

RUBRICS

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UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Introductions

Using Rubrics Discussion, October 2010

Sources

- Material contained in this presentation was collected from a variety of sources.
- These sources, and others, are found in the RUBRIC RESOURCES handout.

What is a rubric?

● *ruber*

- In medieval times, legal instructions were written in red
 - Headings, titles and sections of early books were often printed in red and, in prayer books, the directions for conducting religious services were also printed in red
 - Evolved to mean “*an established custom or rule of procedure*”

What is a rubric?

- *Adopted by educators in 1980's*
 - "At its most basic, a rubric is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics . . . provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable levels of performance"
 - "Scoring rubrics are descriptive scoring schemes that are developed to guide the analysis of the products or processes of students' efforts"

Why rubrics?

- More objective and meaningful measurement
- Grading – time, consistent and fair, distinction
- Communication of expectations to students
- Convey effective feedback
- Self-assessment
- Student created – partner in learning
- Identify student strengths and weaknesses – teach accordingly
- Track changes in student performance – relate to changes in instruction
- Minimize educational disparities

Why not rubrics?

- Don't use to test knowledge of “*parts of speech*”
- Prescriptive
- Performing *to the Rubric*

When to use rubrics

- Situations that require critical thinking and are multidimensional
- Systems thinking, procedural knowledge, attitude formation
- Group activities
- Multiple evaluators – across sections, across courses in program, major project
- Writing assignments, Extended projects, Oral presentations

Design of Rubrics

□ Identifying Performance Criteria

- Row Headings: **O**bjectives, Traits, Dimensions
- Learning objective ↔ assessment criterion

□ Setting Performance Levels

- Column Headings: **S**tandards, Levels of Achievement

□ Creating Performance Descriptions

- Cell descriptions: **M**easurement, Differentiation
- Non-judgmental, free of jargon, reflect classroom vocabulary

Write a Rubric!

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Resources

RANDOM MUSINGS ON RUBRICS

ADAM MCGLYNN



BENEFITS & PITFALLS

- Incredibly useful for online courses given the lack of face to face interaction.
 - Grading of essays & especially discussion forums
- Provides “insurance” for students questioning their grades.
 - I share a rubric with my students so they have a clear understanding of my expectations.
- Lack of flexibility.
- I try to set general standards in my rubrics not specific knowledge requirements.
- Using the rubric to grade efficiently and not paying attention to detail or the intricacies of certain responses.

PITFALLS

Quality Criteria	No or Limited Proficiency (0)	Some Proficiency (1)	Proficiency (2)	High Proficiency (3)	Score
Research Focus or Question	No focus or research question	May exist but is unclear	Exists but is elementary	Clear, shows fresh insight, challenging	
Structure of Paper	No discernable structure. No transition.	Some structure, but abrupt shifts & ineffective flow of ideas	Structure is adequate. Transitions appropriate. Sequence of ideas could be improved	Structure is excellent. Fully supports focus and question. Transitions are effective.	
Use of Evidence (documentation)	Neglects important sources. Gross underuse of quotations or paraphrase.	Uses relevant sources but lacks in variety and/or skillful combinations.	Uses sources to support. May not always conform to required style manual.	Excellent use of sources. Combines material from variety of sources. Uses required style.	
Analysis and Logic	No analysis and no logical rationale shown in paper.	Some analysis, some logic, but does not consider counter arguments or interpretations.	Good analysis, but paper doesn't seem to flow logically. Nothing new or creative.	Excellent analysis and logical presentation of information. Creative and imaginative.	
Mechanics	Sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, spelling all not at acceptable college level	Sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, spelling at an average college level	Sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, spelling all slightly above an acceptable college level	Sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, spelling all at exactly at senior level college work	

RUBRIC FROM AP GOVERNMENT & POLITICS EXAM

The requirements of specific information limited our ability to assign points to well-informed answers that did not use the correct “key words.”

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- **Part (c): 3 points**
- One point is earned for each explanation of how, over the past few decades, party composition has changed with respect to three of the four groups:
 - Catholics — They have become less reliable Democratic voters.
 - Labor union members — They have become less reliable Democratic voters; have decreased in number and thus there are fewer Democratic supporters; have become a smaller percentage of the Democratic voting bloc.
 - Women — They have become more reliable Democratic voters; have increased in number and thus there are more Democratic supporters; have become a larger percentage of the Democratic voting bloc.
 - Social conservatives — They were previously nonexistent and have now crystallized to become more reliable Republican voters; previously found in the Democratic party and have moved to the Republican party.