# Using VALUE Rubrics to Assess *Almost* any Program Outcome

## Let's Get it Started

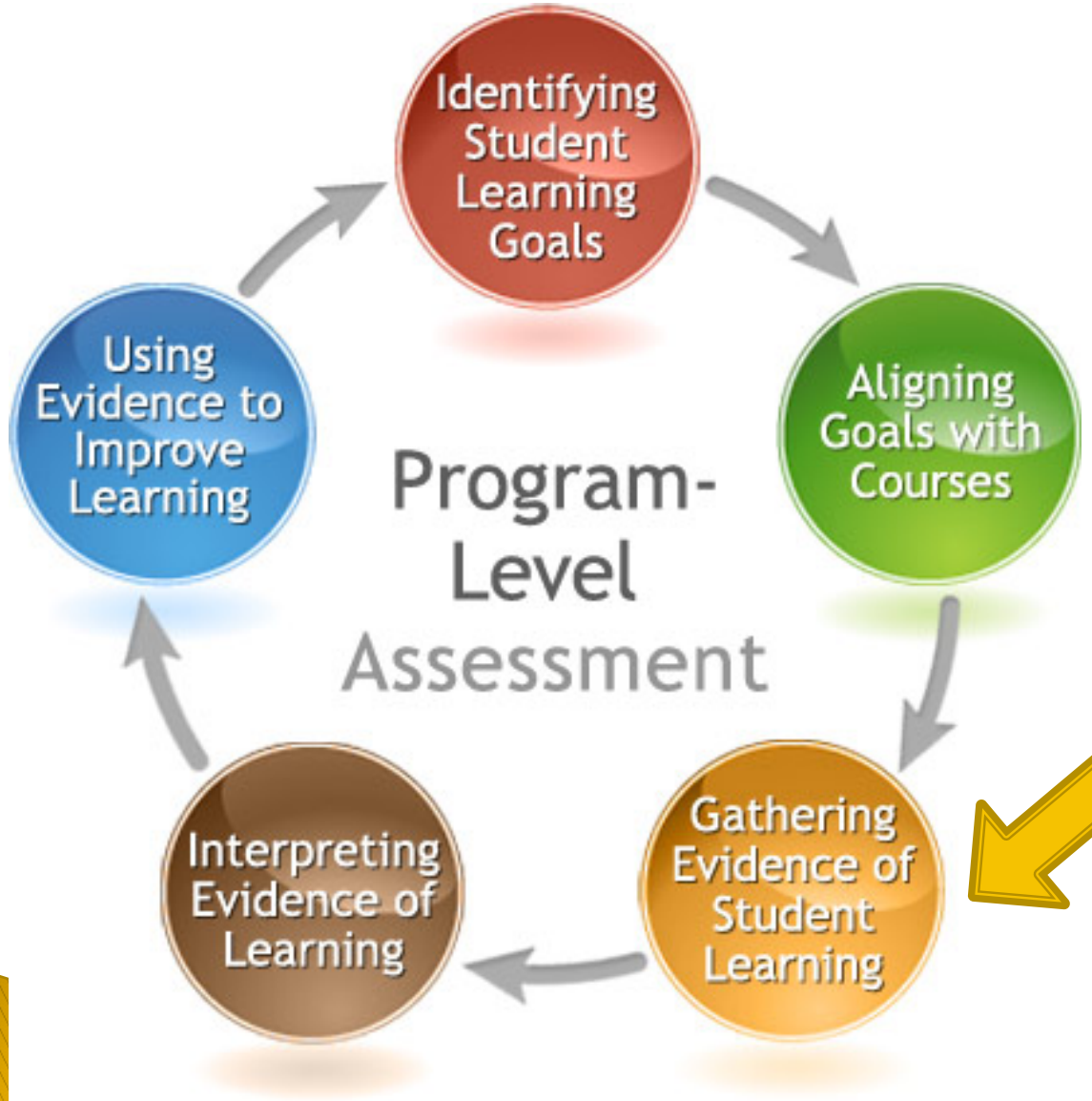
**Fall 2020 Assessment Workshops**

***November 13, 2020***

# Workshop Outcomes

- As a result of this workshop you will be able to:
  - **Learn about Rubrics:** What, why, create and types of rubrics
  - Describe how **VALUE rubrics** can be used for program assessment
  - Review the **WASC Rubric** for Program Learning Outcomes
  - Create a **signature or key assignment** that is aligned with program learning outcomes
  - Collect (**data collection**) student work from multiple course sections and/or instructors
  - Learn the process of becoming an expert **Faculty Scorer!**

# The Assessment Cycle

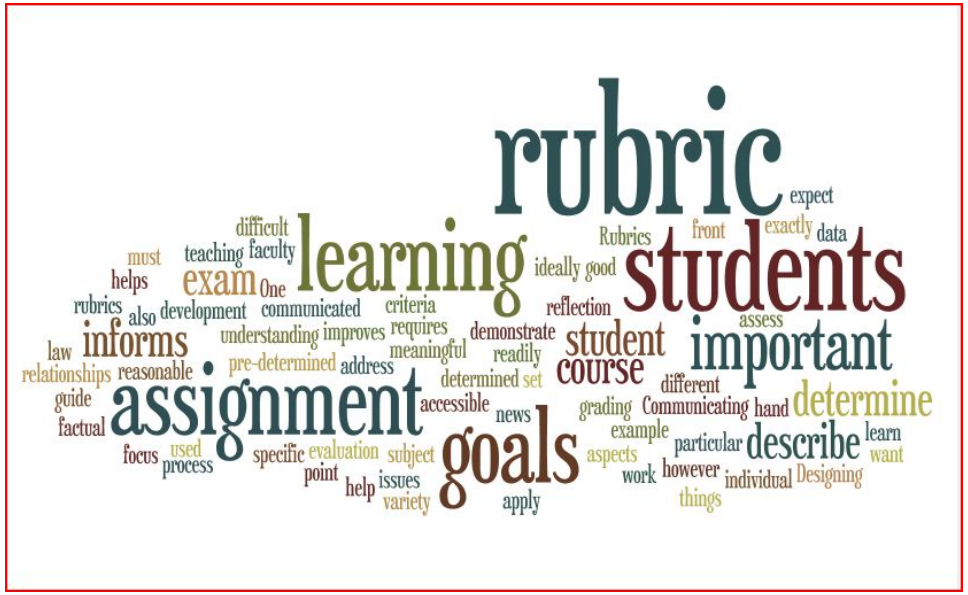



Today!

