quality – levels of performance for each goal

What does "excellent" vs. "good" work look like?

Suggested labels for levels of performance

Quality	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Expertise	Expert Exemplary Distinguished	Advanced Accomplished Proficient	Intermediate Developing Apprentice	Beginning Novice

4. Determine a scoring method – (how) will you translate the rubric into a grade?
Will you indicate a relative importance (weight) for each goal?

Implementation

- A. Share it with learners when announcing an assignment
- B. Encourage learners to use it to evaluate their own work
Optional – learners fill out a rubric and hand it in with the completed work
- C. Instructor uses the rubric to assess work.
- D. After each use, re-evaluate components, standards, scoring
- E. Ask learners for feedback on the rubric.

Using iRubric in Sakai – the basics

Step 1: Create a Gradebook item

If the Gradebook tool is not visible, go to Site Editor > Edit Tools.

Where items are created:

1. In the Gradebook itself (File > New Item) OR
2. In another tool: Assignments, Tests and Quizzes, Forums, etc.

Step 2: Build a rubric

- Open the Gradebook tool
- Double-click any item
- Click "Select iRubric" (if it's hidden, click the triangle by "Scoring Agent")
- Maximize the window and then click the "build rubric" tab
- You have four options:
 - A. Build from scratch
 - B. Revise my existing rubric
 - C. Duplicate and re-purpose an existing rubric
 - D. Import a rubric from iRubric Public Gallery

Step 3: Attach a rubric to a gradebook item

- Open the Gradebook tool
- Double-click the item to which you'd like to attach a rubric
- Click "Select iRubric"
- Click "select a rubric"
- Click "select" next to the desired rubric
- Click "save", then "close"

To refresh the screen, exit the Gradebook tool and re-enter. Under the Gradebook tab you should now see two icons in the Scoring Agent column for the desired item. If you double-click the item, you should see the name of the rubric next to "Select iRubric"

Step 4: Use the rubric to provide feedback

- Click the checkerboard icon in the Scoring Agent column
- Click the name of the student you wish to grade
 - Click the boxes for the appropriate levels of performance
 - Enter any comments you wish to make
 - Click "save score"
- After entering and saving your feedback, close the window
- Click the refresh icon (blue arrows) in the Scoring Agent column

University of Notre Dame Learning Outcomes for Undergraduates

In order to lay the foundations for life-long learning, by the time they graduate, Notre Dame undergraduates will be able to:

- A. Acquire, synthesize, and communicate knowledge by incorporating relevant disciplinary approaches, cultural perspectives, and Catholic intellectual tradition.
- B. Recognize moral and ethical questions in lived experiences, evaluate alternatives, and act with integrity.
- C. Contribute to the common good by displaying a disciplined sensibility and committed engagement in response to complex challenges facing local, national, or global communities.
- D. Demonstrate the vision and self-direction necessary to articulate, set, and advance toward their goals.
- E. Think critically in formulating opinions or accepting conclusions.
- F. Exhibit creativity or innovation in the pursuit of their intellectual interests.
- G. Display a level of mastery in their major field(s) of study that enables them to successfully pursue professional careers or advanced study.

Source: <http://provost.nd.edu/undergraduate-education/university-learning-outcomes-for-undergraduates/>

Critical thinking - calls for these abilities:

1. Recognize problems and find ways to address them
2. Recognize unstated assumptions and values
3. Comprehend and use language
4. Gather information
5. Interpret data, appraise evidence and evaluate arguments
6. Recognize relationships between propositions
7. Draw conclusions and make generalizations
8. Test conclusions and generalizations
9. Render judgments
10. Reconstruct patterns of belief on the basis of experience

Based on *An Experiment in the Development of Critical Thinking*,
Edward M. Glaser, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1941.

