



## Analyzing General Education Course Syllabi for Alignment with Defined Core Skills

### Study Summary

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Over the past few years, much work has been done at Northern Arizona University (NAU) to develop ways of assessing what undergraduate students really know at the completion of their degree, in terms of the skills and the themes valued in the general education curriculum. One critical step in this direction was the development, in the academic year 2003/2004, of new definitions for three core skills, namely effective writing, critical reading, and oral communication. In addition, during Fall 2004, a comprehensive plan to assess student learning outcomes in general education courses was developed.

As an initial step in this assessment plan, NAU's Office of Academic Assessment (OAA) conducted a content analysis of syllabi of general education courses that are categorized as teaching one or more of the three specified skills. Syllabi are often used for three purposes: "syllabus as a legal document, syllabus as an organizational tool, and syllabus as a means of communication" (Eberly, Newton, & Wiggins, 2001, p. 59). Communication is typically defined as communication between the instructor and the students. However, given the administrative structure of the general education program, syllabi are also the primary means by which instructors communicate with the administering faculty committee and demonstrate how a course addresses one or more outcomes of the general education curriculum. Thus, the goal of this content analysis study was twofold: 1) to determine the extent to which general education courses align with the new definitions developed; and 2) to determine how these core skills are taught and assessed, as evidenced by the objectives, assignments, and content of the course outline present in the syllabi.

There are 308 courses approved for general education credit at NAU that are classified as teaching one or more of these three core skills. Of these, 192 syllabi from 29 academic units were included in the content analysis. The syllabi were analyzed using a scoring rubric, which was designed to determine alignment along four parameters:

- 1) Whether the student learning outcomes specified in the course syllabus relating to the skill(s) were aligned (i.e., similar) to the new definitions of the skill(s);
- 2) Whether the syllabus included any assignment(s) designed to assess students' learning outcomes related to the skill(s);

- 3) Whether any of these assignments were valued, that is contributed in some way to the student's final course grade;
- 4) Whether there was any evidence of the teaching and assessment of the skill(s) in the course outline.

The results from the analysis are summarized below.

#### *Findings for Effective Writing*

One-hundred and fifty-two syllabi marked as teaching effective writing were included in the analysis. Approximately one third (32%) of the syllabi were found to provide learning outcomes related to effective writing that clearly align with the new definition of this skill. However, over 40% of the syllabi were found not to provide a definition of learning outcomes related to effective writing that clearly and explicitly aligns with the adopted definition. Overall, 80% of the syllabi in the dataset included two or more assignments related to effective writing. Over 90% of the syllabi were found to have assessments related to effective writing that were graded and contributed to the student's final grade. Finally, only a small minority of the syllabi (less than 10%) were found to include some indication of the teaching of the skill in the outline for the course, whereas the majority of the syllabi (over 45%) were found to include assignments related to the skill on the course outline. Over one third of the syllabi (36%) were found to include only topics related to the content of the course.

#### *Findings for Critical Reading*

One-hundred and sixty syllabi marked as teaching critical reading were included in the analysis. Over 60% of the syllabi were found to provide learning outcomes related to critical reading that clearly align with the new definition of this skill. In addition, 25% of the syllabi were found not to provide a definition of learning outcomes related to critical reading that clearly and explicitly aligns with the adopted definition. Overall, 80% of the syllabi in the dataset included two or more assignments related to critical reading. 90% of the syllabi were found to have assignments related to critical reading that were graded and contributed to the student's final grade. Only a small proportion of the syllabi (less than 10%) were found to include some indication of the teaching of the skill in the outline for the course, whereas the majority of the syllabi (over 50%) were found to include assignments related to the skill on the course outline. An additional 27% of the syllabi were found to include only topics related to the course.