How are we doing?
How do we know?
What evidence do we need to know to determine whether we are successful?

# What is a Rubric?

A coherent set of **criteria** for student work that describes **levels** of performance quality.



# Why rubrics?

- Chance for faculty to **explicitly articulate and specify criteria** for evaluating student learning

- Student work can be scored to **examine** for which skills are they meeting **expectations** and which need **improvement**

# Advantages of using rubrics

## For the Instructor

- Allow evaluation and assessment to be more **objective and consistent**
- Help focus criteria in **specific terms**
- Provide **useful feedback** regarding the effectiveness of the instruction
- Provide **benchmarks** against which to measure and document progress

## For Students

- Help them define "**quality**"
- Promote student awareness of about the **criteria** to use in assessing peer performance
- Help students **judge and revise their own work** before handing in their assignments.
- **Clearly** show the student **how** their work will be **evaluated** and what is expected (*creates a sense of fairness and equity*)

# Creating a Rubric: Canvas

**Scale**

| Dimensions | 1 - Does not meet expectations | 2 - Meets expectations | 3 - Exceeds expectations | Comments (Descriptions) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listens effectively ☐ | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | |
| Writes in a professional manner ☐ | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | |
| Speaks clearly and concisely ☐ | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | What does this look like? | |
| Total: | | | | |

# Fun with Rubrics: The Cookie

**Task:** Make a chocolate chip cookie that I would want to eat.

**Criteria:** Texture, Taste, Number of Chocolate Chips, Richness

**Range of performance:**

- Delicious(14-16 pts)
- Tasty(11-13 pts)
- Edible(8-10 pts)
- Not yet edible(0-7 pts)

# The Rubric

| | **Delicious**<br>**4** | **Tasty**<br>**3** | **Edible**<br>**2** | **Not yet edible**<br>**1** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **# chips** | Chips in every bite | 75% chips | 50% chips | Less than 50% chips |
| **texture** | Consistently chewy | Chewy middle, crispy edges | Crunchy | **Like a dog biscuit** |
| **color** | Even golden brown | Brown with pale center | All brown<br>Or all pale | Burned |
| **richness** | Buttery, high fat | Medium fat | Low-fat flavor | Nonfat flavor |

# Types of Rubrics

| | |
|---|---|
| Holistic | • **Single grading scale** - all criteria considered in the evaluation is included together.<br>• Rater assigns a single score (ex. AP exam)<br>• Doesn't provide as granular, targeted feedback on student performance. |
| Analytic | • **Multi-component grading scale** - describes each evaluation criteria separately.<br>• Raters assign a score for each component, along with an overall score (total or weighted).<br>• Provides more granular, targeted feedback.<br>• More time consuming to create. |

Assessing Writing, Teaching Writers Smith & Swaine, 2017

# Types of Rubrics: Example

## Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric

Facione and Facione

**4** Consistently does all or almost all of the following:

- Accurately interprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc.
- Identifies the salient arguments (reasons and claims) pro and con.
- Thoughtfully analyzes and evaluates major alternative points of view.
- Draws warranted, judicious, non-fallacious conclusions.
- Justifies key results and procedures, explains assumptions and reasons.
- Fair-mindedly follows where evidence and reasons lead.

**3** Does most or many of the following:

- Accurately interprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc.
- Identifies relevant arguments (reasons and claims) pro and con.
- Offers analyses and evaluations of obvious alternative points of view.
- Draws warranted, non-fallacious conclusions.
- Justifies some results or procedures, explains reasons.
- Fair-mindedly follows where evidence and reasons lead.

**2** Does most or many of the following:

- Misinterprets evidence, statements, graphics, questions, etc.
- Fails to identify strong, relevant counter-arguments.
- Ignores or superficially evaluates obvious alternative points of view.
- Draws unwarranted or fallacious conclusions.
- Justifies few results or procedures, seldom explains reasons.
- Regardless of the evidence or reasons, maintains or defends views based on self-interest or preconceptions.

**1** Consistently does all or almost all of the following:

- Offers biased interpretations of evidence, statements, graphics, questions, information, or the points of view of others.
- Fails to identify or hastily dismisses strong, relevant counter-arguments.
- Ignores or superficially evaluates obvious alternative points of view.
- Argues using fallacious or irrelevant reasons, and unwarranted claims.
- Does not justify results or procedures, nor explain reasons.
- Regardless of the evidence or reasons, maintains or defends views based on self-interest or preconceptions.
- Exhibits close-mindedness or hostility to reason.

(c) 1994, Peter A. Facione, Noreen C. Facione, and The California Academic Press. (See cover page for conditional permission to duplicate.)

## Analytic Rubric Sample

From "Rubrics: The Heart of Assessment"

***Pam Stephens***

**Objective**

After defining the concept of art criticism, each student will write a 500-word essay with a beginning, middle, and end that accurately describes, analyzes, interprets, and judges a selected work of art.

