




Introduction to Rubrics

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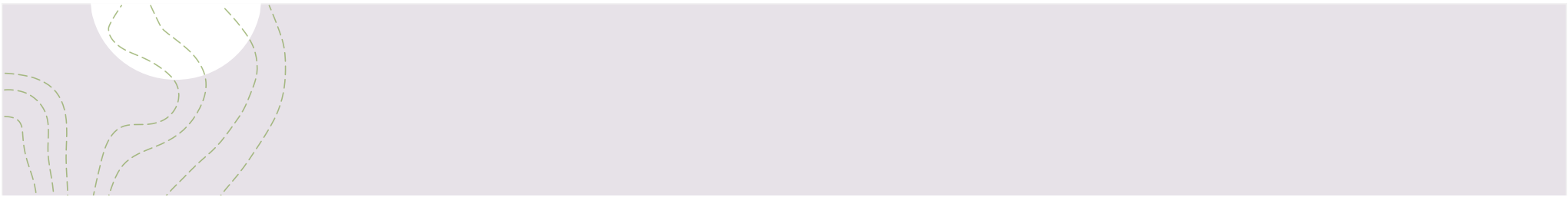
What is a rubric?

- + A guide that articulates the expectations for an assignment and communicates the level of quality
- + A tool that measures performance or learning
- + Rubrics are typically used to score student performance on defined criteria and levels of quality, or intellectual or skill development
- + Rubrics can be simple or complex; qualitative or quantitative

Two main types

- + **Analytic Rubric:** Specifies at least two characteristics to be assessed at each performance level and provides a separate score for each characteristic
 - + Use it for: identifying particular strengths and areas for improvement; detailed formative feedback
- + **Holistic Rubric:** Provides a single score based on an overall impression of a student's performance on a task
 - + Use it when: a single dimension is adequate; short assignment; quick or summative feedback

	Expert	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Articulation of Problem, Purpose, or Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Question, hypothesis, or position is articulated and defended in the context of the problem or purpose; and/or <input type="checkbox"/> A central purpose, focus, or essence of the work or performance is highly evident	<input type="checkbox"/> Question, hypothesis, or position is stated clearly and context of the problem or purpose is apparent; and/or <input type="checkbox"/> A central purpose, focus, or essence of the work or performance is evident	<input type="checkbox"/> Question, hypothesis, or position is stated clearly; and/or <input type="checkbox"/> A purpose or focus of the work can be determined	<input type="checkbox"/> Question, hypothesis, position, purpose, or focus is not visible or stated clearly
Scholarly Context	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensively places problem/question in appropriate scholarly context (scholarly literature, theory, model, or genre)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficiently places problem/question in appropriate scholarly context (scholarly literature, theory, model, or genre)	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially places problem/question in scholarly context; some critical elements are missing, incorrectly developed, or unfocused	<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarly context for the problem/question may be apparent but is not sufficiently demonstrated
Application of Scholarly Method/Technique to Project Design	<input type="checkbox"/> Method/technique is appropriate for question or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Data/sources/evidence are expertly presented <input type="checkbox"/> All elements of method/technique are fully developed and articulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Method/technique is appropriate for question or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Data/sources/evidence are adequately presented <input type="checkbox"/> Critical elements of method/technique are adequately developed; subtle elements are unclear or missing	<input type="checkbox"/> Method/technique loosely supports the question or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Data/sources/evidence are partially presented <input type="checkbox"/> Critical elements of method/technique are partially developed	<input type="checkbox"/> Method/technique is not appropriate for question or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Data/sources/evidence are minimally or not presented <input type="checkbox"/> Critical elements of method/technique are minimally developed
Analysis or Interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence supports a mature, complex, and/or nuanced analysis of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation is explicitly linked to theoretical framework or scholarly model	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence supports an adequately complex analysis of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation is adequately linked to theoretical framework or scholarly model	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence supports a limited analysis of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation is partially linked to theoretical framework or scholarly model	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence supports very limited analysis of the problem <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation is minimally linked to theoretical framework or scholarly model
Implications/Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Implications, consequences, and/or questions raised by the project are thoroughly explored <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations are fully articulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Implications, consequences, and/or questions are adequately explored <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations are adequately articulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Implications, consequences, and/or questions are partially explored <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations are partially articulated	<input type="checkbox"/> Implications, consequences, and/or questions are minimally supported or unarticulated <input type="checkbox"/> Limitations are minimally or not articulated
Quality of Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation or performance is of superior quality <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery is free of technical errors	<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation or performance is of high quality <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery has few technical errors	<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation or performance is of acceptable quality <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery has some technical errors	<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation or performance is of low quality <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery has frequent technical errors



Holistic rating: *Please rate the overall presentation or performance using the following criteria as a guide.*

☐ **Expert**

Use appropriate evidence, presentation modes and/or argument strategies to skillfully communicate meaning to a specified audience; communicate with clarity and fluency and in a virtually error-free presentation.

☐ **Proficient**

Use mostly appropriate evidence, presentation modes, and/or argument strategies to communicate meaning to a specified audience; design a presentation that is clear and has few errors.