#### *Findings for Effective Oral Communication*

Sixty-six syllabi marked as teaching oral communication were included in the analysis. Less than 20% of the syllabi were found to provide learning outcomes related to oral communication that clearly align with the new definition of this skill. Almost 30% of the syllabi were found not to provide a definition of learning outcomes related to oral communication that clearly and explicitly aligns with the adopted definition. Overall, less than 30% of the syllabi in the dataset included two or more assignments related to oral communication. Whereas over 70% of the syllabi in the sample were found to include either one or no assignments related to oral communication. In over 50% of the cases, the assignments related to oral communication were graded and contributed to the

student's final grade. Finally, only a small proportion of the syllabi (less than 10%) were found to include some indication of the teaching of the skill in the outline for the course, whereas a greater proportion of syllabi (24%) were found to include assignments related to the skill on the course outline. The majority of the syllabi (over 35%) were found to include no mention of the skill in their outline.

## Conclusions

The results of the present content analysis study showed that critical reading resulted in the highest proportion of alignment (87%) with the new definition of the skill. The analysis also showed that liberal studies courses generally include assignments that are designed to assess critical reading (83%) and that contribute to the student's final grade (95%). The second best aligned skill was effective writing. Syllabi were found to include learning outcomes that overall aligned with the new definition of effective writing in over 76% of the cases; and they were found to include assignments designed to assess effective writing (81%) and that contribute to the student's final grade (92%). In contrast, less than half of the syllabi (47%) were found to have learning outcomes for oral communication that aligned with the new definition for this skill, and even fewer were found to include assignments designed to assess this skill (37%).

The results from this analysis also revealed that, overall, syllabi course outlines tend to include only topics related to the course, and, in a few cases assignments related to the skills. However, evidence of explicit teaching of the skill is seldom present. This was found to be the case not only for oral communication (the skill that overall resulted in the least alignment) but also for effective writing and critical reading. Indeed, for all three skills, less than 10% of the syllabi evidenced the teaching of the skill in the course outline.

Based on the results of this study and the qualitative observations made by the two coders, several categories of recommendations emerged: 1) policies, procedures, and support related to syllabus construction and review; and 2) three separate plans of action based on syllabi rankings.

### *Policy and Procedure Recommendations*

- Require academic units to submit a new copy of their approved course syllabi on a consistent schedule (e.g., every 3 years or every 5 years) and when significant changes are made to the course.
- Continue efforts to look for overlap between the existing list of skills. Based on recommendations gathered from several conference presentations (Sanders & Herrington-Perry, 2004; Rogers, 2004), it would be useful to narrow NAU's list of 9 skills to 3 to 5.
- Define remaining skills and explicitly publish these definitions for faculty.
- Create an explicit policy regarding the number of skills that a course needs to teach. This policy should include an upper limit and state that the skill needs to be taught and formally assessed. Required types of embedded assignments related to the skill(s) selected, the rubric(s) for assessing the required assignment, and the mechanism for submitting assessment data should also be included in the policy.
- Create examples and/or model syllabi to demonstrate how to write objectives that clearly communicate student learning outcomes that are consistent with the new definitions. As part of these examples, also demonstrate the consistent mention of teaching the skill throughout the syllabus.

- Publish and provide a copy the syllabus review rubric and results to the academic unit and faculty member.

## Communicating with Academic Units Based on Syllabi Rankings

Determining alignment between the specified skill and the new definition was the primary purpose of this study. Based on the combined results of Question Type 1 (i.e., EW1, CR1, and OC1) and Question Type 2 (i.e., EW2, CR2, and OC2), the following is a list of recommended courses of action for the syllabi reviewed based on rankings.

### *Category 1: Question Type 1 = Score of 4*

The faculty/academic units teaching the courses that fall into this category should be contacted regarding the new policies adopted by the general education committee related to approved course (e.g., requirement regarding submitting updated syllabi, expectations related to using rubrics for a designated assignment and submitting data for assessment purposes, etc.). The faculty teaching courses that fall into this category should be approached regarding using and submitting rubric data. Some of the courses that received a score of 4 for Question Type 1, but received a score 1 or 2 for Question Type will likely need to be contacted regarding identifying an appropriate type of assignment for assessing the specified skill.