| | Value 3 | Value 2 | Value 1 | Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Describe** | Provides a complete and accurate description of the key subject matter and elements seen in the artwork. | Provides a partial but mostly accurate description of the subject matter and/or elements seen in the artwork, some key components overlooked. | Provides an incomplete, unclear, or inaccurate description of subject matter and/or elements seen in the artwork, many key components overlooked. | |
| **Analyze** | Accurately relates how the structures of art function together to make a complete composition. | Relates with limited proficiency how the structures of art function together to make a complete composition, overlooks some important components. | Has trouble relating how the structures of art function together to make a complete composition. | |
| **Interpret** | Suggests a logical and/or symbolic meaning expressed in a work of art, supports idea with multiple points of visual evidence found in the piece. | Suggests a literal meaning expressed in a work of art, supports idea with limited points of visual evidence found in the piece. | Finds it difficult to interpret the meaning of the work, guesses meaning without visual support. | |
| **Evaluate** | Uses multiple criteria to judge the quality of a finished work of art, avoids personal opinion. | Uses a limited range of criteria to judge the quality of a work of art, personal opinion shown. | Uses personal opinion to judge the quality of a finished work of art. | |
| **Technical** | Finished paper follows rules of grammar and essay writing, is in publishable form. | Finished paper contains minor flaws in grammar and essay writing, needs editing. | Finished paper has numerous flaws in grammar and does not follow conventions of essay writing, needs rewriting. | |
| **Notes to student** | | | | **Total score** |

# What Are VALUE rubrics?

- **AAC&U** (**A**ssociation of **A**merican **C**olleges and **U**niversities)'s **VALUE** (**V**alid **A**ssessment of **L**earning in **U**ndergraduate **E**ducation) *project*
- A component of the **LEAP** (**L**iberal **E**ducation and **A**merica's **P**romise) *initiative*

- <u>Goals:</u>
  - Develop shared understanding of student learning outcomes
  - Promote authentic assessment of student work (vs. standardized tests)

# Origin of AAC&U VALUE Rubrics

Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Information Literacy, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Civic Knowledge & Engagement, Intercultural Knowledge & Competence, Ethical Reasoning & Action, Global Learning, Lifelong Learning, Integrative Learning, Inquiry and Analysis, Reading

- 2007–2009 **teams of faculty** and other educational professionals developed 15 VALUE rubrics for the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes.
- Each rubric was developed from **core identified characteristics or criteria** of learning for each outcome.
- Rubrics **tested** by faculty with their own students' work.

*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

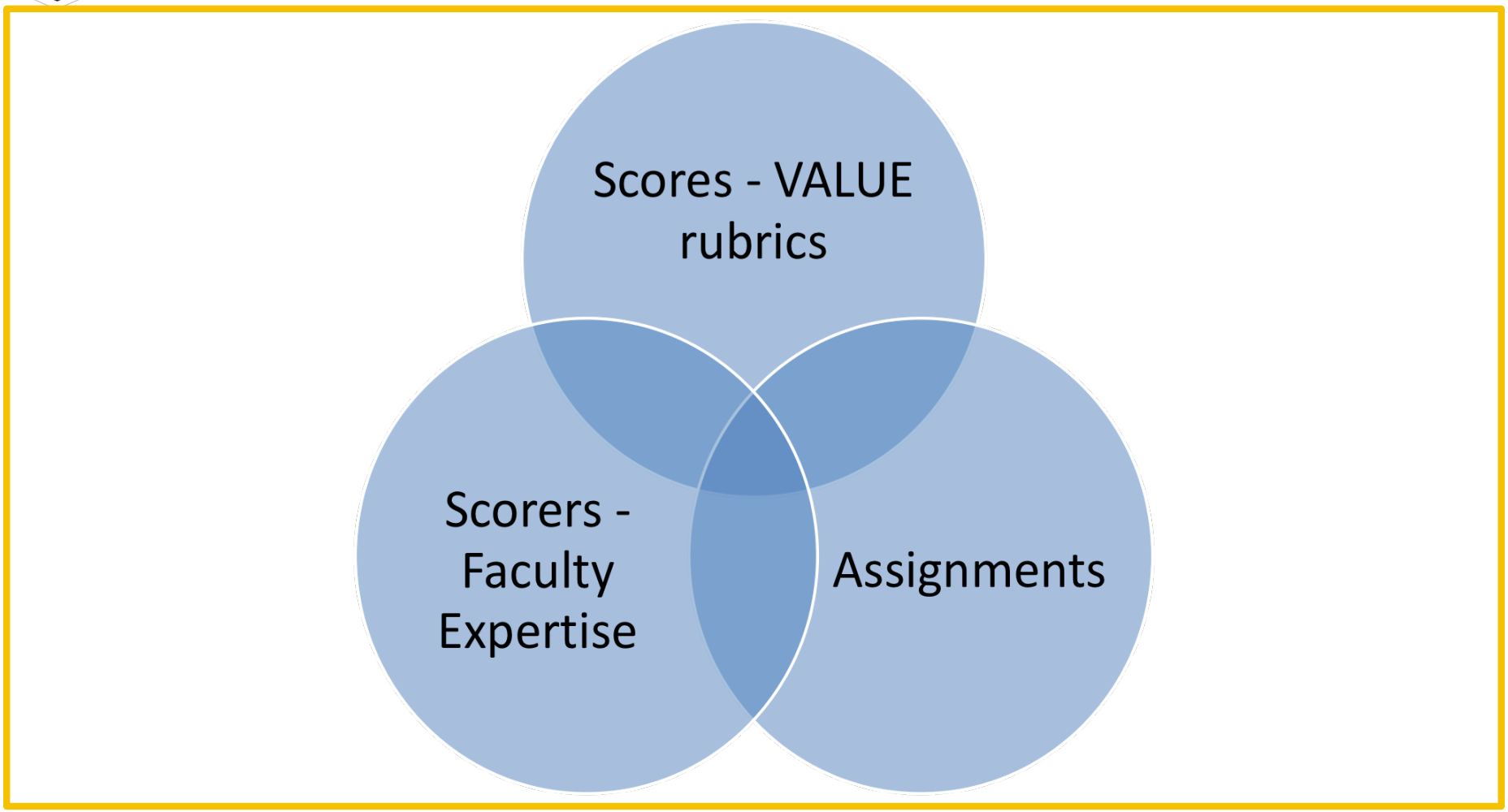
# VALUE Institute Assumptions

- Student work is representation of **student motivated learning**
- Focus on what **student does in terms of key dimensions** of learning outcomes
- Faculty and educator **expert judgment**
- Results are <u>useful and actionable</u> for **improvement of learning**
- **Raise up, not wash out, inherent diversity** (*race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status and diversity of courses, credit-levels, and disciplinary backgrounds*) on campuses.

