

# LEARNING TO ASSESS

Fall 2017

## National Report on Rubrics

*Measuring Outcomes Across Curricula*



The American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) recently published, "On Solid Ground: A Preliminary Look at the Quality of Student Learning in the United States", which validates the type of authentic assessment practiced at PVCC. The report detailed the use of Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics that, like our GEA rubrics, measure key outcomes that both employers and educators believe to be critical. The rubrics allow instructors to measure learning using locally developed assignments resulting in direct and authentic assessment. This approach puts faculty in the driver seat since they can select rubric dimensions that best fit the learning context as opposed to standardized assessments. Most importantly, rubrics benefit students because they clarify expectations, link abilities across disciplines, and communicate a consistent message about criteria used to measure competency. We encourage you to read the report on the GEA libguide under scholarship of assessment.

<http://paradisevalley.libguides.com/generaleducation>

### Tips



**Use Technology:** Did you know that you can build a rubric with learning outcomes to score assignments in Canvas?



**Working Together:** Consider partnering with an adjunct faculty member to focus on a specific learning outcome.

### Point to Ponder

Assessment is authentic when assignments:

- Mirror real life situations
- Incorporate student interests
- Allow for multiple opportunities to practice knowledge and skills
- Reinforce abilities across disciplines
- Require problem solving, reflection, creativity, and application
- Are followed up with timely feedback that students can make sense of and use to improve

Jankowski, N. A. (2016) Unpacking Relationships: Instruction and student outcomes. Washington, D. C. American Council on Education.

### Your AAT Chairs are wondering...



In what ways do you help students to transfer learning across disciplines? What are you doing to help students further develop skills learned from another class?

Which cocurricular activities would enhance learning related to your classes? How can we encourage students to participate?

## Trending Data

Number of Students Assessed from 2010-2016 Using GEA Rubrics								
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Total
Technology	570	746	828	1,057	1,087	607	536	5,431
Problem Solving	762	1,603	1,184	1,504	1,235	1,051	1,047	8,386
Written Communication	820	538	1063	970	834	612	697	5,534
Oral Communication	718	345	817	703	635	678	943	4,839
Information Literacy	241	100	224	143	441	413	498	2,060
Critical Thinking			557	533	722	995	1,178	3,985
Diversity & Global Awareness			172	632	173	129	306	1,412
Critical Reading					724	528	485	1,737
Civic Engagement							239	239
	3,111	3,332	4,845	5,542	5,851	5,013	5,929	33,623

GEA Participation		
Term	2015-2016	2016-2017
RFP Faculty	72 (67%)*	77 (70%)*
Adjunct Faculty	36	46
Total Faculty	108	123

\* Percentage of RFP entering scores in GEA including service faculty

## Reinforcing Writing Skills in Interpersonal Communication



Dr. Walt Thielen submitted a stellar example of an authentic, direct, and formative assessment. He used the Written Communication Rubric to improve students' writing skills for discussion agendas. Students often used incomplete sentences and made typical grammar and punctuation errors. Dr. Thielen administered a pre and post test to 62 students across three sections of COM 110. On the writing mechanics dimension of the rubric, students scored an average of 1.45 on the pre-test. To help students improve, he employed three strategies which included: highlighting every incomplete sentence on the outline, giving students a handout on writing mechanics when the graded assignment was returned, and providing a checklist for completing the next outline that made expectations for writing explicit. As a result, the average score on the post-test rose to 1.90 for a 31% increase. Kudos to Dr. Thielen for helping students become better writers, documenting his efforts, and emphasizing that institutional learning outcomes are interdisciplinary.

## AAC&U General Education Assessment Conference

Members of AAT attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) General Education Assessment Conference-*Design Thinking for Student Learning* from Feb. 23-25 in downtown Phoenix. Themes included: using design thinking to empower learners, "capturing learning beyond traditional transcripts in ways that are meaningful to employers", making general education personally relevant for students, and examples from the winning institutions of the *Excellence in Assessment Designation* (NILOA).