### *Category 2: Question Type 1 = Score of 3*

The faculty/academic units teaching the courses that fall into this category should be contacted regarding the new policies adopted by the general education committee related to approved course (e.g., requirement regarding submitting updated syllabi, expectations related to using rubrics for a designated assignment and submitting data for assessment purposes, etc.). The faculty teaching courses that fall into this category should be given copies of the new definitions, example syllabi, and the required assignment types. The faculty/academic units teaching these courses should be asked to revise and resubmit copies of their syllabi based on an agreed upon timeline and to select a date for beginning use of and submission of assessment data.

### *Category 3: Question Type 1 = Score of 1 or 2*

The faculty/academic units teaching the courses that fall into this category should be contacted regarding the new policies adopted by the general education committee related to approved course (e.g., requirement regarding submitting updated syllabi, expectations related to using rubrics for a designated assignment and submitting data for assessment purposes, etc.). The faculty teaching courses that fall into this category should be given copies of the new definitions, example syllabi, and the required assignment types. The faculty/academic units teaching these courses should be encouraged to and be provided support (e.g., workshop and/or consultation) regarding appropriate revisions as well as potentially limiting or narrowing the selection of skills, etc. The revised syllabus should be resubmitted based on an agreed upon timeline and the faculty/academic unit should be asked to select a date for beginning use of and submission of assessment data.

## Summary

The recommendations outlined in Section 4 are intended as a guide for implementing the general education assessment plan. By approaching faculty/academic units according to the three categories outlined above, the goal is to create a more cohesive curriculum that includes mechanisms for gathering embedded assessment data. The recommendations will allow for a phased approach to both updating the curriculum and collecting assessment data which will allow time to implement appropriate procedural revisions as needed and determine the type of administrative and analytical support needed for managing the curriculum and assessment components.

## References

Eberly, M.B., Newton, S.E, & Wiggins, R.A. (2001). The syllabus as a tool for student-centered learning. *The Journal of General Education*, 50(1), 56-74.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. London: Sage Publications.

Sanders, K. & Herrington-Perry, M. (2004, June 12). *Going public: Translating campus assessment results for off-campus audiences*. Presentation at the 2004 American Association for Higher Education Assessment Conference.

Rogers, G. M. (2004, June 12). *Program and institutional assessment: Best practices*. Presentation at the 2004 American Association for Higher Education Assessment Conference.

**THIS IS A REFERENCE RUBRIC TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE ANALYTIC RUBRIC SCALE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Demonstrated Competence for Effective Oral Communication: Holistic Rubric**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; #:</b>		<b>Section:</b>				
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Term:</b>				
<b>Instructor:</b>		<b>Type of Assignment</b>				
<b>Demonstrated Competence LS Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Exemplary oral communication presentation</b>	<b>Good oral communication presentation</b>	<b>Developing oral communication presentation</b>	<b>Limited oral communication presentation</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory oral communication presentation</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Organization:</b> Organize and deliver content based on audience, setting, allotted time, and purpose.	Topic, purpose, and content are clearly appropriate for audience. Presentation is expertly matched with audience expectations, allotted time, and avoids basic summary or other information already known to audience. Mode of presentation expertly fitted to setting. Sources are well documented.	Topic, purpose, and content are appropriate for audience. Presentation matches with audience expectations, allotted time, and avoids basic summary and most information already known to audience. Mode of presentation fitted to setting. Sources are documented.	Topic, purpose, and content not clearly geared toward audience. Presentation somewhat matches with audience expectations, allotted time. Some summary and information already known to audience. Mode of presentation not well suited to setting. Some sources are documented.	Topic, purpose, and content not geared toward audience, audience expectations, or allotted time. Most summary and information already known to audience. Mode of presentation poorly fitted to setting. Documentation is seldom or infrequent.	Topic, purpose, and content are inappropriate for audience, context, or allotted time. Presentation largely misses audience expectations and level of expertise. Mode of presentation not suited to setting. Documentation is not present.	
<b>Delivery:</b> Speak with appropriate oral communication techniques.	A connection with the audience is effectively established; no vocal pauses and slang or distracting nonverbal behaviors detract from the presentation; presentation is exceptionally articulate.	A connection with the audience is made and maintained; vocal pauses and slang seldom occur; distracting nonverbal behaviors are mostly controlled detracting little from the presentation; presentation is mostly	Some connection with the audience is made; vocal pauses and slang and nonverbal gestures occur with some distraction for the audience; presentation could be more articulate.	Minimal connection with the audience is made; vocal pauses and slang overpower the presentation and nonverbal gestures distract the audience and distract from the message; presentation not very articulate.	No connection with the audience is made; vocal pauses and slang and gestures constantly distract the audience and overpower the presentation; inarticulate.	

