



FACULTY WORKSHOPS

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Boxed In

Identifying Attributes and Accounting for Process in Writing-Related Rubrics

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Preface and Caveat Emptor

- Rubric development takes quite a bit of iteration and subject matter expertise to develop well, align with the assignment, course and program outcomes, and implement in the classroom.
- Please feel free to reach out with questions in the application of the information in the slides.
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Workshop Objectives

- To create opportunities for discussion and guided practice that enable attendees to revise existing or develop new writing-related rubrics.
- Workshop Approach:
 - We'll discuss a topic, then you'll apply it to your circumstance.
- Topics/Organization:
 - General Rubric: Setup, Types, Process
 - Writing Related Rubric Challenges
 - Writing Genres and Scaffolded and Sequenced Assignments
 - Identifying Attributes to Establish the Ideal
 - Clustering and Differentiation
 - Scaling Down
 - Develop a draft rubric over the course of the workshop

General Rubric: Purpose

- To aid in the evaluation process by ensuring attributes align with
 - the assignment
 - learning objectives and outcomes
- Identify and weight key attributes for evaluation
- Establish the basis for interrater reliability and grade norming
- Make evaluation more efficient (sometimes)

General Rubric: Types 1

- There are several types of rubrics that serve different purposes
 - Analytic or atomistic
 - Holistic
 - Developmental
 - Single-Point
 - Checklists

General Rubric: Types 2

Holistic

- Excellent
 - The submitted paper includes a thesis statement, exemplary logic, and clarity of writing.
- Meets Standard
 - The submitted paper provides a thesis statement, is generally logical, and the writing is clear.
- Does Not Meet Standard
 - The submitted paper may or may not have a thesis statement, if so the thesis is weak. There is no discernible logic. The writing is hard to follow and unclear due to errors.

Analytic

- Logic of Analysis 20%
 - Excellent: Balanced presentation of relevant and legitimate information that clearly supports a central purpose or argument and show a thoughtful, in-depth analysis of a significant topic. Student employs persuasive reasoning.
 - Meets Standard: Information provides reasonable support for the thesis and displays evidence of a basic analysis of a significant topic. Reader gains some insights.
 - Does Not Meet Standard: Information supports a central purpose or argument at times. Analysis is basic or general. Reader gains few insights. Or, logic supporting the thesis is not clearly identified. Analysis is vague or not evident. Reader is left confused or uncertain.
- Thesis Statement 10%
 - Excellent: Thesis is clear and well defined. It makes a significant and compelling position.
 - Meets Standard: Thesis clearly states the position. Some terms may not have been defined.
 - Does Not Meet Standard: Thesis states a general position but does not make a specific case. Or, thesis is vague or unclear. Key terms are not defined.

Which type of rubric is required for Outcomes Based Education? Why?

General Rubric: Pre-made Rubrics 1

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Framing Language

This writing rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of educational institutions. The most clear finding to emerge from decades of research on writing assessment is that the best writing assessments are locally determined and sensitive to local context and mission. Users of this rubric should, in the end, consider making adaptations and additions that clearly link the language of the rubric to individual campus contexts.

This rubric focuses assessment on how specific written work samples or collections of work respond to specific contexts. The central question guiding the rubric is "How well does writing respond to the needs of audience(s) for the work?" In focusing on this question the rubric does not attend to other aspects of writing that are equally important: issues of writing process, writing strategies, writers' fluency with different modes of textual production or publication, or writer's growing engagement with writing and disciplinarity through the process of writing.

Evaluators using this rubric must have information about the assignments or purposes for writing guiding writers' work. Also recommended is including reflective work samples of collections of work that address such questions as: What decisions did the writer make about audience, purpose, and genre as s/he compiled the work in the portfolio? How are those choices evident in the writing – in the content, organization and structure, reasoning, evidence, mechanical and surface conventions, and citational systems used in the writing? This will enable evaluators to have a clear sense of how writers understand the assignments and take it into consideration as they evaluate.