*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

# VALUE is philosophically, pedagogically, and methodologically complex

*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*




*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

# VALUE Rubrics and Equity

- VALUE rubrics were purposefully designed to reflect **Asset-based approach—What students can do!**
- The rubric **"descends"** from the level-four Capstone to the level-one Benchmark when reading from left to right.
- Scorers are trained to **assess student work by beginning at the highest levels** of the rubric, working from the assumption that all students have the potential for achieving Capstone-level work.
- Scorers immediately orient themselves to the **learning that is possible.**

*Adapted from: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

# AAC&U's 15 VALUE rubrics

- ***Intellectual and Practical Skills:***
  1. Inquiry and analysis
  2. Critical thinking
  3. Creative thinking
  4. Written communication
  5. Oral communication
  6. Quantitative literacy
  7. Information literacy
  8. Teamwork
  9. Problem solving
  10. Reading

- ***Personal and Social Responsibility:***
  1. Civic engagement
  2. Intercultural knowledge and competence
  3. Ethical reasoning
  4. Lifelong learning
  5. Integrative learning

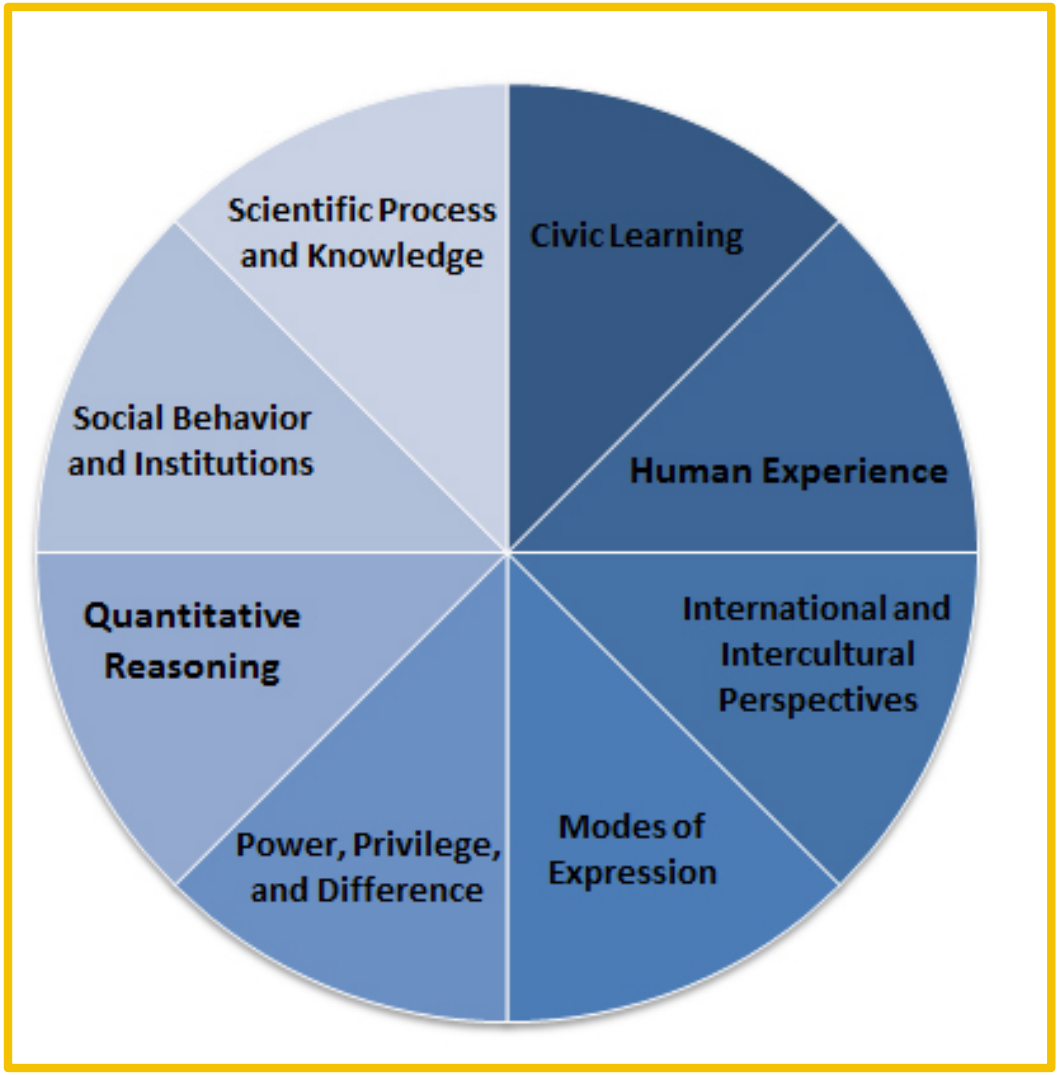
# Possible Uses of VALUE rubrics

- **Course evaluation**
  - Models for rubrics faculty can use to score of class assignments
  - Student reflection

- **Program evaluation**
  - Help specify department learning outcomes
  - Models for rubrics for program-level evaluation projects

