

2022 – 23 Departmental Assessment Plan

Department/Program/Unit: Human and Social Sciences	Date: 09/29/2022
Related: University Goals/Outcomes: Knowledge Communication Select Select	
Members involved with development of Plan: Sara Brady, Thad Warren, Kathy Miller, Kim Boyce	
Departmental/Program/Unit Student Outcome: <i>What student outcome from the departmental matrix will be assessed? (It is suggested that you cut and paste directly from the matrix. Outcomes should represent the absolute priorities for learning- students must be able to do [this] when they finish our program).</i> State as follows: Students should be able to [action verb] [something]. Students should be able to communicate subject-related knowledge.	
Background: <i>What factors caused you to choose this particular assessment outcome? If you chose this outcome because of a perceived problem, please explain.</i> Both full-time and adjunct faculty noted difficulty in students' ability to write a cogent argument. Some students struggle with mechanics and organization, whereas other struggle with applying their knowledge in a formal manner. Last year we assessed sociology courses and this year, we would like to include psychology courses.	
Question: <i>What specific question(s) are you attempting to answer through assessing this student outcome? (What are you trying to find out? There may be more than one question, but no more than three.)</i> Q1: To what extent are students who are in entry-level psychology courses proficient in written communication? Q2: To what extent are students who are in senior-level psychology courses proficient in written communication? Q3: Are senior-level students taking psychology courses more proficient in written communication than their entry-level counterparts?	
Methodology: 1. OBJECT* - <i>What data (i.e. artifact, exam score, detailed description of assignment) will be collected?</i> Students enrolled in PSY 101 (Intro to Psychology) and PSY 445 (Abnormal Psychology) will complete a take-home essay assignment (see attached). Psychology students will complete the psychology essay prompt. Students will either turn in hard-copies or submit their written papers to Blackboard. a. <i>How does this data address the assessment question?</i> The attached rubric will be used. The rubric will determine the extent to which students explained the context of and purpose for writing, content development, genre and disciplinary conventions (APA writing), sources and evidence, and control of syntax and grammar. i. <i>Include/attach a description/example of assessment tool to be used.</i> 2. <i>How will data be collected?</i> Professors of PSY 101 (Spring) and PSY 445 (Fall) will administer the instructions and ask students to return their written responses. To encourage students to complete the assessment, the instructors will require it as part of an assignment in the course.	
Analysis of Artifacts: PERFORMANCE CRITERIA* - Discuss: 1) <i>How the artifacts will be analyzed (attach rubrics/scoring tools if used):</i> At least two faculty members will be asked to analyze each artifact according to the rubric. Names will be removed from the artifacts prior to analysis. Disagreements with scoring will be discussed between faculty raters. 2) <i>How you will know if it is good (i.e. score required by % of students):</i> To answer Questions 1 and 2, descriptive statistics will be used to determine the percentage of students who scored 2 or higher on each rubric criteria. Percentages equal to or higher than 75% will be considered adequate. To answer Question 3, two independent samples t tests will be conducted on students' total rubric scores to determine whether mean differences are found between students in entry-level courses and students in 400-level courses. A t test will be conducted. Statistical significance ($p < .05$) and Cohen's d larger than 0.25 will determine whether or not there is a difference between groups.	
Submitted by: Sara Brady Date: 09/29/2022 Assessment Committee Reviewed (Date): 11/1/22 Department Chair notified of approval/or additional action needed: Approved 11/1/22	

Psychology Assessment Essay

Purpose

The purpose of the essay is to analyze critically the major theories of psychology, apply one theory to a specific scenario, and discuss the strengths and limitations of the theory to address psychological processes and behavior.

Content

Your written, typed essay should address the following:

1. Identify the six main psychological theories for explaining human behavior and mental processes.
2. Explain the core characteristics of one of these theoretical approaches (models) that you most identify with.
3. In detail, apply this theoretical approach (model) to explain someone's thinking, feeling, and/or behavior. In your explanation, generate a specific scenario when applying this theory. Use the core characteristics explained earlier in your explanation.
4. Be sure to include the strengths and limitations of the model that you choose. Adequately compare and contrast the other psychological theories when addressing the strengths and limitations of the theory that you chose to analyze and explain.
5. Use relevant, scholarly sources to support main ideas and arguments. Scholarly sources could include peer-reviewed articles, textbooks, or edited books.