		articulate.				
<p><b><u>Interaction:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Listen actively and respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to questions.</b></li> <li>• <b>Keep audience attention and is aware of nonverbal cues from audience. Audience is listening.</b></li> </ul>	The speaker has anticipated questions and is prepared to respond with material that goes beyond ideas already presented; speaker actively listens and responds thoroughly to questions; speaker demonstrates agility in fielding even difficult questions expertly and thoroughly, extending, reinforcing, and clarifying presentation.	The speaker has anticipated some questions and is mostly prepared to respond with material that goes beyond ideas already presented; speaker listens and responds to questions; speaker is able to field some difficult questions with ease and some thoroughness, while extending, reinforcing, and clarifying presentation.	The speaker has anticipated some questions, but may respond with repetition of material already presented; speaker listens to questions but response is limited; responses to questions missing some opportunities to extend, reinforce and clarify the presentation.	The speaker does not anticipate questions, and responds with repetition of material already presented; speaker does not seem to listen to questions resulting in limited responses thus not extending, reinforcing or clarifying the presentation.	The speaker fails to invite comments and/or questions; speaker has not anticipated basic questions, and is unprepared to respond; speaker's response to questions are superficial, unrelated to purpose of presentation; responses to questions fail to reinforce, expand, or clarify presentation.	
<p><b><u>Use of Presentation Aids:</u> Create appropriately professional supplemental materials that reinforce the presentation.</b></p>	Speaker provides and exceeds the required amount of appropriate supporting material based on the audience and occasion. Supplemental materials are incorporated logically, insightfully, elegantly; and reinforce the presentation.	Speaker provides the required amount of appropriate supporting material based on the audience and occasion. Supplemental materials are mostly incorporated logically, and adequately reinforce the presentation.	Speaker provides some appropriate supporting material based on the audience and occasion. Supplemental materials are noticeable and an attempt is made to incorporate them logically; but more is needed to reinforce the presentation.	Speaker provides few appropriate supporting material based on the audience and occasion. Supplemental materials are inappropriate, or unclearly incorporated or are noticeably absent.	Supplemental materials are not incorporated or incorporated inappropriately or unclearly.	

**THIS IS A SCORING RUBRIC TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE HOLISTIC RUBRIC SCALE DESCRIPTIONS  
Demonstrated Competence for Effective Oral Communication: Analytic Rubric**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; #:</b>		<b>Section:</b>	
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Term:</b>	
<b>Instructor:</b>		<b>Type of Assignment</b>	

<b>Oral Performance</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Communication</b> <b>LS Student Learning Outcomes</b>							
<b>1. Organization: (___ points)</b> Organize and deliver content based on audience, setting, allotted time, and purpose.							
<b>2. Delivery: (___ points)</b> Speak with appropriate oral communication techniques.							
<b>3. Interaction: (___ points)</b> Listen actively and respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to questions. Keep audience attention and is aware of nonverbal cues from audience. Audience is listening.							
<b>4. Use of Presentation Aids: (___ points)</b> Create appropriately professional supplemental materials that reinforce the presentation.							

