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## Authentic Grading

Authentic Test	Traditional Test
Requires students to create solutions to complex, real-world problems by integrating and applying what they have learned	More often requires students to recall or recognize correct answers
Usually involves a single, complex task	Test usually is composed of items that are unrelated to each other
Can provide direct evidence of student mastery of complex learning objectives	Usually provides indirect evidence of student mastery of complex learning objectives
Scoring generally requires subjective judgment	Scoring more often is mechanical
Variety of answers may be acceptable, although some may be better than others	Usually there is one correct answer
Expectations and criteria may be known in advance, e.g., a rubric may be provided to students	Scoring criteria generally not known to students in advance
Generally formative feedback is provided to students	More often summative feedback is provided to students, telling them what they don't know, rather than how to improve
Opportunities may be available to redo or revise the product	Usually there is one-chance testing, with no opportunity for revision
May occur in a complex environment, such as a field placement or laboratory	Usually done as a timed, paper-and-pencil test in a classroom
May involve students working cooperatively or with other colleagues to construct a solution	Usually students take the test by themselves
May encourage deeper learning	May encourage memorization and "cramming"

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“Multiple choice tests, in particular, provide little evidence of the analytical power, creativity, resourcefulness, empathy, and abilities to apply knowledge and transfer skills from one environment to another that students will need for college success.”

(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002, *Greater Expectations*, p. 13)

“Conventional test questions, be they from national tests or the teacher down the hall, do not replicate the kinds of challenges that adults face in the workplace, in civic affairs, or in their personal lives.”

(Grant Wiggins, 1998, *Educative Assessment*, p. 22)

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## Scoring Rubrics

Scoring rubrics are explicit schemes for classifying products or behaviors into categories that vary along a continuum. They can be used to classify virtually any product or behavior, such as essays, research reports, portfolios, works of art, recitals, oral presentations, performances, and group activities. Judgments can be self-assessments by students; or judgments can be made by others, such as faculty, other students, fieldwork supervisors, and external reviewers. Rubrics can be used to provide formative feedback to students, to grade students, and/or to assess programs.

There are two major types of scoring rubrics:

- Holistic scoring — one global, holistic score for a product or behavior
- Analytic rubrics — separate, holistic scoring of specified characteristics of a product or behavior

<b>Holistic Rubric for Assessing Student Essays</b>	
Inadequate	The essay has at least one serious weakness. It may be unfocused, underdeveloped, or rambling. Problems with the use of language seriously interfere with the reader's ability to understand what is being communicated.
Developing Competence	The essay may be somewhat unfocused, underdeveloped, or rambling, but it does have some coherence. Problems with the use of language occasionally interfere with the reader's ability to understand what is being communicated.
Acceptable	The essay is generally focused and contains some development of ideas, but the discussion may be simplistic or repetitive. The language lacks syntactic complexity and may contain occasional grammatical errors, but the reader is able to understand what is being communicated.
Sophisticated	The essay is focused and clearly organized, and it shows depth of development. The language is precise and shows syntactic variety, and ideas are clearly communicated to the reader.

<b>Analytic Rubric for Peer Assessment of Team Project Members</b>			
	<b>Below Expectation</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Exceptional</b>
Project Contributions	Made few substantive contributions to the team's final product	Contributed a "fair share" of substance to the team's final product	Contributed considerable substance to the team's final product
Leadership	Rarely or never exercised leadership	Accepted a "fair share" of leadership responsibilities	Routinely provided excellent leadership
Collaboration	Undermined group discussions or often failed to participate	Respected other's opinions and contributed to the group's discussion	Respected other's opinions and made major contributions to the group's discussion

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## Online Rubrics

For links to online rubrics, go to <http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/sloa/>. Many rubrics have been created for use in K-12 education, and they can be adapted for higher education. It's often easier to adapt a rubric that has already been created than to start from scratch.

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### Rubrics have many strengths:

- Complex products or behaviors can be examined efficiently.
  - Developing a rubric helps to precisely define faculty expectations.
  - Well-trained reviewers apply the same criteria and standards.
  - Summaries of results can reveal patterns of student strengths and areas of concern.
  - Rubrics are criterion-referenced, rather than norm-referenced. Raters ask, "Did the student meet the criteria for level 5 of the rubric?" rather than "How well did this student do compared to other students?" This is more compatible with cooperative and collaborative learning environments than competitive grading schemes and is essential when using rubrics for program assessment because you want to learn how well students have met your standards.
  - Ratings can be done by students to assess their own work, or they can be done by others, e.g., peers, fieldwork supervisions, or faculty.
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### Suggestions for Using Rubrics in Courses

1. Hand out the grading rubric with the assignment so students will know your expectations and how they'll be graded. This should help students master your learning objectives by guiding their work in appropriate directions.
  2. Use a rubric for grading student work and return the rubric with the grading on it. Faculty save time writing extensive comments; they just circle or highlight relevant segments of the rubric. Some faculty include room for additional comments on the rubric page, either within each section or at the end.
  3. Develop a rubric with your students for an assignment or group project. Students can then monitor themselves and their peers using agreed-upon criteria that they helped develop. Faculty find that students often create higher standards for themselves than faculty would impose on them.
  4. Have students apply your rubric to some sample products before they create their own. Faculty report that students are quite accurate when doing this, and this process should help them evaluate their own products as they are being developed. The ability to evaluate, edit, and improve draft documents is an important skill.
  5. Have students exchange paper drafts and give peer feedback using the rubric, then give students a few days before the final drafts are turned in to you. You might also require that they turn in the draft and scored rubric with their final paper.
  6. Have students self-assess their products using the grading rubric and hand in the self-assessment with the product; then faculty and students can compare self- and faculty-generated evaluations.
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## Using Rubrics for Grading and Assessment

Rubrics can be useful for grading, as well as assessment. For example, points can be assigned and used for grading, as shown below, and the categories can be used for assessment. Faculty who share an assessment rubric might assign points in different ways, depending on the nature of their courses, and they might decide to add more rows for course-specific criteria or comments.