The first section of this rubric addresses the context and purpose for writing. A work sample or collections of work can convey the context and purpose for the writing tasks it showcases by including the writing assignments associated with work samples. But writers may also convey the context and purpose for their writing within the texts. It is important for faculty and institutions to include directions for students about how they should represent their writing contexts and purposes.

Faculty interested in the research on writing assessment that has guided our work here can consult the National Council of Teachers of English/ Council of Writing Program Administrators' White Paper on Writing Assessment (2008; www.pacouncil.org/whitepaper) and the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2008; www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123784.htm).

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- **Content Development:** The ways in which the text explores and represents its topic in relation to its audience and purpose.
- **Context of and purpose for writing:** The context of writing is the situation surrounding a text: who is reading it? who is writing it? Under what circumstances will the text be shared or circulated? What social or political factors might affect how the text is composed or interpreted? The purpose for writing is the writer's intended effect on an audience. Writers might want to persuade or inform; they might want to report or summarize information; they might want to work through complexity or confusion; they might want to argue with other writers, or connect with other writers; they might want to convey urgency or amuse; they might write for themselves or for an assignment or to remember.
- **Disciplinary conventions:** Formal and informal rules that constitute what is seen generally as appropriate within different academic fields, e.g. introductory strategies, use of passive voice or first person point of view, expectations for thesis or hypothesis, expectations for kinds of evidence and support that are appropriate to the task at hand, use of primary and secondary sources to provide evidence and support arguments and to document critical perspectives on the topic. Writers will incorporate sources according to disciplinary and genre conventions, according to the writer's purpose for the text. Through increasingly sophisticated use of sources, writers develop an ability to differentiate between their own ideas and the ideas of others, credit and build upon work already accomplished in the field or issue they are addressing, and provide meaningful examples to readers.
- **Evidence:** Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, writers' ideas in a text.
- **Genre conventions:** Formal and informal rules for particular kinds of texts and/or media that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices, e.g. lab reports, academic papers, poetry, webpages, or personal essays.
- **Sources:** Texts (written, oral, behavioral, visual, or other) that writers draw on as they work for a variety of purposes – to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

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Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
	monstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and uses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

General Rubric: Pre-made Rubrics 2

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

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Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
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Writing-Related Rubrics: Challenges

- Process and Genre

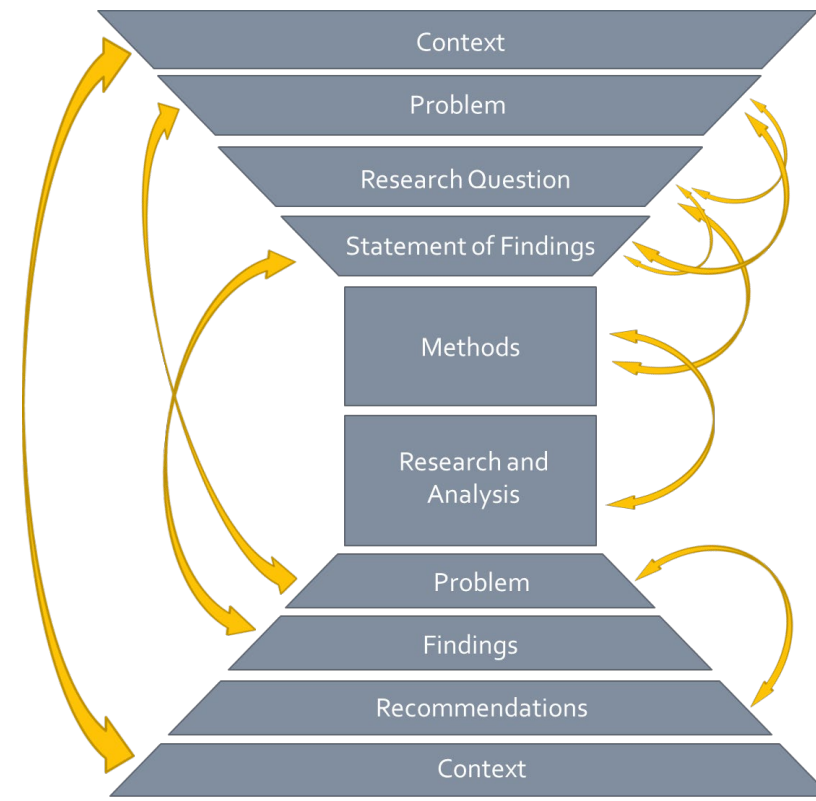
- Most graduate-level work employs assignments that are sequenced, scaffolded, or both
- Genres and genre sets are typified forms of written texts that conform to or meet the needs of activity systems.

