



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

This rubric was adapted by an interdisciplinary team representing Columbia Gorge Community College through a process that examined and modified the AACU Written Communication Value Rubric to meet the needs of CGCC's Institutional Learning Outcomes assessment. The rubric articulates fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubric is intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The CGCC team agrees with the utility of the AACU Value rubric, which "is to position learning at 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".

Institutional Learning Outcome #1

Through their respective disciplines, CGCC students who earn a degree can: Communicate effectively using appropriate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. (Communication)

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 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 disciplinarity through the process of writing.

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.

Glossary

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

- **Audience, Context and purpose:** 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 are followed, including: 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 credit and build upon work already accomplished in the field or issue they are addressing, and provide meaningful examples to readers.
- **Content Development:** The ways in which the text explores and represents its topic in relation to its audience and purpose.
- **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. This rubric was created using the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>

- **Evidence:** Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, writers' ideas in a text.
- **Organization:** The arrangements of elements within the work, for example introduction, body and conclusion
- **Presentation:** Professional and consistent appearance and format - consistency of font, margins are appropriate to the discipline, etc.
- **Syntax:** The arrangement of words and phrases that create well-formed sentences in a language.
- **Mechanics:** Spelling, punctuation and capitalization that assists readers in grasping the author's intended meaning.
- **Graphics:** Charts, graphs, illustrations, tables, images used enhance and support content.

Criteria	4	3	2	1	Not Demonstrated 0 (Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (level one) level performance.) Not demonstrated can be assigned to individual students	Not Applicable (Evaluators are encouraged to assign "not applicable" if student work was not required to address a category. If assignment is used for assessment of all students, all students should be scored as N/A in this category and an explanation is required in space provide on web form.)
Audience, Context, and Purpose <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 fully responds to the assigned task(s) and is applied consistently through all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s).	Demonstrates some attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned task(s), without a clear focus	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned task(s).	Does not meet minimum criteria in addressing the audience, context, and purpose for writing.	Demonstration of interpretation not required for assignment.
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content and ideas that illustrate the writer's command and deep understanding of the subject, skillfully shaping the whole work .	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to accurately explore ideas within the subject and shape the whole work .	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and accurately explore ideas through most of the work .	Uses appropriate and relevant content to accurately develop simple ideas in some parts of the work .	Does not meet minimum criteria in addressing content development.	Demonstration of representation not required for assignment.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the assignment.	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the assignment.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the assignment.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the assignment.	Does not meet minimum criteria in demonstrating the use of sources to support ideas in the assignment.	Demonstration of calculation not required for assignment.

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Organization and Presentation	Demonstrates consistent, skillful, and detailed attention to organization, presentation, and stylistic choices as appropriate to the assignment.	Demonstrates consistent and skillful organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment.	Follows expectations for a consistent system of basic organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment.	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment.	Does not meet minimum criteria in organization and presentation.	Demonstration of application/analysis not required for assignment
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses academic language that skill- fully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency , and is nearly error-free .	Uses straightforward language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity . The language in the work has few errors .	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers, although writing may include some errors .	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.	Does not use language that demonstrates control of syntax and mechanics .	Demonstration of assumption not required for assignment.
Graphics	Graphics effectively support the communication of ideas; visual aids are integrated into the presentation seamlessly , and foster a full understanding of the message.	Graphics generally support the communication of the student’s ideas; visual aids effectively enhance the presentation of ideas and foster a good understanding of the message.	Graphics support the communication of the student’s ideas but are only partially useful or informative .	Graphics do not particularly support the communication of the student’s ideas; they are insufficient to be of much use as they do little to elevate understanding .	Graphics are virtually non-existent, serve no purpose, or are not credible .	Demonstration of communication not required for assignment.