3.3 THE SIX CATEGORIES OF THE COGNITIVE PROCESS DIMENSION AND RELATED COGNITIVE PROCESSES*

PROCESS CATEGORIES	COGNITIVE PROCESSES AND EXAMPLES
1. REMEMBER —Retrieve relevant knowledge from long-term memory.	
1.1 RECOGNIZING	(e.g., Recognize the dates of important events in U.S. history)
1.2 RECALLING	(e.g., Recall the dates of important events in U.S. history)
2. UNDERSTAND —Construct meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication.	
2.1 INTERPRETING	(e.g., Paraphrase important speeches and documents)
2.2 EXEMPLIFYING	(e.g., Give examples of various artistic painting styles)
2.3 CLASSIFYING	(e.g., Classify observed or described cases of mental disorders)
2.4 SUMMARIZING	(e.g., Write a short summary of the events portrayed on videotapes)
2.5 INFERRING	(e.g., In learning a foreign language, infer grammatical principles from examples)
2.6 COMPARING	(e.g., Compare historical events to contemporary situations)
2.7 EXPLAINING	(e.g., Explain the causes of important eighteenth-century events in France)
3. APPLY —Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation.	
3.1 EXECUTING	(e.g., Divide one whole number by another whole number, both with multiple digits)
3.2 IMPLEMENTING	(e.g., Determine in which situations Newton's second law is appropriate)
4. ANALYZE —Break material into constituent parts and determine how parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.	
4.1 DIFFERENTIATING	(e.g., Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant numbers in a mathematical word problem)
4.2 ORGANIZING	(e.g., Structure evidence in a historical description into evidence for and against a particular historical explanation)
4.3 ATTRIBUTING	(e.g., Determine the point of view of the author of an essay in terms of his or her political perspective)
5. EVALUATE —Make judgments based on criteria and standards.	
5.1 CHECKING	(e.g., Determine whether a scientist's conclusions follow from observed data)
5.2 CRITIQUING	(e.g., Judge which of two methods is the best way to solve a given problem)
6. CREATE —Put elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganize elements into a new pattern or structure.	
6.1 GENERATING	(e.g., Generate hypotheses to account for an observed phenomenon)
6.2 PLANNING	(e.g., Plan a research paper on a given historical topic)
6.3 PRODUCING	(e.g., Build habitats for certain species for certain purposes)

Rubric: Audio Interview



Sound Editing				
	Full credit 100 pts	Partial credit 80 pts	Minimal credit 60 pts	No credit 0 pts
Functionality				
Editing 15 %	Full credit All smooth transitions.	Partial credit One or two sharp cuts.	Minimal credit Very choppy.	No credit Unacceptable
Skills 10 %	Full credit Shows skills learned outside of class.	Partial credit Shows skills learned in class.	Minimal credit Shows little skill.	No credit Unacceptable
Volume level 10 %	Full credit Consistently good	Partial credit A bit low or high, some variation	Minimal credit Varies greatly, hard to hear, or distorted.	No credit Unacceptable
Background noise 10 %	Full credit None	Partial credit A small amount	Minimal credit Lots	No credit Unacceptable
Music level 5 %	Full credit Faded behind voice	Partial credit A bit high or low	Minimal credit Overpowering or not heard	No credit Unacceptable
Aesthetics				
General appeal 5 %	Full credit Very high appeal	Partial credit Appropriate	Minimal credit Very little appeal	No credit Unacceptable
Soundtrack 5 %	Full credit Excellent choice	Partial credit Appropriate	Minimal credit No connection	No credit No soundtrack
Speech quality 5 %	Full credit Clear and expressive	Partial credit Adequate	Minimal credit Fast, monotonous, garbled, or slurred	No credit Unacceptable
Content				
General 10 %	Full credit Especially engaging	Partial credit Includes required content	Minimal credit Superficial or all yes/no answers	No credit Unacceptable
Length 5 %	Full credit Required length	Partial credit A bit long or short	Minimal credit Way too long or short	No credit Unacceptable
Credits 5 %	Full credit Complete	Partial credit Small detail missing	Minimal credit Significant information missing	No credit Not included
Copyright 10 %	Full credit Legal soundtrack	Partial credit N.A.	Minimal credit Copyright status unclear	No credit Uses copyrighted music
Release signed 5 %	Full credit Complete and on time	Partial credit A bit late	Minimal credit Very late	No credit Not received

A Grading Rubric for English Essays

An Excellent Essay — addresses the assignment; has a clearly articulated, original thesis and an easily identifiable structure; is believable, persuasive, and insightful; is amply developed; stays right on topic; makes excellent use of evidence to support the author's claims; cites concrete, relevant examples; is characterized by precision and accuracy; bristles with energy; demonstrates a solid command of the topic; involves detailed close reading; uses a clever or intriguing title; is superbly well written; is lean and economical, with not a word out of place; and has no mechanical or grammatical weaknesses and *no* typos. A really excellent essay teaches me something and makes me want to keep reading!