- Professional, aka multi-disciplinary, aka multi-content areas

- Cogency

- Coherence

- Quantity of grading criteria
- Double-indemnity



Writing-Related Rubrics: Overview of Steps

- Setup the rubric matrix
- Identify the genre and defining genre attributes
- Understand how the genre fits into the broader process, assignments, and milestones/deliverables
- Use the defining genre attributes to describe the ideal submission
- Scale downwards based on the ideal description for each attribute

Rubric Development: Setup

Attribute	Scale Range A+ 100-95	Scale Range A-A- 94-90	Scale Range B+-B 89-85	Scale Range ...	Percentage	Weighted Average
Thesis					15	
Organization					20	
Logic					30	
Uses of Sources					20	
Grammar					15	

Rubric Development: Writing Genres and Process 1

- Understand the big picture, genres, progression/process
 - What are the features/attributes of each genre document?
 - What features/attributes are unique and which persist throughout the process?
 - Sometimes it is easier to see the unique by comparing the preceding and following documents.
- To answer those two questions, we need to understand professional writing circumstances and consider specific genre conventions

Rubric Development: Writing Genre and Process 2

White Papers

- Executive Summary
- Purpose/Problem Statement
- Methods (maybe)
- Analysis
 - Lesson
 - Support/Evidence
 - Value
- Conclusion

Master's Thesis

- Introduction
 - Problem Statement
 - Research Question
 - Findings
- Methods
- Research/Analysis
- Discussion
 - Problem Statement
 - Findings
 - Synthesis
 - Recommendation(s)

What genre are you building a rubric around today?
What are the key attributes of that genre?

Rubric Development: Writing Genres and Process 3

- Executive and Staff Writing Genres
Process of Development
- Notice the importance of sequence

Memorandums

- Action
- Decision
- Information
 - Commander's Guidance

Papers

- Position
- Information
- White
- Executive Summary

Event/Meeting

- Read Aheads
- Talking Points

Comment & Response



Rubric Development: Writing Genres and Process 4

- Master's Thesis Research, Writing, and Analysis Process
- Notice the scaffolding



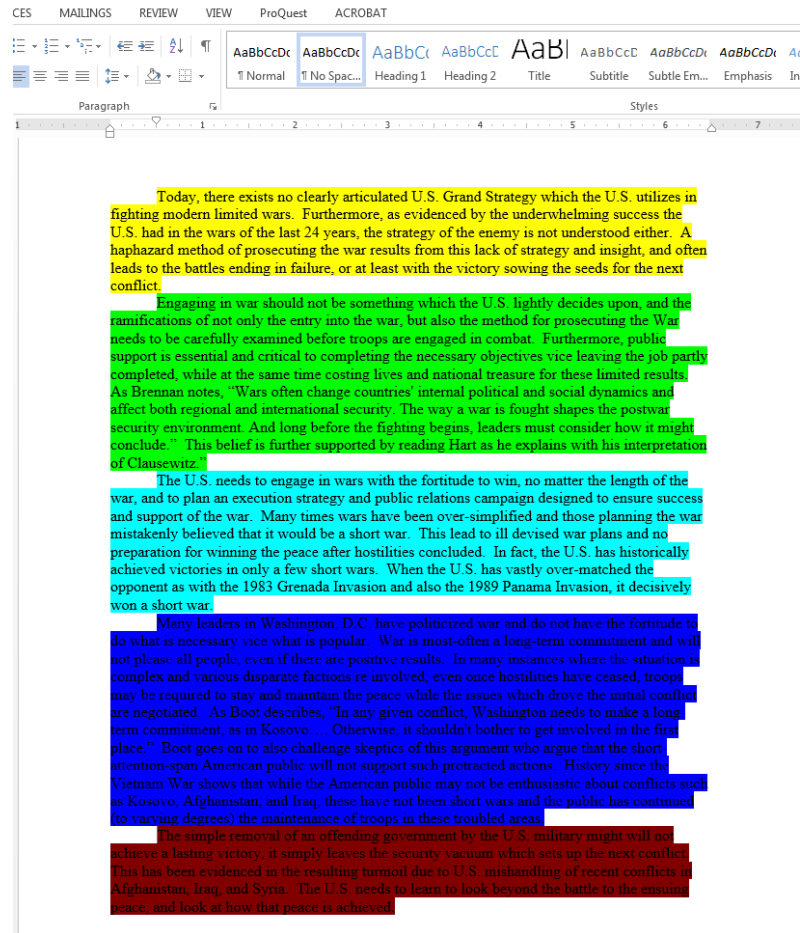
How does your genre fit into broader genre processes, aka What are the types of documents that precede it and follow it?

