

Using Holistic Rubrics to Assess General Education Learning Outcomes

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Background

- Rubric scoring was developed in the 1960s in the K-12 sector as a means of generating objective, standardized ways of evaluating student writing
- The underlying framework for rubric scoring draws on three areas of cognitive and educational research
 - Authentic assessment
 - Self-regulated learning
 - The teaching and evaluation of writing
- Essentially, there are two purposes for rubric scoring
 - Evaluation of student performance
 - Improvement of student performance

What is a Rubric?

- A scoring rubric is a set of ordered categories to which a given piece of work (e.g., a student “artifact”) can be compared. Scoring rubrics specify the qualities or processes that must be exhibited in order for a performance to be assigned a particular evaluative rating (McDaniel, 1994).

Types of Rubrics

Rubrics may be:

- **General**—they contain criteria that are general across tasks
 - Designed to provide general guidance as to expectations, such as evaluation of written assignments (e.g., a “writing rubric”)
- **Task-specific**—they are unique to a specific task assignment
 - Designed to provide detailed guidance regarding a specific assignment or task (e.g., a rubric for the “civil war writing assignment”)

Types of Rubrics

- Checklists
- Analytic
- Holistic

Checklist Rubrics

- Checklist rubrics contain a list of behaviors or specific steps which can be marked as Present/Absent, complete/Incomplete, Yes/No
 - Useful to note the completion of a task but when assignment of a rating scale is not necessary

Analytic Rubrics

- Analytic rubrics employ rating scales to provide specific feedback along several dimensions
 - Assignments/artifacts can be broken down into separate components (e.g., description, analysis, grammar, references, etc.)
 - Scales can include terms (e.g., novice, intermediate, and proficient) or specific point values (0, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Holistic Rubrics

- Holistic rubrics provide overall evaluation guidelines that clarify how assessments relate to performance achievement
 - There is one overall score instead of discrete dimensions

Holistic Rubric: Generic Example (Reading)

Points	Description
2	The response indicates that the student has a complete understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate, complete, and fills all the requirements of the task. Necessary support and/or examples are included, and the information is clearly text-based.
1	The response indicates that the student has a partial understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that includes information that is essentially correct and text-based, but the information is too general or too simplistic. Some of the support and/or examples and requirements of the task may be incomplete or imbedded.
0	The response is inaccurate, confused, and/or irrelevant, or the student has failed to respond to the task.

Holistic Rubric: MDC Example (Math)

	Description
Emerging 1	Cannot identify data necessary to solve the problem
Developing 2	Can identify data necessary to solve problem, but analyzes data incorrectly
Proficient 3	Identifies applicable data, and analyzes data correctly, but does not justify results
Exemplary 4	Identifies applicable data, analyzes data correctly, and justifies results

Points to Ponder

1. The perfect data fallacy
 - Measurement in higher education is imprecise
2. Assessment is messy
3. Resistance to change
 - Individual and organizational inertia

Rules for the Upcoming Exercises

1. Each team must report only one score per artifact (i.e., as a team, you **must** agree on a single score)
2. The score you report must be a whole number—no decimals, no fractions
