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Developing Rubrics for Assessment in Non-Degree Granting Academic Programs

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Developing Rubrics for Assessment in Non-Degree Granting Academic Programs

While assessment rubrics are available in many academic areas, they traditionally apply only to the degree-granting components in higher education. A collaborative effort among selected units of the Center for Academic Success Programs (CASP) is being undertaken to develop rubrics for use in assessment throughout the Academic Resource Center, Intellectual Skills Development Program, and Office of Transfer Student Services - three non-degree granting academic programs. Using the Association of American Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) VALUE rubric as a model - both for style and mode of development, these three programs are working in partnership to develop and test rubrics which can then be adapted to other non-degree granting academic programs within the Center for Academic Success Programs and across the University.

The purpose of this grant is to support the design and analysis of the assessment component of the program. Specifically, the funding fostered:

- **Purpose I**: The design and test of the rubrics for assessing student learning in non-degree granting units
- **Purpose II**: The implementation of the assessment rubrics developed through Purpose I and
- **Purpose III**: The expansion of the program to other programs within the University.

When the focus groups complete the rubrics, an Excel spreadsheet is maintained to record the ratings, allowing us to compare validity and reliability of the rubrics.

The 2012-13 assessment grant funding has aided in working toward the following objectives:

- **Objective 1**: Establish rubrics to be used to assess student learning from participation in non-degree granting academic programs
- **Objective 2**: Test the validity of the rubrics by bringing professional staff and faculty into focus groups to use the proposed rubrics in trial settings
- **Objective 3**: Revise the rubrics as deemed appropriate after the testing in Objective 2 and
- **Objective 4**: Implement the use of rubrics throughout these programs.

Below are samples of the rubrics being developed:

**Critical Thinking Rubric**
- **Definition**: Comprehensively examine ideas, issues, etc. before accepting or discounting. Using the evaluation of the information to form an opinion or draw a conclusion.
- **Implementation of Ideas**: Use multiple sources to support ideas with evidence and analysis. How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented challenge or disagree with the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support or challenge the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented challenge or disagree with the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented challenge or disagree with the conclusion presented?

**Written Communication Rubric**
- **Definition**: Developing and expressing ideas through different written expressions (e.g., traditional, online, digital media).
- **Purpose**: The design and test of the rubrics for assessing student learning in non-degree granting units
- **Content**: Includes multiple ideas developed in paper and-presented ideas. How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented? How do the ideas presented support the conclusion presented?

**Status**
- 1) We've looked at samples of rubrics used in degree-granting areas.
- 2) We are still in the writing stage of the rubrics.
- 3) We will soon be working to develop the video-taped components to use for testing the rubrics on focus groups.
- 4) Then we will be conducting focus groups of professional staff and faculty.
- 5) Following comparison and analysis of the ratings using the rubrics as well as comments received from the focus groups, the rubrics will be revised and retested, if necessary.

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