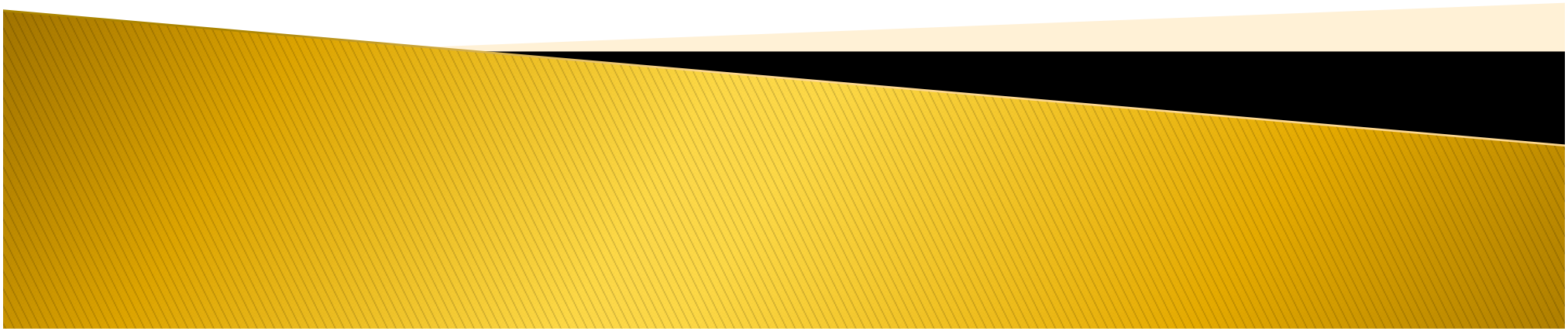
# VALUE Rubrics: Faculty Engagement

- Used VALUE rubrics to engage faculty in **discussions about designing assignments and assessing student learning**




*Adapted from: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

# What does a VALUE rubric look like?



Learning Outcome

# CRITICAL THINKING 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, disc[illegible]es. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such[illegible]ing can by shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

**Definition**

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

**Framing Language**

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive lis[illegible]l thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. Assignments that c[illegible] mode might be especially useful in some fields. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., how information s[illegible] regardless of whether they were included in the product) is important, assignments focused on student reflection might be especially illuminating.

Framing Language

**Glossary**

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

- Ambiguity: Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.
- Assumptions: Ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are "taken for granted or accepted as true without proof." (quoted from www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/assumptions)
- Context: The historical, ethical. political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events.
- Literal meaning: Interpretation of information exactly as stated. For example, "she was green with envy" would be interpreted to mean that her skin was green.
- Metaphor: Information that is (intended to be) interpreted in a non-literal way. For example, "she was green with envy" is intended to convey an intensity of emotion, not a skin color.

Glossary

*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

Learning Outcome

# CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

*for more information, please contact* value@aacu.org

Definition

**Definition**

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

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

Performance Levels

Levels (4,3,2,1,0)

| | Capstone | Milestones | | Benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Explanation of issues** | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description. |
| **Evidence** *Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion* | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly. | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question. |
| **Influence of context and assumptions** | Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position. | Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position. | Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa). | Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position. |
| **Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)** | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis). | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis). | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue. | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious. |
| **Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)** | Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order. | Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified. |

Dimensions

Performance Descriptors

*Source: AAC&U Webinar 2019*

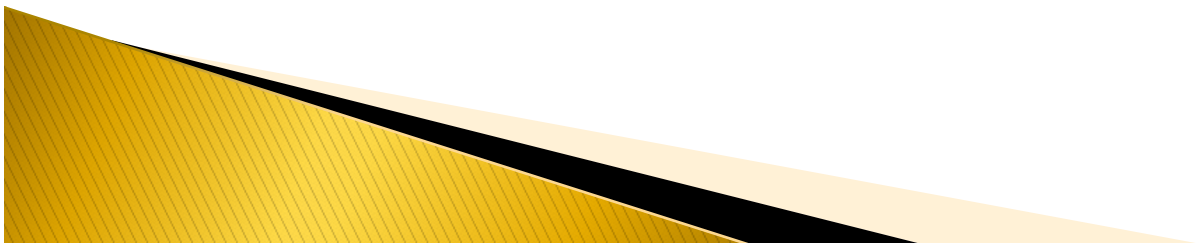
# Modifying Value Rubrics

- **Meant to be modified!**
- Add more specific criteria based on your program or assignment
- Add new dimensions to reflect issues important to your program

Figure 8. Modification of the VALUE rubric for civic engagement (tracked changes show relabeling of criteria, combination of two criteria, and additional changes to reflect campus context)

| | CAPSTONE 4 | MILESTONE 3 | MILESTONE 2 | BENCHMARK 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civic Literacy (Knowledge) | Connects and extends knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) of civic contexts, structures and systems within one's own academic study/field/discipline and beyond (multidisciplinary) | Analyzes knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) of civic contexts, structures and systems by making relevant connections to one's own academic study/field/discipline. | Begins to connect knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) of civic contexts, structures and systems to one's own academic study/field/discipline. | Begins to identify knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) of civic contexts, structures and systems. |
| Analysis of Knowledge | Connects and extends knowledge ~~(facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and~~ to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government. | Analyzes knowledge ~~(facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline~~ by making relevant connections to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government. | Begins to connect knowledge ~~(facts, theories, etc.)~~ to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government. | Begins to identify knowledge ~~(facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline that is~~ relevant to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government. |
| Civic ~~Communication and~~ Skills | Tailors communication strategies, participation and advocacy skills ~~and advocacy skills~~ to effectively express, listen, and adapt to others to establish relationships to further civic action | Effectively communicates, participates and advocates in civic context, showing ability to do all of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. | Communicates, participates and advocates in civic context, showing ability to do more than one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. | Communicates, participates and advocates in civic context, showing ability to do one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. |
| Civic Responsibility (Values) | Demonstrates ability and commitment to *collaboratively work across and within* community contexts and structures *to achieve a civic aim.* | Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively *within* community contexts and structures *to achieve a civic aim.* | Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to actively *participate in* civic contexts and structures. | Demonstrates a willingness for passive but not active participation in civic context and structures. |

# Examples



# Salt Lake Community College

- Require instructors to use of **signature assignments** to assess their general education outcomes, but allow faculty freedom in creating the assignments. A few general requirements for the assignments:
  - *address at least two learning outcomes*
  - *include student reflection*
  - *demonstrate a real world, not theoretical, application of disciplinary knowledge*
- A mathematics instructor created a signature assignment where students acted as potential car buyers and calculated how different interest rates affect the amount of money spent.
  - Learning outcomes- **quantitative literacy and written communication**
  - Students reflect on how this activity can be applied in other classes or real world scenarios.