Rubric Development: Writing Genres and Process Exercise

- Identify a writing assignment and answer these broad questions:
 - What genre does the assignment require students to complete?
 - What are the genre's defining attributes?
 - Does this assignment have subsequent or prior assignments it will build on or build from?
 - Do the attributes persist, not persist, or transform, how so?

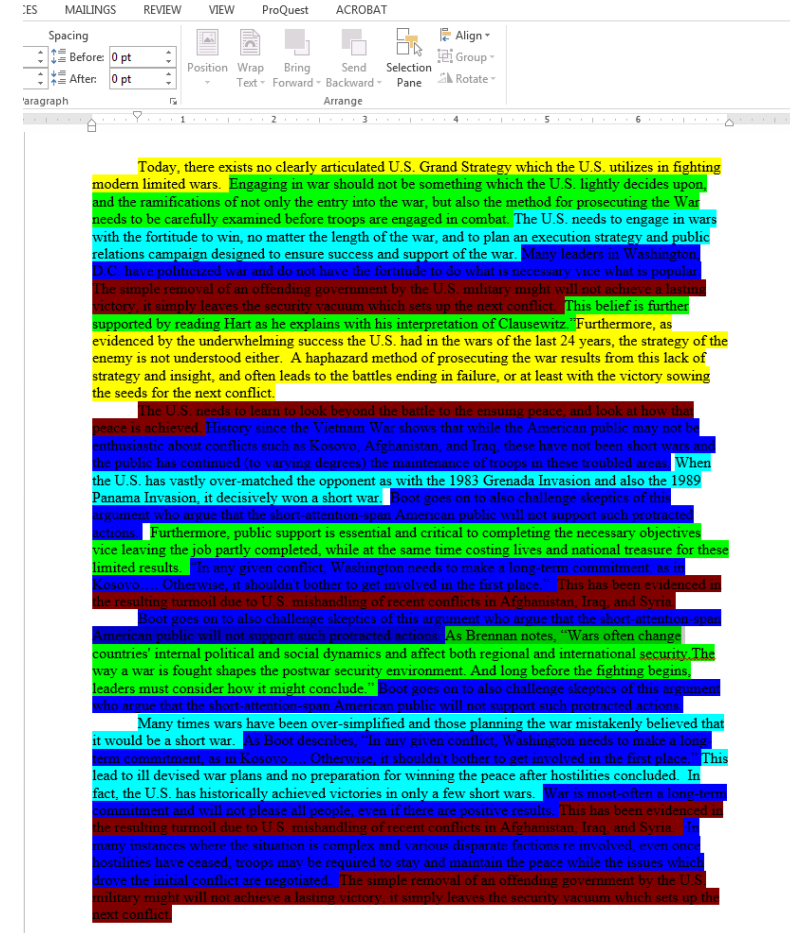
Rubric Development: Measurable and Observable Attributes, Literature Review

Serial Integration



Source A
Source B
Source C
Original
Topic X

Series Integration



What is the measurable and observable attribute of the "good" literature review on the right compared to the "weak" literature review on the left?

