



Rubric Roundtable

CUW Assessment Committee

2023-24

Rubrics – What are the benefits?

- ❖ **Clarity and Transparency:** Rubrics provide clear and explicit criteria for assessment, outlining exactly what is expected of students or participants. This transparency helps both educators and learners understand the **standards of performance** and **the expectations for achieving different levels of proficiency**.
- ❖ **Consistency and Fairness:** Rubrics promote consistency in assessment by ensuring that all students are evaluated using the same criteria. This **reduces subjective bias and ensures fairness in grading or evaluation processes**, as each student is judged against the same standards.

A person wearing a white lab coat is pointing their right index finger towards the right side of the frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a computer screen or a similar device.

However...

Most of us have rubrics that just aren't working for us!

Rubrics – What are the benefits?

- ❖ **Feedback and Improvement:** Rubrics facilitate constructive feedback by providing specific areas for improvement. Students receive **detailed feedback on their performance relative to each criterion**, allowing them to identify strengths and weaknesses and take **targeted actions for improvement**.
- ❖ **Support for Learning Objectives:** Rubrics can be designed to align with specific learning objectives or standards, ensuring that assessment tasks are directly linked to desired learning outcomes. This alignment **helps instructors assess whether students have achieved the intended learning goals**.

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Rubrics – What are the benefits?

- ❖ **Efficiency in Assessment:** Rubrics streamline the assessment process by providing a structured framework for evaluation. Educators can efficiently evaluate student work by **referring to the predetermined criteria and descriptors**, saving time compared to more subjective assessment methods.
- ❖ **Promotion of Self-Assessment and Reflection:** Rubrics empower students to engage in self-assessment and reflection. By comparing their work against the rubric criteria, **students can assess their progress and identify areas for growth**, fostering a sense of responsibility for their learning.

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Rubrics – What are the benefits?

- ❖ **Support for Differentiation and Individualized Learning:** Rubrics can be adapted to accommodate different levels of proficiency or diverse learning styles. They allow for differentiation in assessment, **enabling educators to provide targeted support and feedback to meet the unique needs of each student.**

Overall, the use of rubrics enhances the **effectiveness, fairness, and efficiency of assessment practices, ultimately promoting student learning and achievement.**

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Objectives for Rubric Development

Goals for learning today include:

Understanding the Purpose and Components of Rubrics: Participants will be able to comprehend the purpose of rubrics in assessing student performance or project outcomes. They will gain insights into the various components of a rubric, such as criteria, descriptors, and levels of proficiency.

Designing Effective Rubrics: Participants will learn strategies to design clear, specific, and measurable criteria for assessing performance or outcomes. They will understand how to align rubric criteria with learning objectives and standards, ensuring fairness and reliability in assessment.

Practical Application and Evaluation: Participants will engage in hands-on activities to practice developing rubrics for different assessment tasks or projects relevant to their fields or disciplines. They will receive feedback on their rubric designs and learn strategies for evaluating and refining rubrics based on usability and effectiveness.

Objectives for Rubric Development

What would a rubric look like for these objectives?

Criteria	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement
Understanding the Purpose and Components of Rubrics	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose of rubrics and effectively identifies and explains the key components such as criteria, descriptors, and levels of proficiency.	Shows some understanding of the purpose and components of rubrics but lacks depth or clarity in explanation.	Demonstrates limited understanding of the purpose and components of rubrics; unable to clearly identify or explain key components.
Designing Effective Rubrics	Designs a rubric that is clear, specific, and aligned with learning objectives or standards. Criteria are well-defined, measurable, and effectively support the assessment of performance or outcomes.	Designs a rubric with some clarity, but may lack specificity or alignment with learning objectives or standards. Criteria may be somewhat vague or inconsistently defined.	Rubric design lacks clarity, specificity, and alignment with learning objectives or standards. Criteria are unclear, vague, or not effectively supportive of assessment.
Practical Application and Evaluation	Successfully applies rubric development concepts in hands-on activities, demonstrating the ability to create rubrics for various assessment tasks or projects and effectively evaluate and refine them based on usability and effectiveness.	Participates in hands-on activities but demonstrates limited ability to apply rubric development concepts effectively or evaluate and refine rubrics.	Struggles to apply rubric development concepts in hands-on activities and demonstrates limited ability to evaluate and refine rubrics based on usability and effectiveness.

Objectives for Rubric Development

Adding point values to the rubric

Criteria			
Understanding Rubric Purpose and Components	Excellent (10 points): Clearly articulates the purpose of rubrics, identifies all key components accurately (criteria, descriptors, levels).	Proficient (5 points): Demonstrates a basic understanding of rubric purpose and components, with some minor inaccuracies or omissions.	Needs Improvement (1 point): Shows limited understanding of rubric purpose and components, with significant inaccuracies or confusion.
Designing Effective Rubrics	Excellent (10 points): Develops clear, specific, and measurable criteria aligned with learning objectives and standards.	Proficient (5 points): Creates criteria that are somewhat clear and aligned but may lack specificity or clarity in measurement.	Needs Improvement (1 point): Criteria are unclear, not aligned with objectives, or lack measurability and specificity.
Practical Application and Evaluation	Excellent (10 points): Successfully applies rubric design principles to create effective rubrics, actively participates in hands-on activities, and effectively evaluates and refines rubrics based on feedback.	Proficient (5 points): Engages in workshop activities but may require some guidance or refinement in rubric design and evaluation.	Needs Improvement (1 point): Demonstrates limited engagement in workshop activities, struggles to apply rubric design principles, or shows resistance to feedback and refinement.

