A Guide to Rubrics

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Savvy Strategies to Help you Succeed

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

fession



Introduction

As a Walden University student, you will need to become familiar with rubrics. Most instructors utilize a rubric to define their grading criteria and to establish clear expectations for assignments. When used to their full advantage, rubrics are beneficial to instructors and students alike.



WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

A rubric is an assessment tool, which allows instructors to proactively share the criteria they will use to grade an assignment. Rubrics help instructors to grade fairly and consistently; in turn, rubrics help you (the student) to understand instructors' expectations prior to submitting an assignment. Typically, a rubric defines the skills that instructors would like you to master through the assignment.

Skill	Mastery	Exceptional	Competent	Developing
Formulates accurate, original	-Thesis clearly addresses the assignment	-Thesis clearly addresses the assignment	-Thesis does not address the assignment completely	- No thesis OR -Thesis is only loosely tied
thesis	-Thesis presents logical, insightful conclusion drawn	-Thesis presents conclusion drawn mostly accurately from ovidence in the paper	-Thesis presents conclusion which is not clearly tied to the evidence in the paper	to the assignment -Thesis presents conclusion
In the first column, you'll find	accurately from evidence in the paper	-Thesis mostly reflects what	the evidence in the paper	which is not tied logically to evidence
the skill or objective your instructor hopes you'll master	-Thesis reflects what is argued in the body of the paper	is argued in the body of the paper		
through the assignment.	Note: The example above represents a partial rubric. Most Walden University rubrics are comprised of 5-8 skills.			WALDEN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR GOOD

HOW DOES A RUBRIC WORK?

A rubric should be read left to right, starting with the skill identified in the first column. Then, moving right, each column describes a different level of mastery. Levels of mastery are similar to grades (A, B, C, D), but they are more descriptive. In the rubric below, "Mastery" and "Exceptional" indicate that a skill has been achieved, while "Competent" and "Developing" suggest a need for improvement. While more descriptive than letter grades, levels of mastery correspond to a certain number of points, so you will also receive a numeric score.

Start here!	Levels of Mastery			
Skill	Mastery	Exceptional	Competent	Developing
Formulates accurate, original	-Thesis clearly addresses the assignment	-Thesis clearly addresses the assignment	-Thesis does not address the assignment completely	- No thesis OR -Thesis is only loosely tied
thesis	-Thesis presents logical, insightful conclusion drawn accurately from	-Thesis presents conclusion drawn mostly accurately from evidence	-Thesis presents conclusion which is not clearly tied to the evidence	to the assignment -Thesis presents
Note: Depending on the course and assignment, the	evidence in the paper	in the paper -Thesis mostly reflects	in the paper	conclusion which is not tied logically to evidence
rubric may contain additional levels of mastery.	argued in the body of the paper	what is argued in the body of the paper		WALDEN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR GOOD

HOW DOES A RUBRIC WORK?

Each level of mastery is defined by the criteria below it. It's best to review the rubric before and after completing your assignment. That way, you will be able to shape your assignment around the instructor's grading criteria, *and* you will have the opportunity to double-check that your work meets the expectations of the rubric prior to submission.

Skill	Mastery	Exceptional	Competent	Developing
Formulates accurate, original thesis	 Thesis clearly addresses the assignment Thesis presents logical, insightful conclusion drawn accurately from evidence in the paper Thesis reflects what is argued in the body of the paper 	-Thesis clearly addresses the assignment -Thesis presents conclusion drawn mostly accurately from evidence in the paper -Thesis mostly reflects what is argued in the body of the paper	-Thesis does not address the assignment completely -Thesis presents conclusion which is not clearly tied to the evidence in the paper	- No thesis OR - Thesis is only loosely tied to the assignment - Thesis presents conclusion which is not tied logically to evidence WALDEN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR GOOD

HOW DOES A RUBRIC WORK?

After your assignment has been graded, review your instructor's feedback. In addition to his/her written comments, reconsider the rubric to better understand how you might improve on the next assignment. If, for example, you achieved "Exceptional," instead of "Mastery," look for key differences in the criteria associated with each level of mastery. On future assignments, you can pay special attention to improving in those areas.

Skill	Mastery	Exceptional	Competent	Developing
Formulates	-Thesis clearly addresses	-Thesis clearly addresses	-Thesis does not address	- No thesis OR
accurate, original	the assignment	the assignment	the assignment completely	-Thesis is only loosely tied
thesis	-Thesis presents logical,	-Thesis presents conclusion	-Thesis presents conclusion	to the assignment
	insightful conclusion drawn accurately from evidence in	drawn mostly accurately from evidence in the paper	which is not clearly tied to the evidence in the paper	-Thesis presents conclusion which is not tied logically to
	the paper	-Thesis <mark>mostly</mark> reflects what	The difference between	evidence
	-Thesis reflects what is argued in the body of the	is argued in the body of the paper	"Mastery" and "Exceptional" lies	
	paper		between these two criteria.If needed, ask the	
			instructor for additional feedback on how to improve in this area.	WALDEN UNIVERSITY

WHY USE A RUBRIC?

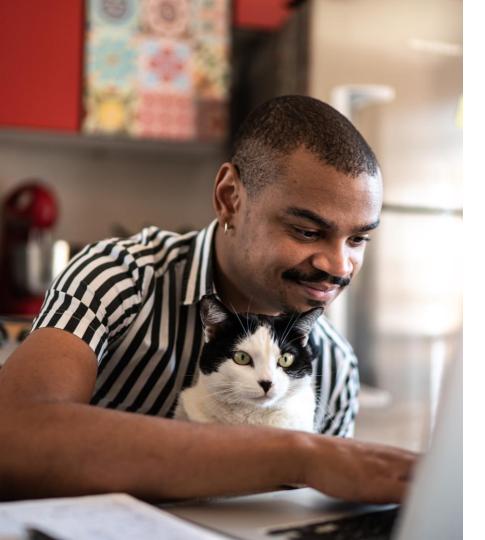
There are many advantages to rubrics. Rubrics help you understand how an assignment will be graded, which allows them to avoid losing unnecessary points. Additionally, after submitting an assignment, rubrics provide thorough, specific feedback which empowers you to work towards self-improvement. For instructors, rubrics ensure that each student's work is evaluated according to the same standards.

Benefits of a Rubric

- Provide more descriptive feedback than a letter grade or percentage
- Establish clear expectations and grading criteria
- Foster fair and consistent grading practices
- Encourage self-improvement



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Closing

Especially if you have never used one before, rubrics can feel overwhelming at first. However, with time and practice, rubrics become valuable tools that encourage you to learn from feedback and works towards self-improvement. To get the most out of a rubric, remember to:

- Review the rubric before you begin an assignment *and* prior to submitting your completed work.
- Ask your instructor if you have any questions about the rubric prior to completing and submitting an assignment. You can also reach out to your instructor after receiving a grade for additional clarification and feedback.

Questions? Email us at academicskills@mail.waldenu.edu