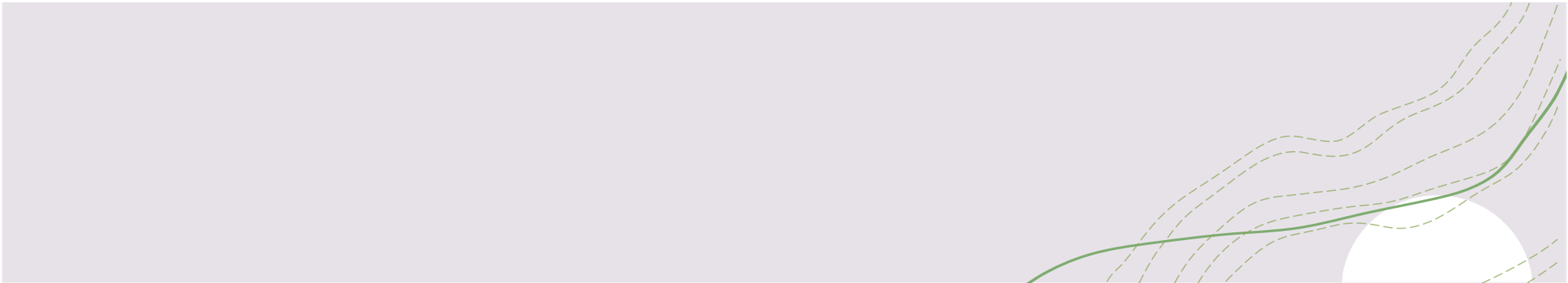
☐ **Emerging**

Use some appropriate evidence, presentation modes, and/or argument strategies to communicate meaning to a specified audience; design a presentation with limited clarity and/or some errors.

☐ **Novice**

Use approaches or include errors that limit or obscure relevance and impede understanding.

Reviewer Comments:



Why use rubrics?

- + **Communication:** A rubric creates a common framework and clear expectations
- + **Consistency and Fairness:** Same criteria and standards across students and reviewers/graders
- + **Transparency:** Progress and grades are clear, reduces mystery
- + **Faster Assessment:** Assessment and evaluation can be done more efficiently
- + **Identify Strengths and Weaknesses:** Shows where students are doing well and where they need more support (Is it a 'B' paper all the way through?)
- + **Objective Criteria:** Rubrics are criterion-referenced, rather than norm-referenced. Raters ask, "Did the student meet the criteria for level 5 of the rubric?" rather than "How well did this student do compared to other students?"

When to use rubrics?

- + Assignments for which there is more than one answer
- + Formative or summative assessment
 - + *When the cook tastes the soup, that's formative; when the guests eat the soup, that's summative. -Robert Stake*
- + Process or product/performance
- + Peer review
- + Self-assessment and improvement—promotes higher order thinking and communication with instructor



Creating a Rubric

In its simplest form, a rubric includes five things

The Essentials

1. A task description
2. The outcomes or dimensions to be rated—rows
3. Levels of performance/scale—columns
4. A description of each characteristic at each level of performance/scale—cells
5. A scoring strategy

*See *Best Practices for Creating and Using Rubrics* for more detail

Task Description

+ *This rubric is designed to evaluate the product of an undergraduate research or creative project. Products may include written documents, poster presentations, oral presentations or performances, artistic expressions, and interviews.*

*FROM GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS PRODUCT RUBRIC

Analytic Rubric

	Scale level 1	Scale level 2	Scale level 3
Dimension 1			
Dimension 2			
Dimension 3			
Dimension 4			

Dimension can be about the product or performance (e.g. use of evidence to make an argument, use of examples, organization of ideas) or it can be about process (e.g. Teamwork, proper protocols)

Scale/Level of Performance describes how well the task is performed. Might include: Exemplary, proficient, needs work; Complete, partial, none; Letter grades

Dimensions/Outcomes

Articulation of Problem, Purpose, or Focus				
Scholarly Context				
Application of Scholarly Method/Technique to Project Design				
Analysis or Interpretation				

Scale/Levels of Performance

	Expert	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Articulation of Problem, Purpose, or Focus				
Scholarly Context				
Application of Scholarly Method/Technique to Project Design				
Analysis or Interpretation				

Description at each level

	Expert	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Scholarly Context*	Comprehensively places problem/question in appropriate scholarly context (using scholarly literature, theory, model, or genre)	Sufficiently places problem/question in appropriate scholarly context (using scholarly literature, theory, model, or genre)	Partially places problem/question in scholarly context; some critical elements are missing, incorrectly developed, or unfocused	Scholarly context for the problem/question may be apparent but is not sufficiently demonstrated

*FROM GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS PRODUCT RUBRIC

A Few Good Resources

- + Selke, M. J. G. (2013). *Rubric assessment goes to college: Objective, comprehensive evaluation of student work*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- + Stevens, D. D., & Levi, A. J. (2013). *Introduction to rubrics: An assessment tool to save grading time, convey effective feedback, and promote student learning* (second edition). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- + <https://dept.writing.wisc.edu/wac/resources-for-instructors/>
(section on Responding, Evaluating, Grading)

Expanding our use of rubrics

- + Rubrics can be used as an instructional guide **instead of** or **in addition to** use for grading
- + Rubrics can be used to assess learning and performance over time, such as in a portfolio
- + Rubrics can be used to assess learning across sections of the same course or across courses
- + Rubrics can be used to guide decisions about programs, curriculum, and program assessment tools