<b>Evaluation (A-F scale)</b>							

**Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

# Syllabus Review Instrument

REVIEWER:

Date:

COURSE PREFIX/NUMBER:

SPECIFIED SKILL(S):  Effective Writing;  Critical Reading;  Oral Communication

		<b>Reviewer Ratings</b>			
<b>Q#</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	not aligned 1	not enough info 2	possibly aligns 3	outcomes align 4
<b>1</b>	(EW1). Student learning outcomes related to <b>effective writing</b> are aligned with LS definitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		not addressed 1	minimal/ low 2	adequate/ medium 3	exceptional/ high 4
<b>2</b>	(EW2). Authentic assessment(s) related to <b>effective writing</b> is incorporated into the course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	(EW3). Assessment(s) related to <b>effective writing</b> is 'valued' to encourage best work	<input type="checkbox"/> (N/A)	<input type="checkbox"/> (No)	<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes)	
<b>4</b>	(EW4). Timeline/schedule for course reflects content related to <b>effective writing</b> outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(EW5). Description of and outcome assignment(s) align to:				
		not aligned 1	not enough info 2	possibly aligns 3	outcomes align 4
<b>5</b>	(CR1). Student learning outcomes related to <b>critical reading</b> are aligned with LS definitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		not addressed 1	minimal/ low 2	adequate/ medium 3	exceptional/ high 4
<b>6</b>	(CR2). Authentic assessment(s) related to <b>critical reading</b> is incorporated into the course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	(CR3). Assessment(s) related to <b>critical reading</b> is 'valued' to encourage best work	<input type="checkbox"/> (N/A)	<input type="checkbox"/> (No)	<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes)	
<b>8</b>	(CR4). Timeline/schedule for course reflects content related to <b>critical reading</b> outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		<b>Reviewer Ratings</b>			
<b>Q#</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	not aligned 1	not enough info 2	possibly aligns 3	outcomes align 4
	(CR5). Description of and outcome assignment(s) align to:				
<b>9</b>	(OC1). Student learning outcomes related to <b>oral communication</b> are aligned with LS definitions	not aligned 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	not enough info 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	possibly aligns 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	outcomes align 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>10</b>	(OC2). Authentic assessment(s) related to <b>oral communication</b> is incorporated into the course	not addressed 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	minimal/ low 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	adequate/ medium 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	exceptional/ high 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>11</b>	(OC3). Assessment(s) related to <b>oral communication</b> is 'valued' to encourage best work	<input type="checkbox"/> (N/A)	<input type="checkbox"/> (No)	<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes)	
<b>12</b>	(OC4). Timeline/schedule for course reflects content related to <b>oral communication</b> outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(OC5). Description of and outcome assignment(s) align to:				

*Operational Definitions*

Q1. Student learning outcomes related to [skill] are aligned with LS definitions

Aligned = course outcomes are worded similarly and/or course outcomes are defined similarly to the LS definition for the skill

Q2. Authentic assessment(s) related to LS [skill] is incorporated into the course

Authentic = the assessment(s) related to the specified learning outcome would demonstrate student's ability related to skill (i.e., the course outcome related to the skill is actually assessed through course work)

Q3. Assessment(s) related to LS [skill] is 'valued' to encourage best work

'Valued' = the assessment is graded/scored and/or there is extrinsic motivation for the student to do his/her best work or at least good work

Q4. Timeline/schedule for course reflects content related to student learning outcomes

Timeline/schedule reflects content related to outcomes = the skill is not just stated as an outcome but it is also stated/reflected in the activities/content/assignments of the class

Q5. Description of assignment(s) and outcome assignment aligns to:

Description = assignment label or brief summary and outcome align with; primary purpose is to be able to communicate with faculty about identified assignments as possible items for assessment

Scales

Q1. *Note: Look through stated outcomes as well as details related to assignments.*

*Not aligned (1)* = outcomes do not appear similar in nature to LS defined outcomes

*Not enough info (2)* = not enough information included in syllabus to determine alignment with defined outcomes (i.e., skill listed in cover sheet or course description, but not actually stated in list of course outcomes)

*Possibly aligns (3)* = more information needed; difficult to determine based on wording of outcomes, but other evidence such as assignments or content exists related to skill

*Outcomes align (4)* = course outcomes overlap/are similar in nature to LS defined outcomes

Q2. *Note: Consider both the type of assignment as well as the assignment criteria.*

*Not addressed (1)* = course has been marked as teaching specified skill, but no evidence exists related to the three criteria

*Minimal/low (2)* = 1 item related to at least one outcome exists related to the specified criteria

*Adequate/medium (3)* = 2 items related to at least two outcomes exists related to the specified criteria

*Exceptional/high (4)* = more than 2 items related to more than two outcomes exists related to the specified criteria

Q3.