# Cal State LA's Institutional Assessment of Oral Communication:

- Presentations recorded in **10** classes in Spring 2017
- ***N* = 171** students: 109 female, 62 male
- College and Courses:
  - 44 from A&L (COMM 4300, COMM 43900)
  - 65 from B&E (BUS 4150, BUS4970)
  - 4 from CCOE (COUN 4940A)
  - 13 from HHS (COMD 3190, KIN4250)
  - 45 from NSS (ANTH 4970, CHEM4311, PSY 3040).

# Recording and Scoring:

- Presentations were recorded using Zoom
  - 84% were group presentations
  - Student presentation time:
    - 67% over two minutes
    - 27% 1-2 minutes
    - 6% less than 1 minute
- 4 faculty scored presentations **using the VALUE rubric**

# Oral Communication Scores: Psychology (*n* = 23)

| Proficiency Score | Organization | Language | Delivery | Supporting Material | Central Message |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.75-4.0 | 0 (0%) | 3 (13%) | 1 (4%) | 2 (9%) | 1 (4%) |
| 3.0-3.5 | 15 (65%) | 14 (61%) | 10 (44%) | 15 (65%) | 18 (78%) |
| 2.0-2.75 | 8 (35%) | 6 (26%) | 9 (39%) | 6 (26%) | 4 (17%) |
| 1.0-1.75 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (13%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

*Note.* Scoring was as follows: 1 = *Benchmark (Does not Meet Competency)*, 2 = *Milestone (Minimal Competency)*, 3 = *Milestone (Meets Competency)*, 4 = *Capstone (Exceeds Competency).*

**What trends do you notice?**
**What questions are left unanswered?**
**How could we collect more useful data?**

# Developing YOUR plan of action

# Activity #1: Choosing a Learning Outcome

- How do these align with your Program Learning Outcomes? Which learning outcomes are emphasized by your program?
- Which VALUE rubric will be used?
- Which areas will be modified?

WSC Senior College and University Commission

# PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES RUBRIC
## Rubric for Assessing the Quality of Academic Program Learning Outcomes

| Criterion | Initial | Emerging | Developed | Highly Developed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Comprehensive List | The list of outcomes is problematic: e.g., very incomplete, overly detailed, inappropriate, and disorganized. It may include only discipline-specific learning, ignoring relevant institution-wide learning. The list may confuse learning processes (e.g., doing an internship) with learning outcomes (e.g., application of theory to real-world problems). | The list includes reasonable outcomes but does not specify expectations for the program as a whole. Relevant institution-wide learning outcomes and/or national disciplinary standards may be ignored. Distinctions between expectations for undergraduate and graduate programs may be unclear. | The list is a well-organized set of reasonable outcomes that focus on the key knowledge, skills, and values students learn in the program. It includes relevant institution-wide outcomes (e.g., communication or critical thinking skills). Outcomes are appropriate for the level (undergraduate vs. graduate); national disciplinary standards have been considered. | The list is reasonable, appropriate, and comprehensive, with clear distinctions between undergraduate and graduate expectations, if applicable. National disciplinary standards have been considered. Faculty has agreed on explicit criteria for assessing students' level of mastery of each outcome. |
| Assessable Outcomes | Outcome statements do not identify what students can do to demonstrate learning. Statements such as "Students understand scientific method" do not specify how understanding can be demonstrated and assessed. | Most of the outcomes indicate how students can demonstrate their learning. | Each outcome describes how students can demonstrate learning, e.g., "Graduates can write reports in APA style" or "Graduates can make original contributions to biological knowledge." | Outcomes describe how students can demonstrate their learning. Faculty has agreed on explicit criteria statements, such as rubrics, and has identified examples of student performance at varying levels for each outcome. |
| Alignment | There is no clear relationship between the outcomes and the curriculum that students experience. | Students appear to be given reasonable opportunities to develop the outcomes in the required curriculum. | The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for students to learn and to develop increasing sophistication with respect to each outcome. This design may be summarized in a curriculum map. | Pedagogy, grading, the curriculum, relevant student support services and co- curriculum are explicitly and intentionally aligned with each outcome. Curriculum map indicates increasing levels of proficiency. |
| Assessment Planning | There is no formal plan for assessing each outcome. | The program relies on short-term planning, such as selecting which outcome(s) to assess in the current year. | The program has a reasonable, multi-year assessment plan that identifies when each outcome will be assessed. The plan may explicitly include analysis and implementation of improvements. | The program has a fully-articulated, sustainable, multi-year assessment plan that describes when and how each outcome will be assessed and how improvements based on findings will be implemented. The plan is routinely examined and revised, as needed. |
| The Student Experience | Students know little or nothing about the overall outcomes of the program. Communication of outcomes to students, e.g. in syllabi or catalog, is spotty or nonexistent. | Students have some knowledge of program outcomes. Communication is occasional and informal, left to individual faculty or advisors. | Students have a good grasp of program outcomes. They may use them to guide their own learning. Outcomes are included in most syllabi and are readily available in the catalog, on the web page, and elsewhere. | Students are well-acquainted with program outcomes and may participate in the creation and use of rubrics. They are skilled at self-assessing in relation to the outcomes and levels of performance. Program policy calls for inclusion of outcomes in all course syllabi, and they are readily available in other program documents. |

**Guidelines on Using the Learning Outcomes Rubric**

This rubric is intended to help teams assess the extent to which an institution has developed and assessed program learning outcomes and made improvements based on assessment results. For the fullest picture of an institution's accomplishments, reviews of written materials should be augmented with interviews at the time of the visit.

*Dimensions of the Rubric:*

1. **Comprehensive List**. The set of program learning outcomes should be a short but comprehensive list of the most important knowledge, skills, and values students learn in the program. Higher levels of sophistication are expected for graduate program outcomes than for undergraduate program outcomes. There is no strict rule concerning the optimum number of outcomes, but quality is more important than quantity. Learning processes (e.g., completing an internship) should not be confused with learning outcomes (what is learned in the internship, such as application of theory to real-world practice).

   Questions. Is the list reasonable, appropriate and well organized? Are relevant institution-wide outcomes, such as information literacy, included? Are distinctions between undergraduate and graduate outcomes clear? Have national disciplinary standards been considered when developing and refining the outcomes? Are explicit criteria – as defined in a rubric, for example – available for each outcome?

