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Rubric Development Workshop

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Rubric Development Workshop

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Rubrics

Rubrics specify the criteria we use to assess direct evidence for a learning outcome. The evidence might be term papers, theses, projects, oral presentations, exam answers, etc. The basic principle is that the assignment must require students to perform the outcome (define, explain, compute, etc.) so you can assess how well they can do it.

There are two major types of rubrics:

- Holistic scoring — one global, holistic score for a product or behavior
 - Analytic rubrics — separate, holistic scoring of specified dimensions of the outcome
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Rubric Examples

- Critical Thinking (10, 11, 74, 75)
 - Writing (2, 3, 4, 5, 18, 23, 46, 78)
 - Information Competence (77)
 - GE Social Sciences (19, 44)
 - Fine Arts (20, 31, 62, 64)
 - Natural Sciences (5, 41)
 - Leadership (13)
 - Collaboration (27, 76)
 - Intentional Learning (57)
 - Community Service Learning Outcomes (65)
 - AAC&U Value Rubrics
-

Typical Four-Point Rubric Levels

1. Below Expectations. Student's demonstrated level of understanding clearly does not meet our expectations. Major ideas may be missing, inaccurate, or irrelevant to the task.
 2. Needs Improvement. Student needs to demonstrate a deeper understanding to meet our expectations, but does show some understanding; student may not fully develop ideas or may use concepts incorrectly.
 3. Meets Expectations. Student meets our expectations, performs at a level acceptable for graduation, demonstrates good understanding, etc.
 4. Exceeds Expectations. Student exceeds our expectations, performs at a sophisticated level, identifies subtle nuances, develops fresh insights, integrates ideas in creative ways, etc.
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Rubric Category Labels

- Does Not Meet Expectations, Needs Improvement, Acceptable, Exemplary
 - Below Expectations, Developing, Meets Expectations, Exceeds Expectations
 - Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, Expert
 - Emerging, Developing, Proficient, Insightful
 - Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, Advanced (AAC&U Board of Directors, *Our Students Best Work*, 2004)
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Creating a Rubric

1. Adapt an already-existing rubric.
 2. Analytic Method
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Drafting the Rubric

I generally find it easier to start at the extremes when drafting the criteria in the rubric's cells, then move up and down to draft the levels in the middle. Starting at the lowest and highest cells, you ask:

- What are the characteristics of an unacceptable product, the worst product you could imagine, a product that results when students are very weak on the outcome being assessed?
- What are the characteristics of a product that would be exemplary, that would exceed your expectations, that would result when the student is an expert on the outcome being assessed?

Some words I find helpful:

(in)complete, (in)accurate, (un)reasonable, detailed, thorough, creative, original, subtle, sophisticated, synthesizes, integrates, analyzes, minor/major conceptual errors, flexibility, adaptability, complexity of thought, clarity, well-documented, well-supported, professional, organized, insightful, relevant

Assessment Standards: How Good Is Good Enough?

Typical: We would be satisfied if at least 80% of the students are at level 3 or higher.

Let's consider the evidence for an outcome and the associated assessment rubric.

Pick a program learning outcome and consider the evidence you will collect to assess it. Then, draft the associated assessment rubric.

As you draft your rubric, consider these questions:

1. Do you want a holistic or analytic rubric?
2. How many rating categories do you want to use? What are their labels?
4. If you're developing an analytic rubric, what dimensions do you want to assess?
5. Can you adapt someone else's rubric, or should you start from scratch?
6. Do the assignment and rubric align so the rubric is a reasonable way to assess the evidence?

References

- Allen, M. J. (2004). *Assessing academic programs in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Allen, M. J. (2006). *Assessing general education programs in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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Holistic Rubric Template

Outcome:

Evidence:

Standard: We will be satisfied if:

Category	Characteristics
4	
3	
2	
1	

Analytic Rubric Template

Outcome:

Evidence:

Standard: We will be satisfied if:

Dimension	Rating Category			
	1	2	3	4