Form

1. Essay should be between 3-5 pages, double-spaced.
2. Essay should include a defined introduction, body, and conclusion.
3. Essay should use standard grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
4. Essay should adhere to basic APA style in form and citation style. Essay should include a title page and reference page (an abstract page is not necessary).

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@acu.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, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Framing Language

This writing rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of educational institutions. The most clear finding to emerge from decades of research on writing assessment is that the best writing assessments are locally determined and sensitive to local context and mission. Users of this rubric should, in the end, consider making adaptations and additions that clearly link the language of the rubric to individual campus contexts.

This rubric focuses assessment on how specific written work samples or collections of work respond to specific contexts. The central question guiding the rubric is "How well does writing respond to the needs of audience(s) for the work?" In focusing on this question the rubric does not attend to other aspects of writing that are equally important: issues of writing process, writing strategies, writers' fluency with different modes of textual production or publication, or writer's growing engagement with writing and disciplinary through the process of writing.

Evaluators using this rubric must have information about the assignments or purposes for writing guiding writers' work. Also recommended is including reflective work samples of collections of work that address such questions as: What decisions did the writer make about audience, purpose, and genre as s/he compiled the work in the portfolio? How are those choices evident in the writing -- in the content, organization and structure, reasoning, evidence, mechanical and surface conventions, and citational systems used in the writing? This will enable evaluators to have a clear sense of how writers understand the assignments and take it into consideration as they evaluate.

The first section of this rubric addresses the context and purpose for writing. A work sample or collections of work can convey the context and purpose for the writing tasks it showcases by including the writing assignments associated with work samples. But writers may also convey the context and purpose for their writing within the texts. It is important for faculty and institutions to include directions for students about how they should represent their writing contexts and purposes.

Faculty interested in the research on writing assessment that has guided our work here can consult the National Council of Teachers of English/ Council of Writing Program Administrators' White Paper on Writing Assessment (2008; www.wpacouncil.org/whitepaper) and the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2008; www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123784.htm)

Glossary

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

- **Content Development:** The ways in which the text explores and represents its topic in relation to its audience and purpose.
- **Context of and purpose for writing:** The context of writing is the situation surrounding a text: who is reading it? who is writing it? Under what circumstances will the text be shared or circulated? What social or political factors might affect how the text is composed or interpreted? The purpose for writing is the writer's intended effect on an audience. Writers might want to persuade or inform; they might want to report or summarize information; they might want to work through complexity or confusion; they might want to argue with other writers, or connect with other writers; they might want to convey urgency or amuse; they might write for themselves or for an assignment or to remember.
- **Disciplinary conventions:** Formal and informal rules that constitute what is seen generally as appropriate within different academic fields, e.g. introductory strategies, use of passive voice or first person point of view, expectations for thesis or hypothesis, expectations for kinds of evidence and support that are appropriate to the task at hand, use of primary and secondary sources to provide evidence and support arguments and to document critical perspectives on the topic. Writers will incorporate sources according to disciplinary and genre conventions, according to the writer's purpose for the text. Through increasingly sophisticated use of sources, writers develop an ability to differentiate between their own ideas and the ideas of others, credit and build upon work already accomplished in the field or issue they are addressing, and provide meaningful examples to readers.
- **Evidence:** Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, writers' ideas in a text.
- **Genre conventions:** Formal and informal rules for particular kinds of texts and/or media that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices, e.g. lab reports, academic papers, poetry, webpages, or personal essays.
- **Sources:** Texts (written, oral, behavioral, visual, or other) that writers draw on as they work for a variety of purposes -- to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

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Definition

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Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet basic (cell one) level performance.

	Exemplary 4	3	Proficient 2	Basic 1
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.