



TIPS ON GRADING: USING RUBRICS

A grading rubric is a scoring guide or checklist that identifies the standards and criteria for a given assignment. Rubrics work particularly well for assessing communication activities such as presentations, written assignments, or teamwork. They help you and your students come to a shared understanding of the requirements of an assignment.

Rubrics help you simplify grading and ensure consistency. Using one, you can comment at length on just one or two points and then, depending on your priorities, highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the rest of the paper. You can use rubrics to allow you the time to respond to early drafts, students can apply them during peer review, or you can use them in conjunction with brief overall comments to save time grading final drafts. Generally, it is best for students to understand in advance the criteria by which their performance is to be judged.

THE BEST RUBRICS ARE SPECIFIC TO THE ASSIGNMENT

It is important to note that a very general rubric provides little feedback or guidance to students. In other words, the more explicit the rubric to the specific assignment, the more direction students get, and the easier it is for them to write to a target, revise a draft paper, or improve on the next assignment.

On the next several pages, you will find sample rubrics for different courses and purposes. Even though each is designed for a specific task, most could easily be modified for your specific course and needs. Thus, the rubric for a research proposal in chemistry might easily be adapted for a biology or social sciences proposal.

Page 2	Marketing Proposal
Page 3	Presentation Report
Page 4	Research Proposal in Chemistry
Page 5	Teamwork
Page 6-7	Critical Reading and Analysis
Page 8	Research Paper in History
Page 9	Argument Paper in 1 st Year Composition

USEFUL SOURCES:

Bean, John C. "Developing and Applying Grading Criteria." In *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 2001.

The following websites offer excellent discussions and samples of scoring rubrics:

<http://www.missouri.edu/~pattonmd/rubrics.html>

<http://www.missouri.edu/~pattonmd/commenting.html>



MARKETING PROPOSAL

Criteria	Max. Points (100 Total)	Points Earned
Cover/Title page	5	
Table of contents	5	
Abstract	5	
Introduction/background	10	
Competitive analysis	10	
Proposed plan	10	
Cost/benefit analysis	10	
Conclusion	10	
Tables and charts	10	
Format	5	
Grammar and style	10	
Works cited/APA Style	10	



PRESENTATION REPORT EVALUATION

Presentation Topic _____

Evaluator _____

Criteria	Great	OK	Needs Work	Poor
Strong purpose with attention to action	4	3	2	1
Well planned beginning and ending	4	3	2	1
Engaging, interesting verbal style	4	3	2	1
Strong content with good detail	4	3	2	1
Sufficient context given for audience to understand the topic	4	3	2	1
Strong PowerPoint design & delivery	4	3	2	1
Good use of data, charts, drawings, tables, lists	4	3	2	1
Documentation	4	3	2	1



RUBRIC FOR A RESEARCH PROPOSAL IN CHEMISTRY

	(quite weak)		(quite strong)	
Summary	1	2	3	4
Synopsis of the lit review				
Brief outline of proposed work				
Anticipated results and their significance				
Literature Review	1	2	3	4
Persuasive case for research				
Evidence and references for research				
Proof that previous research has been understood				
Work Proposed	1	2	3	4
Why research idea is a good one				
What is going to be done				
Details of proposed experiments				
Proof that the plan will work				
Anticipated results	1	2	3	4
Results will make a contribution to the problem				
References	1	2	3	4
Total points				



RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING TEAMWORK

TEAM MEMBER EVALUATION

Evaluate your fellow group members by assigning numbers based on individual performance in the group setting. The purpose of this evaluation is to help individuals understand how their work is perceived by others. Evaluations will be anonymous and will help the instructor assign points for class participation.

Name of team member being evaluated: _____

Score Key

-1: Hindered group effort	0: Made no contribution	1: Contributed little
2: Contributed adequately	3: Contributed actively	4: Made major contributions

1. Student's preparation for and attendance at group meetings.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

2. Student's participation during group meetings.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

3. Student's performance on assigned tasks—quality of work.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

4. Student's ability to work with others.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

5. Student's ability to accept constructive criticism, compromise, and negotiate.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

6. Student's ability to meet deadlines.

-1 0 1 2 3 4

Comments on strengths and weaknesses as team member:

Overall Evaluation _____

(Add all 6 evaluations; divide by 6)



RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING WRITING THAT REQUIRES CRITICAL READING AND ANALYSIS

(Rubric developed by The FIPSE Inter-Institutional General Assessment Project 2004)