Notice how this rubric allows faculty who may not be experts on oral presentation skills to give detailed formative feedback to students. This feedback describes present skills and indicates what they have to do to improve. Effective rubrics can help faculty reduce the time they spend grading and eliminate the need to repeatedly write the same comments to multiple students.

<b>Analytic Rubric for Grading Oral Presentations</b>				
	<b>Below Expectation</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Score</b>
Organization	No apparent organization. Evidence is not used to support assertions.  (0-2)	The presentation has a focus and provides some evidence which supports conclusions.  (3-5)	The presentation is carefully organized and provides convincing evidence to support conclusions.  (6-8)	
Content	The content is inaccurate or overly general. Listeners are unlikely to learn anything or may be misled.  (0-2)	The content is generally accurate, but incomplete. Listeners may learn some isolated facts, but they are unlikely to gain new insights about the topic.  (5-7)	The content is accurate and complete. Listeners are likely to gain new insights about the topic.  (10-13)	
Style	The speaker appears anxious and uncomfortable, and reads notes, rather than speaks. Listeners are largely ignored.  (0-2)	The speaker is generally relaxed and comfortable, but too often relies on notes. Listeners are sometimes ignored or misunderstood.  (3-6)	The speaker is relaxed and comfortable, speaks without undue reliance on notes, and interacts effectively with listeners.  (7-9)	
Total Score				

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## Classroom Assessment

(Angelo & Cross, 1993, *Classroom Assessment*, Jossey-Bass)

Classroom assessment involves an array of strategies for examining learning and learning processes in a class session. Classroom assessment strategies are used under the assumption that faculty can improve learning by defining objectives, evaluating progress toward those objectives, and changing directions when needed. Their students develop better self-monitoring and metacognitive skills and benefit from the improved learning environment.

### Examples

- **The Minute Paper.** What was the most important thing you learned today? What questions remain uppermost in your mind as we conclude this session?
- **The Muddiest Point.** What was the muddiest point in today's class session?
- **The One-Sentence Summary.** At the battle at the Alamo, who did what to whom, when, where, how, and why?
- **Directed Paraphrasing.** In two or three sentences, explain positive reinforcement in a way that would be useful to the parents of adolescent children.
- **Application Cards.** Give an example of a public health issue that could be examined by conducting an analysis of variance.

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## Quick Checks

Think about sprinkling some Quick Checks into your class.

- **Dichotomous Hand Signals.** Thumbs up/thumbs down on a dichotomous decision
  - **Fingers.** Students show estimates or select from among multiple responses.
  - **Explanations.** Ask students to explain concepts to their partners, with partners verifying their accuracy or letting you know if there's a discrepancy they can't resolve.
  - **Brief Open-Ended Questions.** Give students time to think, perhaps by requesting a brief written response first, followed by dyad, small group, or whole class discussion.
  - **One-Word Papers.** Perhaps follow up with oral or written explanation or dyad, small group, or whole class discussion.
  - **Brief Writing Assignment.** Could request a summary, application, question, example, personal position, exam question, or "clear and fuzzy" ideas. Discuss sample papers. Perhaps integrate these assignments into learning journals.
  - **Time for Note Taking.** Pause to give students time to consolidate their notes. Verify that what they wrote is accurate.
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## **Program Assessment**

**Program assessment** is an on-going process designed to monitor and improve student learning.

Faculty:

- develop explicit statements of what students should learn.
- verify that the program is designed to foster this learning.
- collect empirical data that indicate student attainment.
- use these data to improve student learning.

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## **Program Assessment Steps**

1. Define learning goals and objectives.
  2. Check for alignment between the curriculum and objectives.
  3. Develop a meaningful, manageable, and sustainable assessment plan.
  4. Collect assessment data.
  5. Close the loop – collective reflection and action.
  6. Routinely examine the assessment process.
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## Promoting Student Success

What can faculty do to promote student success in a learner-centered environment?

1. **Cohesive Curriculum.** Work with colleagues to design a cohesive curriculum.
2. **Course Learning Objectives.** Delineate what you want students to learn in your course.
3. **Course Alignment.** Verify that your course learning objectives align with program learning objectives.
4. **Instructional Design.** Design the course to engage students in learning opportunities directly tied to course learning objectives.
5. **Prerequisites.** Consider prerequisite knowledge and skills; communicate them to students; and offer, if possible, opportunities to remediate deficiencies before students enroll or early in the term.
6. **Diverse Learners.** Be sensitive to students who have differing life experiences or who learn in different ways. Offer a variety of learning opportunities.
7. **Grading.** Be sure that assignments and grading promote and align with the course learning objectives.
8. **Classroom Assessment.** Use classroom assessment to monitor student learning and make appropriate adjustments.
9. **Program Assessment.** Use program assessment to refine the curriculum.
10. **Student Support.** Faculty and students do not interact in a vacuum. Be sure that student support services (tutoring center, etc.) provide appropriate support for course and program learning objectives.
11. **Collaboration.** Share what you're learning about teaching and learning with colleagues, and learn from their experiences.



**More Ideas, Insights, and Brainstorms for Promoting Student Success**