*Not addressed (1)* = course has been marked as teaching specified skill, but no evidence exists related to the three criteria

*No(2)* = the identified assignment(s) are not scored/graded (i.e., the assignment(s) does NOT contribute to the student's overall grade)

*Yes (3)* = the identified assignment(s) are scored/graded (i.e., the assignment(s) does contribute to the student's overall grade)

Q4.

*Not addressed (1)* = course has been marked as teaching specified skill, but no evidence exists related to the three criteria

*Minimal/low (2)* = only topics related to the content of the course are listed on the timeline/schedule

*Adequate/medium (3)* = skill related assignment(s) are listed on the timeline/schedule

*Exceptional/high (4)* = the skill is specifically listed on the timeline/schedule

**Skill:** Effective written communication

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate steps in the writing process
- Tailor writing to a specific audience
- Focus writing on a specific purpose
- Provide logically coherent pieces of written work
- Apply general writing standards

**Skill:** Critical reading

Students will be able to:

- Summarize accurately and comprehensively
- Recognize the most significant textual and visual elements
- Incorporate/use specific examples and/or quotations
- Recognize patterns and valid comparatives
- Demonstrate an understanding/comprehension of the material
- Demonstrate evidence of an ability to analyze and evaluate texts
- Demonstrate the ability to explicitly identify criteria and use these criteria accurately to evaluate a piece of written work

**Skill:** Effective oral communication

Students will be able to:

- Organize and deliver content based on audience, location, allotted time, and purpose
- Speak with appropriate oral communications techniques
- Listen and respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to questions
- Create appropriate professional supplemental materials that reinforce the presentation

**THIS IS A DRAFT REFERENCE RUBRIC TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE ANALYTIC RUBRIC SCALE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Demonstrated Competence for Critical Reading: Holistic Rubric**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; #:</b>		<b>Section:</b>	
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Term:</b>	
<b>Instructor:</b>		<b>Assignment</b>	

<b>Demonstrated Competence LS Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Exemplary reading performance</b>	<b>Thoughtful reading performance</b>	<b>Literal reading performance</b>	<b>Limited reading performance</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory reading performance</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<p><b><u>Discover/determine the central claims and purpose of the reading:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Summarize accurately and comprehensively</b></li> <li>• <b>Demonstrate an understanding/comprehension of the material</b></li> </ul> <p><b>(Comprehension)</b></p>	Demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the reading as a whole. Summarizes the main point of the reading and numerous details, using specific examples and/or quotations.	Demonstrates an understanding of the reading as a whole. Summarizes the main point of the reading and some details, providing some examples and/or quotations.	Demonstrates some understanding of portions of the reading or of the reading as a whole. Summarizes the main point of the reading with few details and/or some errors.	Demonstrates a limited or superficial understanding of the reading. Misses important points essential to summarizing the text.	Demonstrates little or no comprehension of the reading or seriously misunderstands portions of the reading or the reading as a whole. Unable to summarize the argument, or the summary contains significant errors.	
<p><b><u>Identify the evidence:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognize the most significant textual and/or visual elements</b></li> <li>• <b>Incorporate/use specific and valid comparatives</b></li> </ul> <p><b>(Interpretation)</b></p>	Demonstrates strong ability to interpret clues or evidence from the reading to make inferences, draw conclusions, and generalize beyond the reading. Carries on an internal dialogue with the author. Takes risks in interpreting the text.	Demonstrates ability to interpret clues or evidence from the reading to make inferences, draw conclusions, and generalize beyond the reading. Some internal dialogue with the author. Takes some risks in interpreting the text.	Demonstrates some ability to interpret clues or evidence from the reading to make inferences, draw conclusions, and generalize beyond the reading.	Demonstrates little ability to interpret clues or evidence from the reading to make inferences, draw conclusions, and generalize beyond the reading.	Does not demonstrate an ability to interpret clues or evidence from the reading to make inferences, draw conclusions, and generalize beyond the reading.	
<p><b><u>Recognize the kinds of reasoning/logic used in the reading:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognize patterns and valid comparatives</b></li> </ul>	Demonstrates perceptive connections between the reading and other texts and/or outside experiences. Supports these connections with evidence. Combines	Demonstrates connections between the reading and other texts and/or outside experiences. Supports these connections with some evidence.	Demonstrates some connections between the reading and other texts and/or outside experiences, but with little depth and/or support.	Demonstrates difficulty in making connections between the reading and other texts and/or outside experiences, or such connections are superficial.	Does not demonstrate an ability to make connections between the reading and other texts and/or outside experiences.	