	Category	
Low Scores 1 or 2	Average Score 3	High Scores 4 or 5
	1. Evidence of controlling purpose (central idea or argument)	
Fails to establish purpose for writing. No clear point or purpose; no central argument to paper. Paper drifts substantially from initial purpose or controlling idea.	Purpose or controlling idea is established initially, but inconsistently attended to. Paper shows some unity of purpose, though some material may not be well aligned.	Establishes strong sense of purpose, either explicitly or implicitly. Controlling purpose governs development and organization of the text. Attends to purpose as paper unfolds.
	2. Engagement with the text	
Does not connect well to the source text Does not show evidence of having understood the reading(s) that should inform the paper. Repeats or summarizes source text without analyzing or critiqueing.	Shows evidence that materials were read and that those texts have shaped the students's writing. Shows basic understanding and ability to engage the substance of the text(s). Goes beyond repetition or summary of source text(s).	Shows clearly that the student read and understood the source text(s) that inform the paper. Summarizes key points or issues in the source text and then critically analyzes or synthesizes those ideas with the students's own ideas. Extends the ideas of the source text in interesting ways.
	3. Use of source material	
It is often not clear whether information comes from the text vs. the student. In-text citations and end-of-text references are not formatted according to an appropriate style sheet.	Source materials are cited, though not always consistently. It is generally clear when information comes from source text(s). Most in-text citations have appropriately formatted end-of-text references.	Source materials are introduced, contextualized, and made relevant to the purpose of the paper. It is always clear when information, opinions, or facts come from a source as opposed to coming from the student. Source materials are conventionally documented according to academic style (APA, MLA, CSE).



RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING WRITING THAT REQUIRES CRITICAL READING AND ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

	Category	
Low Scores 1 or 2	Average Score 3	High Scores 4 or 5
	4. Organization	
Moves in unpredictable sequence. Lacks progression from start through middle to end. Paragraphs unpredictably structured.	Some evidence of organization, with appropriate moves in the introduction and conclusion and some partitioning in the body. Most paragraphs have topic sentences with supporting details.	Establishes clear pattern of development, so the paper feels organized and orderly from beginning to end. Uses effective generalization/support patterning. Strong paragraphing.
	5. Support	
Moves from idea to idea without substantial development; lacks depth. Lacks support for arguments or claims.	Achieves some depth and specificity of discussion. Provides specific detail in some places.	Develops specific ideas in depth with strong and appropriate supporting examples, data, experiences.
	6. Style	
Lacks control over sentence structure; difficult to follow. Little control over sentence patterns of subordination and coordination. Requires the reader to backtrack to make sense. Uses wrong words and awkward phrasing.	Style is competent, though not engaging or inventive. Shows reasonable command over phrasing and word choice. Some useful connections from sentence to sentence.	Student clearly controls the pace, rhythm, and variety of sentences. Sentence style is smooth and efficient, with good use of subordination and coordination. Words are well chosen and phrasing is apt and precise. Sentences move smoothly from one to the next, with clear moves that open, develop, and close topics.
	7. Command of sentence-level conventions	
Many errors of punctuation, spelling, capitalization (mechanics). Many grammatical errors (agreement, tense, case, number, pronoun use).	Some typical errors are in evidence, but overall, the writing is correct.	Few, if any, errors of punctuation, spelling, capitalization (mechanics). Few if any grammatical errors (agreement, tense, case, number, pronoun use).



RUBRIC FOR A RESEARCH PAPER IN HISTORY

Paper on Politics

Between the World Wars

Poor

Adequate

Good

Great

- ☐ Specific **title**
- ☐ **Introduction** showing why there is a controversy about the role of inflation in Germany on international trade
- ☐ Focused argumentative **thesis statement**
- ☐ **Logical organization** built with step-by-step evidence
- ☐ Details, dates, etc., that **support** the argument in your thesis, particularly citing from three of the five assigned readings thus far in the semester.
- ☐ Extensive **documented primary sources**
- ☐ **Quotations** smoothly woven into the text
- ☐ Acknowledgement of **opposing viewpoints**
- ☐ **Original thinking**, not a rehash of previous writers
- ☐ **Conclusion** that extends your findings into the broader context of the themes we've discussed this semester. Avoids merely summing up what you have already said.
- ☐ **Style**
 - Varied, Effective **Sentences**
 - **Audience** awareness
 - Lively **language**
 - Non-judgmental **tone**
 - Effective **Mechanics**
- ☐ **Footnotes/endnotes**, Chicago style



RUBRIC FOR AN ARGUMENT PAPER IN 1ST YEAR COMPOSITION

Criteria	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Weak	Unacceptable
Strong introduction with appropriate context that raises the overall topic and sets the stage for the remaining paper in an engaging way					
Clear thesis statement with arguable assertion					
Clear and concise overview of each side of the writer's topic					
Brief, but well-argued, presentation of writer's position					
Specific support for each overview and for writer's argument is specific and from credible sources					
Effective organization					
Transitions are effective and smooth. Writer may use subheadings to help with transitions, but does not rely on them to provide all sense of coherence					
Effective conclusion that does more than simply sum up paper					
Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation – paper has few errors of these kinds					
Style – writer uses a clear, concise style with a variety of lengths and types of sentences, always preferring a more verbal style.					
Visuals – writer includes one graph or chart or illustration that adds content and clarity to the paper					
Works cited page/ parenthetical citations in MLA or APA style					
Paper meets the requirements of the assignment					



