



Rubrics: A Tool to Assess Student Learning

Within the past decade, practitioners in higher education have been asked to demonstrate what students are learning as a result of participating in various programs, such as leadership education, multicultural workshops, and student activities. Typically, the response has been to distribute an electronic survey or ask students to self-report what they have learned as a result of their involvement. While electronic surveys seem easy to create and distribute, students may provide what they perceive to be the most socially desirable response or delete the email request for participation due to survey fatigue. A more comprehensive way to assess student learning in addition to giving students feedback on their performance is to create a rubric.

What is a Rubric?

A rubric is a scoring guide that describes the learning outcomes for an activity along with descriptions of what is considered acceptable and unacceptable performance levels for each of the learning outcomes (Stevens & Levi, 2013). If you've developed a learning outcome for your program or activity, you can take the learning outcome and develop it into a scoring rubric. For example, here is a format for constructing a rubric:

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Developing	Beginning
Dimension 1				
Dimension 2				
Dimension 3				

Source: Stevens, D.D. & Levi, A.J. (2013). *Introduction to Rubrics, 2nd ed.* Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Along the rows for the dimension, you can place the particular item that you want to assess, such as team work skills, presentation skills, etc. By collaborating with other practitioners and colleagues in your office, you can determine how to describe what exemplary team work skills look like, what accomplished skills look like, and so on.



Benefits of a Rubric

Stevens and Levi (2013) provide six key reasons for using rubrics, which include:

- Rubrics provide timely feedback;
- Rubrics prepare students to use detailed feedback;
- Rubrics encourage critical thinking;
- Rubrics facilitate communication with others;
- Rubrics encourage us to refine our teaching methods;
- Rubrics level the playing field (p. 28).

Websites with Examples and Resources:

There are several websites in student affairs that contain resources on assessment or examples of rubrics that you can review. A few of these resources are listed below:

<http://www.myacpa.org/professional-competencies>

<http://studentaffairsassessment.org/assessment-resources>

http://www.ndsu.edu/vpsa/assessment/resources_for_assessment/rubrics/

<http://www.d.umn.edu/vcaa/assessment/rubrics.html>



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Assessment Resources

To view assessment reading and training materials, go to our webpage at:

<http://castle.eiu.edu/sa-assessment/resources.php>

If you need help on an assessment project, please contact us at:

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