<b>(Comparison)</b>	information in new ways.					
<b><u>Evaluate the reading, or make a judgment about the context:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demonstrate evidence of an ability to analyze and evaluate texts</b></li> <li>• <b>Demonstrate the ability to explicitly identify criteria and use these criteria accurately to evaluate a piece of written work.</b></li> </ul> <b>(Critique)</b>	Demonstrates perceptive evaluation of the argument, narrative, context, style, evidence, and/or methodology of the reading, as well as its overall value, importance, or persuasiveness. Supports this evaluation with evidence. Challenges the text.	Demonstrates evaluation of the argument, narrative, context, style, evidence, and/or methodology of the reading, as well as its overall value, importance, or persuasiveness. Supports this evaluation with some evidence.	Demonstrates some evaluation of the reading, but with little depth and/or support.	Demonstrates difficulty in evaluating the text, or such evaluations are superficial.	Does not demonstrate an ability to evaluate the text.	

Type of material used in assignment:

popular sources (magazines, newspapers, etc.)

secondary sources (college level monographs, books, anthologies, journals)

primary sources (historical within culture and discipline)

textbook (lower and upper division)

creative sources (poems, films, performance)

advanced sources (theoretical, professional journals, etc.)

**THIS IS A DRAFT SCORING RUBRIC TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE HOLISTIC RUBRIC SCALE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Demonstrated Competence for Critical Reading: Analytic Rubric**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; #:</b>		<b>Section:</b>	
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Term:</b>	
<b>Instructor:</b>		<b>Assignment</b>	

<b>Reading Performance</b>	Exemplary	Thoughtful	Literal	Limited	Unsatisfactory	N/A	Points
<b>LS Student Learning Outcomes</b>							
<b>1. Discover/determine the central claims and purpose of the reading (Comprehension): ( ____ points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize accurately and comprehensively</li> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding/ comprehension of the material</li> </ul>							
<b>2. Identify the evidence (Interpretation): ( ____ points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the most significant textual and/or visual elements</li> <li>• Incorporate/use specific and valid comparatives</li> </ul>							
<b>2. Recognize the kinds of reasoning/logic used in the reading (Comparison): ( ____ points)</b>  Recognize patterns and valid comparatives							
<b>4. Evaluate the reading, or make a judgment about the context (Critique): ( ____ points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate evidence of an ability to analyze and evaluate texts</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to explicitly identify criteria and use these criteria accurately to evaluate a piece of written work.</li> </ul>							
<b>Evaluation (A-F scale)</b>							

**Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

<b>Course Prefix &amp; #:</b>		<b>Section:</b>	
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Term:</b>	
<b>Instructor:</b>		<b>Assignment</b>	

**THIS IS A REFERENCE RUBRIC TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE ANALYTIC RUBRIC SCALE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Demonstrated Competence for Effective Written Communication: Holistic Rubric**