2. **Assessable Outcomes**. Outcome statements specify what students can do to demonstrate their learning. For example, an outcome might state, "Graduates of our program can collaborate effectively to reach a common goal" or "Graduates of our program can design research studies to test theories." These outcomes are assessable because the quality of collaboration in teams and the quality of student-created research designs can be observed. Criteria for assessing student products or behaviors usually are specified in rubrics that indicate varying levels of student performance (i.e., work that does not meet expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations).

   Questions, Do the outcomes clarify how students can demonstrate learning? Are there agreed upon, explicit criteria, such as rubrics, for assessing each outcome? Are there examples of student work representing different levels of mastery for each outcome?

3. **Alignment**. Students cannot be held responsible for mastering learning outcomes without a curriculum that is designed to develop increasing sophistication with respect to each outcome. This design is often summarized in a curriculum map—a matrix that shows the relationship between courses in the required curriculum and the program's learning outcomes. Pedagogy and grading aligned with outcomes help encourage student growth and provide students feedback on their development.

   Questions. Is the curriculum explicitly aligned with the program outcomes? Do faculty select effective pedagogy and use grading to promote learning? Are student support services and the co-curriculum explicitly aligned to reinforce and promote the development of student learning outcomes?

4. **Assessment Planning**. Programs need not assess every outcome every year, but faculty are expected to have a plan to cycle through the outcomes over a reasonable period of time, such as the timeframe for program review.

   Questions. Does the plan clarify when, how, and how often each outcome will be assessed? Will all outcomes be assessed over a reasonable period of time? Is the plan sustainable, in terms of human, fiscal, and other resources? Are assessment plans revised, as needed?

5. **The Student Experience**. At a minimum, students need to be aware of the learning outcomes of the program(s) in which they are enrolled. Ideally, they could be included as partners in defining and applying the outcomes and the criteria for varying levels of accomplishment.

   Questions: Are the outcomes communicated to students consistently and meaningfully? Do students understand what the outcomes mean and how they can further their own learning? Do students use the outcomes and criteria to self-assess?
   Do they participate in reviews of outcomes, criteria, curriculum design, or related activities?

# Where is the Outcome taught in your curriculum?

| | 1500 | 2000 | 3020 | 3040 | 3080 | 3100 | 3220 | 3230 | 4110 | 4120 | 4250 | 4650 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PLO1 | I | | D | | D | D | | | D | D | M | M |
| PLO2 | | I | D | | | | | | D | | | M |
| PLO3 | | I | | | D | | | D | | | | |
| PLO4 | I | D | | D | D | D | D | D | | D | M | M |
| PLO5 | | I | | D | D | | | | | | | M |
| PLO6 | | I | | D | | | | | | | | |
| PLO7 | I | | D | | | D | | | M | | | |

**I = Introduced; D = Developed/Reinforced; M = Mastered**

# What is a Signature assignment?

- **Embedded** in a course
- Used for **course grade and program assessment**
- **Aligned** with Program Learning Outcomes
- **Collaboratively** designed by faculty
- **Meaningful and integrative**

- **Why?**
  - Allows a program to assess learning **across** course sections or instructors
  - Creates **consistency**
  - Useful for assessing course sections with **different modalities/pedagogies**
- **Healthy Balance: Standardization v. Creativity/Academic Freedom**

# Signature Assignment Examples

## ASSIGNMENT 1

*(To be assessed with the VALUE rubric for creative thinking)*

### Overview

You are to select a contemporary issue in health (other area could be substituted) and develop a point of view regarding this issue. Then, create a social media campaign to educate a specific population and persuade them of your point of view. Materials may include text, photographs, video, etc.

#### OPTION 1

Write a proposal for your project. In this proposal you will

- identify the issue or problem, your point of view, and the population/target audience;
- describe your approach to the issue;
- discuss your approach and its advantages relative to other approaches that have been taken to the issue.

#### OPTION 2

Write an Implementation Plan for your project. In this plan you will

- describe in detail how you will get your message across to your audience; your description may include story boarding, choice of media, samples of images, video and text, etc.
- specify needed resources.

*Further assignments may include actual implementation of the campaign and assessment of the results.*

## ASSIGNMENT 2

*(To be assessed with the VALUE rubric for creative thinking)*

### Overview

You have been invited to prepare the introduction to our special speaker who will be here in less than forty-eight hours. The individual originally assigned to prepare the introduction has been called away on a family emergency. Your introduction is to be interesting, entertaining, and concise. To help you prepare, you have decided to make two ten-minute calls to individuals who know the special speaker.

#### NOTES

You are to identify the speaker for the event and why you selected this speaker.

You are given the option of delivering the Speaker Introduction or, if you do not give the address, you can select someone whom you will coach and prepare through the process to make the presentation engaging and personable.

#### ASSIGNMENT PRODUCTS

- Abstract—this is the interesting, entertaining, and concise introduction
- Chronicle—a chronicle of your performance including:
  - Whom you selected as the speaker
  - Which two individuals you will call, why, and the process for engaging and contacting them
  - A reflection on your problem solving
  - Are you delivering the Speaker Introduction or coaching another
  - Evaluation of the process