A Good Essay — addresses the assignment and has good ideas but may drift momentarily from the main topic and becomes diffuse (but only momentarily); may not fully develop its best ideas; relies more heavily on summary than on analysis and close reading; has minor problems maintaining clarity and focus; uses generally strong evidence to support the argument, but the logic may falter in one or two places; lacks significant insight and originality; has good sentence structure and is mechanically sound with perhaps a few exceptions; may lapse back into the old funnel-shaped essay structure at the end and restate half of the opening paragraph in the closing paragraph. This is a competent but uninspired essay.

A Not-So-Good Essay — is not well organized and has trouble addressing the assignment but still works in the direction of a thesis; offers nothing new; makes claims without offering support; is unclear; does not integrate quotations seamlessly and grammatically into the surrounding sentences, and inserts quotations without analysis or explanation of context; reads suspiciously like a hurried first draft cranked out the night before it was due; is indistinguishable from about half of the other essays submitted for this assignment.

An Even Weaker Essay — has no identifiable thesis and therefore does not adequately satisfy the assignment; is incoherent and logically simplistic; is consistently marred by weaknesses and errors in sentence structure, grammar, and spelling; offers little to no evidence to support its claims; never once quotes from the text under discussion; does not reach the minimum page requirement for the assignment. In an essay at this level of the scale the intellectual and creative content of the paper is submerged beneath the overwhelming problems in presentation.

An Unacceptable Essay — demonstrates no real effort to address the assignment, or an inability to grasp the assignment, and is very difficult to understand; may plagiarize.

Some additional factors:

- A truly clever, witty, inventive essay that in other respects is not of sterling quality may receive a small boost.
- The grading scale for a course needs to be weighted to make allowances for students who occasionally slip. The semester course grade should fairly reflect the student's performance, but it shouldn't be too heavily based on a single foul-up.

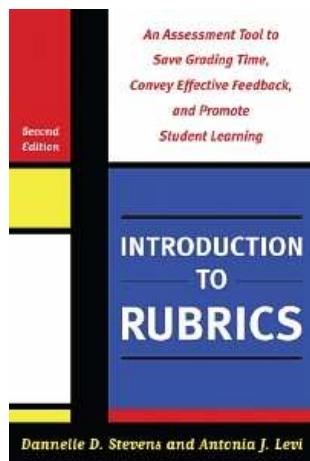
Introduction to Rubrics

An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback, and Promote Student Learning

Edition: 2

Dannelle D. Stevens , Antonia J. Levi

Foreword by Barbara E. Walvoord



Cloth: 978 1 57922 587 2

Price: \$75.00

Published: October 2012

Paper: 978 1 57922 588 9

Price: \$24.95

Published: October 2012

Ebook: 978 1 57922 590 2

Price: \$19.99

Published: January 2013

Publisher: Stylus Publishing

232 pp., 7" x 10"

This new edition retains the appeal, clarity and practicality that made the first so successful, and continues to provide a fundamental introduction to the principles and purposes of rubrics, with guidance on how to construct them, use them to align course content to learning outcomes, and apply them in a wide variety of courses, and to all forms of assignment.

Reflecting developments since publication of the first edition, the authors have extended coverage to include:

- * Expanded discussion on use of rubrics for grading
- * Grading on-line with rubrics
- * Wider coverage of rubric types (e.g., holistic, rating scales)
- * Rubric construction in student affairs
- * Pros and cons of working with "ready-made" rubrics
- * Using rubrics to improve your teaching, and for SoTL
- * Use of rubrics in program assessment (case study)
- * Application of rubrics in the arts, for study abroad, service learning and students' independent learning
- * Up-dated literature review

Reviews & Endorsements:

"A rubric, the authors emphasize, is a tool. And their book itself is a wonderful tool for exploring how to use rubrics as tools. For a long time, I have been recommending the first edition to faculty in workshops I lead. I can recommend this second edition with even greater enthusiasm, because it does so much more, and does it so intelligently.

The authors offer advice about all the surrounding situations and problems that may accompany rubrics: how to get students involved in rubrics, how to use rubrics with TA's, how to collaborate with other faculty in constructing common rubrics, and how to use rubrics that someone else has constructed. The book focuses on rubrics but offers a great deal of advice about good teaching, good collaboration, and good assessment. In short, this book is a great tool."