<b>Demonstrated Competence</b> <b>Liberal Studies Learning Objective</b>	<b>Exemplary writing performance</b>	<b>Good writing performance</b>	<b>Developing writing performance</b>	<b>Limited writing performance</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory writing performance</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<u><b>Purpose, thesis, Audience:</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Tailor writing to a specific audience</b></li> <li><b>Focus writing on a specific purpose (explanatory, persuasive, descriptive)</b></li> </ul>	Demonstrates a coherent, original, well-developed and clear thesis/purpose for a specific audience (for example, experts, children, peers).	Demonstrates a coherent thesis/purpose and clear argument generally aimed at an appropriate audience (for example, experts, children, peers).	Demonstrates a thesis but purpose and argument are not entirely clear or consistently aimed at an appropriate audience (for example, experts, children, peers).	Demonstrates an unclear or general thesis, purpose or argument without appropriate audience in mind (for example, experts, children, peers).	Lacks a thesis and analysis. Does not write for the intended audience (for example, experts, children, peers).	
<u><b>Organization and Development of Ideas (or Content, structure, analysis):</b></u>  <b>Provide logically coherent pieces of written work</b>	Effective organization contributes to full development of presentation. All ideas in the paper flow logically in an organized manner. For example: evidence of excellent integration of sources that strongly support thesis and is evaluated critically; argument is logically consistent and easily synthesized; analysis challenges the reader.	Generally effective organization contributes to development of presentation. Ideas in the paper flow logically, but some inconsistencies and/or unclear transitions. For example: evidence of integrated sources generally supports thesis and are sometimes evaluated critically; argument is generally consistent and synthesis is evident; some challenging analysis.	Inconsistent organization. Ideas in the in the paper are sometimes incoherent or unconnected, do not flow logically, and/or lack transitions. For example: evidence and sources are insufficient, do not always support the thesis, and are rarely evaluated critically; argument is not always consistent or easily synthesized; analysis is not always clear.	Inadequate organization. Lacks logical structure, coherent ideas, and/or transitions. For example: evidence is not clearly evaluated or connected to thesis; argument lacks analysis, synthesis, and is confusing.	Lacks a discernible structure or evidence. For example: no evaluation, analysis, or synthesis of evidence or argument.	

<p><b><u>Mechanics:</u></b></p> <p><b>Apply general writing standards</b></p>	<p>Contains no sentence structure/syntax, grammar, punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors. Sources are used and cited correctly according to an appropriate documentation style. Format is consistent with that used in discipline.</p>	<p>Contains minor errors in sentence structure/syntax, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization. Sources are used and cited according to an appropriate documentation style. Format is somewhat consistent with that used in discipline.</p>	<p>Contains some errors in sentence structure/syntax, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization that sometimes distract from the argument. Sources are used inconsistently or are cited incorrectly. Format is lacking consistency with that used in the discipline.</p>	<p>Contains multiple or recurring errors in sentence structure/syntax, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization that distract from the argument. Sources are not used, used inconsistently, and/or cited incorrectly. Format is not consistent with that used in discipline.</p>	<p>Contains major errors in sentence structure/syntax, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization that distract from the argument. Sources are not used or cited correctly.</p>	
<p><b><u>Engages Fully in the Writing Process:</u></b></p> <p>Demonstrate steps in the writing process</p>	<p>The writer thoughtfully participates in the revision and editing process of any drafts based on suggestions (self and peer); thoughtfully critiques own and others works; willingly collaborates with others; and engages in self-reflection (discussing the writing process).</p>	<p>The writer participates in the revision and editing process of any drafts based on suggestions (self and peer); critiques own and others works; collaborates with others; and engages in self-reflection (discussing the writing process).</p>	<p>The writer somewhat participates in the revision and editing process of any drafts based on suggestions (self and peer); offers some critique to own and others works; somewhat collaborates with others; and demonstrates some self-reflection (discussing the writing process).</p>	<p>The writer participates little in the revision and editing process based on suggestions (self and peer) though only simple edits to the draft are evident; little critique to own and others works; minimal collaborative effort and self-reflection (discussing the writing process).</p>	<p>The writer does not participate in any revision or editing process, critique own and others works, or collaborate in the writing process.</p>	



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**Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**