Rubric Development: Measurable and Observable Attributes, Clustering

- Literature Review
 - Organization and Development
 - The contents of the literature review are organized to identify essential areas of disagreement, agreement, dissonance, contradiction, or other basis for the research that will enable the researcher to accurately frame context, provide background, and conduct deep and nuanced analysis.
 - Citations and Source Quality
 - Provides compelling, reliable, and accurate sources and information throughout the paper with high quality sources and significant depth, often using multiple sources, to overwhelmingly substantiate the research.
 - Attribution is clear and objective.
 - Writing
 - The quality of the writing suggests a high level of immersion and familiarization with the features of the discourse community, posing few if any mechanical or grammatical errors that interrupted reading.
 - Appropriateness to Problem and Research Questions (as outlined in the Proposal)
 - Focus of the literature review elements have clear connection and further frame the research problem and provide foundational material for conducting analysis that will answer the research question.

How are the attributes clustered in this example?

Rubric Development: Measurable and Observable Attributes, Differentiation

<p>Formatting, Grammar, Spelling, Writing, and Mechanics</p> <p>10%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Formatted the work in the thesis template, using the appropriate conventions- Writer demonstrates fluency with the terms of the field by correct usage and incorporation.- Writing is error-free. No spelling and/or grammar mistakes.- Footnotes and bibliographic entries are entered correctly and consistently.	<p>Use of Sources</p> <p>25%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provides compelling, reliable, and accurate sources and information throughout the paper with high quality sources and significant depth, often using multiple sources, to overwhelmingly substantiate the research.- Attribution is clear and objective.
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How does clustering lead to differentiation between attributes?

Rubric Development: Measurable and Observable Attributes, Exercise

- Consider the defining attributes of the genre you identified in the previous exercise.
- Develop descriptions for those attributes based on the ideal?
 - What are the measurable and observable attributes of the ideal paper? Describe them.
- Look at the attributes broadly, cluster and re-label where possible.
 - Does the new cluster clearly differentiate observable and measurable attributes?
 - Is their double-indemnity because of a lack of differentiation?

Rubric Development: Scaling to Lower-levels of Achievement

- Preparation

- Institutional Scale

- 3 column, 4 column, 5 column?
 - Ranges, e.g. 100-95, 94-90, 89-85, etc.?

- Process for Scaling to Lower-levels of Achievement

- Work from the ideal example, the A+/99% work
 - Go to the range below the ideal:
 - What is not happening that prevented the work from being a great?
 - The work tends to go from superlative to neutral to negative (missing attributes)
 - The language is relative, so you may get one column done, then realize it needs to be changed after starting the column to the right of it
 - Sometimes, the sub-attributes need to be broken, i.e. at one level one piece will be present, but at a lower-level a different piece will be missing or present

Rubric Development: Scaling to Lower-levels of Achievement, Example

Exceeds Expectations (Ideal)

Organization and Development

The contents of the literature review are organized to identify the essential areas of disagreement, agreement, dissonance, contradiction, or other basis for the research that will enable the researcher to conduct deep and nuanced analysis or provide deep background.

Meets Expectations

Organization and Development

The contents of the literature review are organized and most areas of disagreement, agreement, dissonance, contradiction, or other basis for the research that will enable the researcher to conduct nuanced analysis or provide background.

Below Expectations

Organization and Development

The contents of the literature review are disorganized, making it difficult to identify areas of disagreement, agreement, dissonance, contradiction, or other basis which will make it difficult for the researcher to conduct sufficient analysis or provide sufficient background.

What differentiates each level of achievement within the scale?

How do the Meets and Below derive from the Exceeds?

How does the language account for process?

Rubric Development: Scaling to Lower-levels of Achievement Exercise

- Work left to right, scale the attribute description from the ideal to the lower levels of achievement.

Closing Discussion and Questions

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