Objectives for Rubric Development

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Practical Application and Evaluation	Excellent (10 points): Successfully applies rubric design principles to create effective rubrics, actively participates in hands-on activities, and effectively evaluates and refines rubrics based on feedback.	Proficient (5 points): Engages in workshop activities but may require some guidance or refinement in rubric design and evaluation.	Needs Improvement (1 point): Demonstrates limited engagement in workshop activities, struggles to apply rubric design principles, or shows resistance to feedback and refinement.

Looking at the criteria what would you consider “passing” – what would the point value be for this?

Example:

- 3 Proficient = Passing (15 points)
- 2 Proficient + 1 Needs Improvement (11 points)



Converting Rubrics to "Grades"

Grading Scale

100-90% = A

89-80% = B

79-70% = C

69-60% = D

59-0% = F

Total Points = 30 pts

30-27 = A

26-24 = B

23-21 = C

20-18 = D

17 = F

15 points = all proficient, however when converted to percentage this would equate to a D.



Potential Dangers of Conversion from Rubric to “Grade”

- **Loss of Nuance:** Rubrics typically provide detailed descriptions of performance levels across multiple criteria. Converting these nuanced assessments into a single percentage grade **may oversimplify the evaluation, losing important distinctions between different aspects of performance.**
- **Subjectivity and Bias:** Converting a rubric to a percentage grade can increase the risk of subjective judgment and bias, especially if the **conversion process is not transparent or standardized.** Different assessors may interpret the rubric criteria differently, leading to inconsistencies in grading.
- **Inaccuracy in Assessment:** Rubrics often assess multiple dimensions of performance, each with its own set of criteria. **Converting these criteria into a single percentage grade may not accurately reflect the overall quality of work,** as it may fail to account for strengths and weaknesses across different dimensions.
- **Miscommunication of Expectations:** Using a percentage grade derived from a rubric **may not effectively communicate expectations to students.** Without clear feedback on specific areas of strength and improvement, **students may struggle to understand how to enhance their performance in future assignments.**
- **Focus on Quantitative Over Qualitative Assessment:** Converting rubric criteria to a percentage grade may prioritize quantitative assessment metrics over qualitative feedback on learning outcomes and skill development. **This focus on grades alone may detract from the educational value of the assessment process.**



Identifying issues

How can you tell your rubric isn't working for you?

Is it making grading easier or harder?

- Every student has skewed grades (on assignment)- up or down
- It isn't capturing what you'd like it to
- It isn't separating high & low quality work
- It isn't helping you provide sound feedback

Evaluating Your Rubric

1. Outcome: Does the rubric relate to the outcome(s) being measured?
2. Criteria: Does it cover important criteria for student performance (content over format!)?
3. Quality: Does the top end of the rubric reflect excellence? Are the categories (of quality work) distinct & clearly defined?
4. Definition: Are the criteria & scales clearly defined? Is it clear what the scale for each criterion measures and how levels differ from one another? Has it been tested? Is the basis for assigning scores at each point clear? Points vs. Percentages.
5. Can the rubric be applied consistently by different scorers? Is it reliable?
6. *If* used for program assessment, can scores be converted easily to the Concordia Common Scale?

(DePaul University, Center for Teaching & Learning)

Additional Resources

Books:

1. **"Creating and Recognizing Quality Rubrics"** by Judith A. Arter and Jan Chappuis: This book provides comprehensive guidance on designing, implementing, and assessing the effectiveness of rubrics across various educational contexts.
2. **"Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education"** by Barbara E. Walvoord: This resource offers practical strategies for creating effective rubrics and integrating them into assessment practices to improve student learning outcomes.
3. **"Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessing and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom"**: This book explores the principles of fair assessment and grading in the context of differentiated instruction. Rick Wormeli discusses strategies for designing assessments that accurately reflect student learning and mastery of content.

Online Courses:

1. Coursera offers courses such as "Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills" and "Foundations of Teaching for Learning: Introduction to Student Assessment" that cover topics related to rubric development and assessment strategies.
2. The Teaching Channel provides online videos and resources specifically focused on rubric development and implementation in the classroom.

Additional Resources

Professional Journals and Articles:

1. **"Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education"**: This peer-reviewed journal publishes research articles, case studies, and theoretical perspectives on assessment practices, including the use of rubrics.
2. **"Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice"**: This journal often features articles and studies related to assessment and evaluation methodologies, including the development and validation of rubrics.

Educational Websites and Organizations:

1. **The Association for Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE)** offers resources, webinars, and conferences focused on assessment practices, including rubric development and implementation.
2. **The Teaching Commons** by Georgetown University provides resources and guides on effective teaching practices, including rubric design and assessment strategies.



Thank You

Assessment Committee



email ?

