QEP Rubric Use Guidelines
University of Houston
Fall '09

The purpose of the rubric is to assess student work relative the six QEP Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). These objectives are:

1. Students will be able to formulate a research question or problem.

2. Students will be able to identify basic principles and knowledge related to their research question or problem.

3. Students will be able to develop a research plan to address or resolve a specific question or problem.

4. Students will be able to collect and interpret data and information in an attempt to resolve the question or problem.

5. Students will demonstrate awareness of the responsible conduct of research.

6. Students will be able to articulate research findings through written, performance, and/or oral presentations.

Application of the Discipline Specific Rubrics

The first step in using the rubric is to select student work from your course that encompasses as many of the student learning objectives as possible. However, it is *not necessary* to provide data on *all* objectives if your "curriculum map" or "evidence inventory" at the beginning of the semester did not indicate all objectives in your course plan.

Each rubric is composed of three performance levels – developing, competent, and exemplary – that span the six SLOs. The rubric uses descriptive anchor statements that define the performance criteria for each SLO, across the three performance levels. Figure 1 provides a generalized example of the rubric layout. The criteria for each performance level are parallel for specific learning outcomes. For example, SLO 1 has 2 criteria for each performance level. SLO 2 has 3 criteria per level and so forth.

It is important to note that the criteria provided for each level should be applied holistically to student work. The criteria are intended to provide guidance over a wide range of assignments and may not all apply in particular instances. For example, in a given class, perhaps only one criterion may apply to an assignment. The instructor would therefore only use the appropriate criterion to evaluate student work.

The guiding question for each instructor should be: what does the *preponderance of evidence* have to say about how to rate a student's work relative to a particular student learning outcome?

Let's use SLO 4 (related to collecting and interpreting data) from Figure 1 to illustrate what this means.

Figure 1. General Rubric Layout

	Developing - 1	Competent - 2	Exemplary - 3
SLO 1	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2
SLO 2	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3
SLO 3	• Criterion 1	• Criterion 1	• Criterion 1
SLO 4	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3 • Criterion 4	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3 • Criterion 4	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3 • Criterion 4
SLO 5	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2
SLO 6	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3	• Criterion 1 • Criterion 2 • Criterion 3

Imagine there are two instructors in two different courses using this rubric to evaluate two different assignments. The first instructor decides only criteria 1 and 2 apply to his assignment while the second instructor sees all four criteria as having relevance to her project. The first instructor would consider criteria 1 and 2 while assessing a student's performance level with regard to collecting and interpreting data. The second instructor would also be judging a student's capability in terms of collecting and interpreting data albeit across a wider range of criteria. Thus, each instructor would be attempting to gauge students' performance relative to SLO 4 as developing, competent, or exemplary using the most appropriate aspects of the general performance level criteria.

As mentioned earlier, instructors must select an assignment that reflects as many SLOs as possible. If an assignment is relevant to only three Student Learning Outcomes, then data for three SLOs would be reported.

Returning to the previous example, perhaps the first instructor is scoring an assignment that covers three SLOs (1, 2, and 4). In this case, the instructor would only assess

student work relative to the three SLOs. Reporting for a single student assignment in this course might look like Figure 2.

Figure 2. Sample Application of General Rubric to a Single Student Assignment for Three SLOs

	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4	SLO 5	SLO 6
Fred Smith	3	3		2		
Susie Snowflake	3	2		2		
Carl Cowboy	2	2		2		

Using the same rubric, the second instructor may decide that all six SLOs apply to her project leading to a similar output but across more SLOs.

Figure 3. Sample Application of General Rubric to a Single Student Assignment for Six SLOs

	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4	SLO 5	SLO 6
Fred Smith	3	3	2	2	2	3
Susie Snowflake	3	2	3	2	3	3
Carl Cowboy	2	2	1	2	2	2

There are some general guidelines that instructors may find useful as they apply the rubrics.

1. Instructors must use their judgment to decide which Student Learning Outcomes apply to particular assignments. For the QEP assessment, they should select an assignment that captures as many SLOs as possible. However, they are not required to assess all the SLOs.
2. Each Student Learning Objective is evaluated in terms of three performance levels: developing, competent and exemplary.
3. Each performance level is defined by general criterion statements that describe what student work should look like at that level.
4. Instructors should use their judgment to decide which criteria are most appropriate for a given assignment.

5. When evaluating student work, instructors should apply the criteria holistically to the assignment and assign a performance level for the relevant Student Learning Objective based on the *preponderance of evidence*.
6. Student performance data will be reported only on the relevant Student Learning Objectives. The maximum number of data points for any assignment is 6 – one for each SLO.

Please let your assessment specialist know if you have any questions on how to apply the rubric.

Your scores must be submitted to Veronique Tran by June 30. Earlier submissions will be welcomed, of course. After all of the data have been collected, we will ask you for your post-implementation feedback on the rubrics, which we will use to refine them for the next round. You may want to keep notes as you score on questions that arise and decisions you had to make which might be helpful for us to know about.