

Resource Guide

Two Paths to Student-Created Rubrics

Using rubrics to aid in the assessment of written assignments can be an inclusive teaching practice, when students have access to that rubric before beginning a project. Including students in the creation of that rubric can increase students' agency in their learning as well as enhance the rubric's usefulness for learning.

Below are two possible ways an instructor could include students in creating rubrics for written projects.

Path One: Starting with a Draft

One approach to student-created rubrics is for students to begin by working with a draft rubric the instructor has already created for the specific project. This method is especially helpful for students who have not had much experience with rubrics or who are new in their role as college students. The draft rubric provides a baseline for structure, organization, and standards while promoting an expectation for alteration.

An example project for this path

Students read through the draft rubric in groups identifying the key terms as well as those terms that are unclear. Then, each group makes revisions to the rubric as they see fit. The instructor compiles those suggested revisions into a second draft rubric and submits it to students for one more round of revision, this works well as a whole class activity. Then, the instructor submits a final rubric to the class for approval.

Path Two: Starting with Learning Objectives

A second approach to student-created rubrics is for students (either individually or in small groups) to begin by working with the learning objectives of the project and create a rubric that assesses those objectives. This method often works best with upper-level or graduate students who have more experience translating project expectations into an artifact of learning and have had more practice working with rubrics to achieve those expectations.

An example project for this path

Students read and discuss the project's learning objectives and guidelines set by the instructor. They identify the key concepts and skills embedded within the objectives and describe what it might "look" like to achieve the ideal version of those concepts and skills, keeping in mind all alternative ways to achieve that ideal, within the guidelines of the project. Once they have described the ideal, they then describe the less successful alternatives and why these alternatives would be seen as achieving lower degrees of success. Instructors could either choose to allow students each to use their own rubrics, after a process of revision and approval

in cooperation with the instructor, or to compile the rubrics in some way and return the compiled version to students for further stages of revision and final approval.

Resources

Stevens, Dannelle D. and Antonia J. Levi. *Introduction to Rubrics, 2nd Ed.* Sterling: Stylus, 2012.

Walvoord, Barbara E. *Assessment Clear and Simple, 2nd Ed.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.

For more information or to discuss how you might incorporate these ideas into your courses, contact the Reinert Center at ctl@slu.edu.