Assessing Core Competencies: Improving with each change in the process

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History

- About Marymount
- Use for SACS
- 4 years
- Started
  - 3 competencies: Critical Thinking, Writing, Information Literacy
  - Lower and upper level papers
Original Process

- Reviewers examine all 3 areas
- Training in large group
- 3 holistic rubrics for each competency area
- 2 rater agreement (if not, then 3rd)
- 75 papers read by each reviewer
Concerns

- Lack of rater agreement
  - Low in certain areas (.03/.28)
- Rater exhaustion
- Errors in data collection
- Difficult to answer important questions (transfers vs. native students)
Concerns

- Lack of rater agreement
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# Original Rubric

## Holistic Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Communication</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establishes control through a sharp, focused thesis or hypothesis</td>
<td>• Thesis or hypothesis too broad for effective treatment within the scope of the assignment</td>
<td>• Fails to articulate a thesis or hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Achieves unity by including only relevant material to support thesis or hypothesis</td>
<td>• Occasionally includes irrelevant material that weakens the unity of the thesis</td>
<td>• Fails to achieve unity by including irrelevant material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Structures material according to a discernible but unobtrusive organizational pattern</td>
<td>• Organizational plan may be somewhat unclear or difficult to discern</td>
<td>• No discernible plan for organizing the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Paragraphs and sentence structure support the communication of ideas</td>
<td>• Paragraphs and sentence structure intermittently support communication of ideas</td>
<td>• Paragraphs and sentence structure hinders communication of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses transitions effectively</td>
<td>• Occasionally uses transitions effectively</td>
<td>• Does not use transitions effectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Current Rubric

## New Rubrics – Analytical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Attempt that fails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The paper establishes control of a topic through a focused thesis, hypothesis, or theme that engages complex ideas without oversimplifying or distorting them.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant material (and only relevant material) is included; summary and narrative, if included, are used appropriately and effectively.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The paper is effectively and coherently organized, with ideas arranged in a clear sequence; paragraphs are unified and fully developed.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The writer adopts a tone and makes word choices appropriate to the topic and the academic context. The sentences are concise and clear and, as appropriate to the discipline, fluent.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The paper is reasonably free of errors in grammar and usage.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OVERALL</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Attempt that fails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The paper works as an academic project in scope, focus, analysis, deliberation, and execution.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other changes

- Process – multiple reviewers
- Improved training
Concerns

- Lack of rater agreement
  - Low in certain areas (.03/.28)
- Rater exhaustion
- Errors in data collection
- Difficult to answer important questions (transfers vs. native students)
Changes

- Raters focused on one competency area
- Move from paper to online entry in computer lab
Concerns

- Lack of rater agreement
  - Low in certain areas (.03/.28)
- Rater exhaustion
- Errors in data collection
- Difficult to answer important questions (transfers vs. native students)
Not all Changes at Once

- **Group 1**
  - Move from reviewing all competencies to one

- **Group 2**
  - Holistic to Analytical Rubrics
  - 2 reviewers to multiples
  - Special Focus on Training

- **Group 3**
  - Paper to electronic entry
Results from Changes

- More focused raters
- Better rater agreement
- More confidence in validity of data
- Better able to answer questions about student performance