Texas A&M University Core Curriculum
Written Communication Rubric

Definition

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board states that the Texas Core Curriculum objective of Communication is "to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication."[1] Further, the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) defines written communication as "the development and expression of ideas in writing... It can involve working with many different writing technologies and mixing texts, data, and images."[2]

Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be applied to student-produced work (artifacts), from a range of disciplines and a variety of genres. Ideally, the artifact assessed with this rubric will be produced by an individual student; however, this rubric may also be applied to group projects. 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?"

Glossary

The following definitions clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

Audience: Assumed to be instructor(s) or classmates unless otherwise noted.

Content development: The text's exploration, interpretation, and/or exposition of the topic (i.e., more than simply a statement without explanation).

Context of and purpose for writing: 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 or reason for writing. Writers might want to persuade or inform; they might want to report or summarize information; they might want to reflect on complexity or confusion; they might want to argue with other writers or connect with other writers.

Conventions: Formal and informal rules for particular kinds of texts that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices (e.g., lab reports, research papers, poetry, webpages, essay exam questions, or personal essays). These rules 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). For handwritten artifacts, legibility and organization that is under the student's control will also be considered (i.e., not penalized for a poor-quality scan of the artifact produced by the instructor).

Outside sources: Any information beyond what the instructor provides within the assignment prompt or description. Appropriateness of the sources is determined by the expectations for the genre (e.g., citing a blog may be appropriate for a reflection essay but not for a lab report).

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[1] 19 Tex. Admin. Code §4.28 (2021).

[2] American Association of Colleges & Universities. (2009). *Written communication VALUE rubric*. https://www.aacu.org/initiatives/value-initiative/value-rubrics/value-rubrics-written-communication

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	Advanced 8	7	Competent 6	5	Developing 4	3	Beginner 2	1	Not Present 0
Context of and Purpose for Writing	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, *audience*, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.		Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, *audience*, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with *audience*, purpose, and context).		Demonstrates awareness of context, *audience*, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of *audience*'s perceptions and assumptions).		Demonstrates minimal attention to context, *audience*, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., may not make thinking explicit, self as *audience*, vague).		No apparent awareness of context or purpose demonstrated.
Content Development	Illustrates mastery of the topic, conveying the writer's comprehensive understanding. If used, *outside sources'* connections to and appropriateness for the topic are thoroughly explained.		Formulates ideas about the topic. If used, *outside sources* are well integrated and clearly relate to and are appropriate for the topic.		Develops ideas about the topic, but content may be unnecessarily repetitive and/or simple. If used, *outside sources* are related to or appropriate for the topic.		States simple ideas about the topic but may be contradictory, may not contain explanation, and/or may not be clearly related to the topic. If used, *outside sources* may be poorly integrated and/or unrelated to or inappropriate for the topic.		No content developed.
Presentation	Demonstrates detailed attention to all elements of *conventions* in an engaging manner.		Consistently follows *conventions* without distracting and/or pervasive mistakes.		Follows the *conventions* but has some areas to improve that do not impede understanding (e.g., occasional confusing word choice, formatting errors, structural issues, etc.).		Attempts to follow *conventions* but understanding is impeded due to poor organization and/or confusing or inappropriate language.		No understanding of *conventions* demonstrated and/or contains illegible portions.

Italicized words appear in the glossary.