- From the Foreword by **Barbara E.**

Walvoord, Professor Emerita, University of Notre Dame, and author of *Effective Grading*, and *Assessment Clear and Simple*

"Students consistently tell us that good teachers give them constant feedback and are clear about their expectations and agendas. One way to accomplish both these purposes is by using well-constructed rubrics. *Introduction to Rubrics* provides a wonderfully helpful guide to creating rubrics that provide timely and detailed feedback and encourage the development of critical thinking. For teachers seeking to improve how they communicate the essentials of learning to students it will be an invaluable resource"

- **Stephen D. Brookfield**, Distinguished University Professor, University of St. Thomas

More Reviews...

Related Titles by Subject:

See Assessment & Accreditation (Higher Education)

<http://stylus.styluspub.com/Books/BookDetail.aspx?productID=280909>

Scoring Guide Rubric Example

Changing Communities in Our City

Task Description: Each student will make a 5 minute presentation on the changes in one Portland community over the past 30 years. The student may focus the presentation in any way s/he wishes, but there needs to be a thesis of some sort, not just a chronological exposition. The presentation should include appropriate photographs, maps, graphs, and other visual aids for the audience.

	Exemplary Performance	Comments	Pts.
Knowledge/ Understanding 20%	The presentation demonstrates a depth of historical understanding by using relevant and accurate detail to support the student's thesis. Research is thorough and goes beyond what was presented in class or in the assigned texts.		
Thinking/ Inquiry 30%	The presentation is centered around a thesis which shows a highly developed awareness of historiographic or social issues and a high level of conceptual ability.		
Communication 20%	The presentation is imaginative and effective in conveying ideas to the audience. The presenter responds effectively to audience reactions and questions		
Use of visual aids 20%	The presentation includes appropriate and easily understood visual aids which the presenter refers to and explains at appropriate moments in the presentation.		
Presentation skills 10%	The presenter speaks clearly and loudly enough to be heard, using eye contact, a lively tone, gestures, and body language to engage the audience.		

Figure 1.5: Part Four: Scoring Guide Rubric: Description of Dimensions at highest level of performance. © Stevens, D. D. & Levi, A. J. (2005). *Introduction to Rubrics*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Press.

Critical Thinking Rubric

Date: _____

Rater: _____

Course: _____

Student: _____

TRAIT	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary	Score
Identifies and Summarizes problem at issue	Does not identify and summarize the problem, is confused or identifies a different or inappropriate problem	Identifies the main problem and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem	Identifies not only the basics of the issue, but recognizes nuances of the issue	
Personal perspective and position	Addresses a single source or view of the argument and fails to clarify presented position relative to one's own	Identifies, appropriately, one's own position on the issue	Draws support from experience and information not available from assigned sources	
Other salient perspectives and positions	Deals only with a single perspective and fails to discuss other salient perspectives	Identifies other salient perspectives drawn from outside information	Addresses and analyzes salient perspectives drawn from outside information	
Key assumptions	Does not surface the assumptions and ethical issues that underlie the issue	Identifies some of the key assumptions and ethical issues	Identifies and questions the validity of the key assumptions and addresses the ethical dimensions that underlie the issue	
Quality of evidence	Merely repeats information provided, taking it as truth or denies evidence without adequate justification	Examines the evidence and source of evidence, questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	Observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences. Clearly distinguishes between fact, opinion, and acknowledges value judgments	
Conclusions, implications, and consequences	Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences of the issue	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications, and consequences	Objectively reflects upon own assertions	

Academic Poster Rubric

<i>Content</i>	<i>Exceeds Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Requirements</i>	<i>Inadequate</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Descriptive topic statement				
Explanation of key concepts and ideas				
Reflection on experience/lessons learned				
Conciseness				
Spelling and accuracy				
Images – clarity and appropriateness				
Organization and logical flow				
<i>Presentation</i>				
Comfort/confidence in explaining				
Empathy/connection to visitors				
Professional appearance and demeanor				
<i>Visual Design</i>				
General attractiveness/appeal				
Readability of text (size, font, color)				
Skill/neatness/attention to detail				
Balance and spacing				