*Another assignment option would be to do a Public Service Announcement.*

Source: Developed through WASC Accreditation Workshop

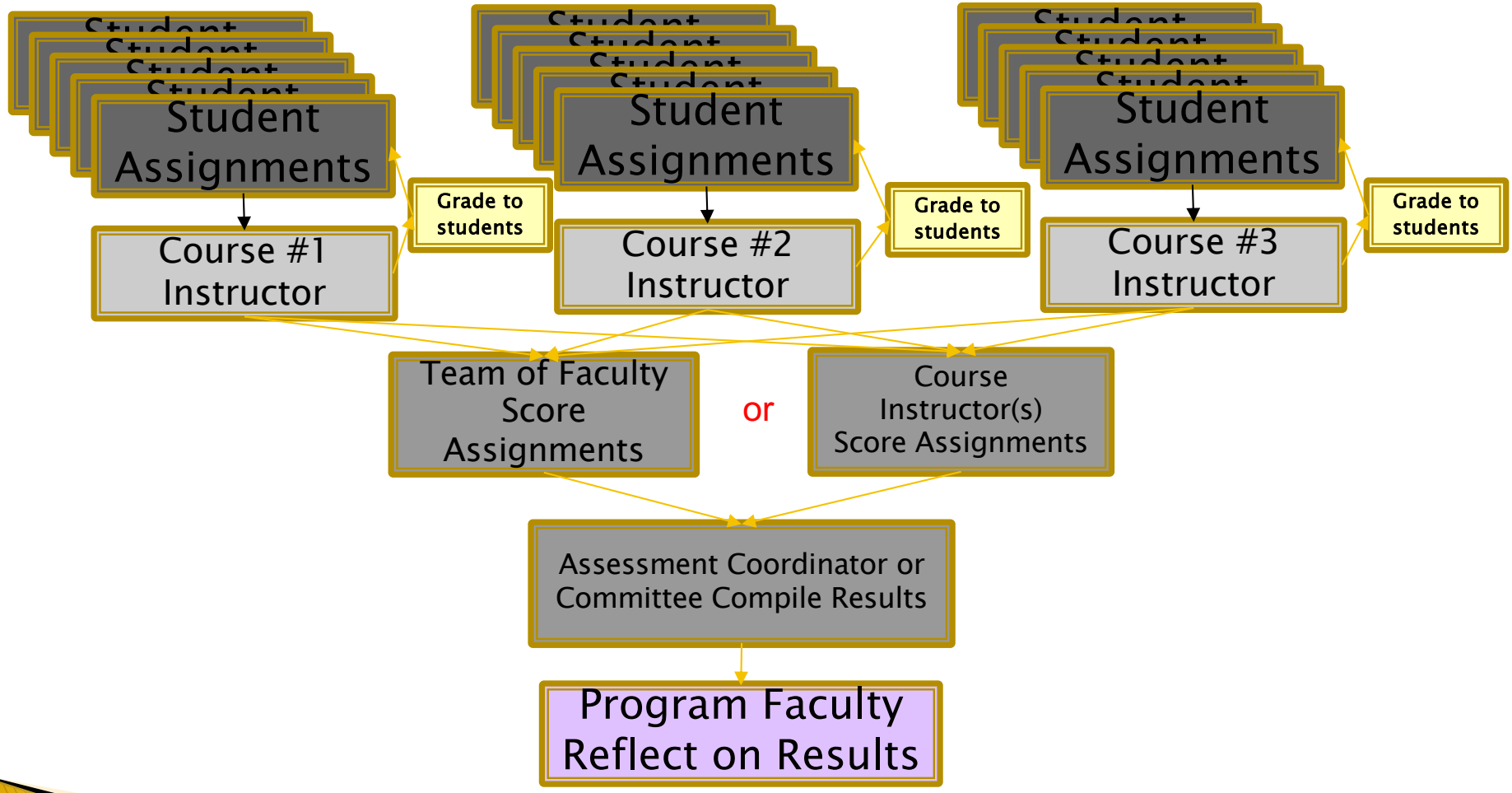
Assignment 3 (to be assessed with the VALUE rubrics Written Communication and Intercultural Understanding)

- **Instructions:**
  - Please take approximately **1– 2 hours** to complete this assignment. The essay topic is designed to give you an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to write clearly and effectively. It will also allow you to display your knowledge of psychological diversity. Perfection is not expected, but you should try to produce the best essay possible in the time allotted. Your essay should be about **2 pages in length** (4-5 paragraphs). Type this assignment and then upload the digital file to the course Moodle site.
  - You do not have to cite sources in this essay, but please **include specific terms** and concepts from your psychology classes.
- **Prompt:**
  - Think about a group of people who are very different from you. These could be individuals from a different culture or perhaps members of a social group that hold views you disagree with.
  - Briefly describe the group's characteristics and how individuals in this group are different from you. Then, describe 1-3 concepts that you've learned from this class (or other psychology classes you've taken) that could be used to change or improve the way you interact with members of this group

# Activity #2: Signature Assignment

- What courses would use this assignment?
- Describe instructions to students, providing explicit guidelines on:
  - Learning outcomes and goals
  - How to complete the assignment
  - Length and time required
  - Sources needed
  - Evaluation criteria

# Gather and Evaluate



# Expert Faculty Scorers

**KEY: Norming Session!**

- calibration to reach a consensus score entails digging deeper and productive discussion
- Thus a rich faculty development opportunity!



# Scoring assignments: Rubric Calibration

- Hold a **calibration session** with all instructors or faculty scorers.
- Begin with a **close reading** of the rubric and identify **areas of discussion.**
- Faculty should come to an **agreement on interpretation of language** in rubric.
- Faculty are given an **example of student work** to score.
- **Discuss** scores row by row. Faculty **provide rationale** for their scores and try to **reach consensus.**
- Repeat with **more examples** of student work **(high, low, medium)**

# Activity #3: Time to Plan!

- **What assignment** or activity will you use?
- **How** will you **score** student achievement?
- **What classes** would you target for sampling and when?
- **Which faculty** will be responsible for coordinating data collection? Data analysis?
- **How** will you analyze the results? **Will you disaggregate** results in some way?
- **How will results** be shared, discussed, and used to make changes?

# Next Steps

- What have you learned today that you want to share with others in your department?

- Write down 1-3 action items you can do **this or Spring 2021 semester** to apply what you've learned today?

# Resources and credits

- "*Using the VALUE Rubrics for Improvement of Learning and Authentic Assessment*" by Rhodes & Finley (2013) Association of American Colleges and Universities
- "*Using Signature Assignments for Program-Level Assessment*" Presentation Slides by University of Hawaii, Manoa
- University of Texas signature assignments webpage:
  - https://ugs.utexas.edu/sig/plan/samples/writing-model4

# Questions?






# Thank You!