

## **PLENARY SESSION: MEASURING UP TO LEARNING EXPECTATIONS: RUBRICS AS A GUIDE TO LEARNING**

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**Jacaranda Educational Development, TLT Group**



**Friday, July 10th, 9:15-10:45am**  
**LOCATION: Meyers Center Auditorium**

Bonnie Mullinix is Co-President of [Jacaranda Educational Development](#) and Senior Consultant for Faculty and Educational Development with the [TLT Group](#). With nearly 30 years experience as an educator in domestic and international settings, her last decade has been focused on supporting faculty and educational development in Higher Education. She has served as founding director and/or designer for two Centers for Teaching and Learning and consultant to multiple colleges and universities, drawing from her experience as faculty teaching in undergraduate, liberal arts, research and professional graduate settings. Dr. Mullinix has facilitated more than twelve sessions guiding faculty and committees through the development and use of quality rubrics for enhancing classroom practice and achieving institutional learning outcomes.

Bonnie holds her Doctorate and Masters in Adult and International Education from the Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst and her undergraduate degree in Transdisciplinary Studies from University of California, Santa Cruz. Author of over 45 publications, Dr. Mullinix has facilitated workshops and presented more than 50 keynotes, workshops and sessions at professional conferences. She currently serves in official leadership capacities in the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network and the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

More details available on her CV at: [http://www.jacarandaeducation.net/Resources/CV\\_BB Mullinix-08.pdf](http://www.jacarandaeducation.net/Resources/CV_BB Mullinix-08.pdf)

## Session Description

Rubrics are an effective tool for measuring multiple dimensions of complex performances and artifacts of student work. They also serve as transparent guides to assessment that promote learning at many levels. This plenary session will actively engage participants in co-constructing a rubric for assessing the quality and design of rubrics and considering characteristics of rubrics that simultaneously measure, direct and inspire performance. Advantages and challenges, types and steps for developing rubrics and associated scoring charts will be covered in an effort to simultaneously demystify rubrics and share ideas for developing these tools to clearly identify measurable indicators of success, guide formative and summative assessment and support self-reflective learning.

## Session Plan

**Session Goal:** To actively explore indicators of quality rubrics and begin to construct workable rubrics for courses/assignments based on a deepened understanding of designing assessment for learning.

**Session Objectives:** *By the end of the workshop session participants will have:*

1. Defined the term “rubric” and related assessment terms and discussed how these inform assessment for learning ;
2. Constructed a rubric for rubric and discussed its usefulness as a guide for understanding various aspects of and evaluating rubrics;
3. Considered types and steps in creating rubrics;
4. Explored sample rubrics and outlined elements of their own rubric for a course/assignment

### **Support Materials/Handouts & References:**

This Handout - *Measuring up to Learning Expectations: Rubrics as a Guide to Learning, including Rubric for Rubric and Sample Rubrics and Scoring Sheets*

Mullinix, B. B. (2002-2009). *Rubrics website:* <http://tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm>

This session will cover:

- What is a Rubric and why would you want to use one? [10 min]
- A Rubric for Rubrics Assessment Tool [30-35 min]
- Types of Rubrics (holistic, analytic; general, task-specific) [10 min]
- Using Rubrics [20 min]
  - o in Class
  - o Using Rubrics for Grading
- Sample Rubrics, Useful Links and References [5-10 min]
- Closure [5-10 min]

**Duration:** 1 ½ hours (*note: generally designed for 2-3 hours this has been redesigned to fit 1 ½ hours*)

## Definitions ~ What is a Rubric?

The Oxford English Dictionary offers its second definition of rubric to be:

*A descriptive heading or title; a designation, category. Also, an injunction, a general rule.*

It is the latter part of this second definition that fuels current use in educational circles.

In *Assessment of Student Achievement* (6th ed., 1998), Norman Gronlund offers:

***Scoring Rubric** - A set of scoring guidelines that describes the characteristics of the different levels of performance used in scoring or judging a performance.*

The following definition, taken from the glossary of *Understanding Educational Measurement* by Peter McDaniel (1994), also provides a good starting point:

***Rubric** - A scoring rubric is a set of ordered categories to which a given piece of work can be compared. Scoring rubrics specify the qualities or processes that must be exhibited in order for a performance to be assigned a particular evaluative rating.*

*In simple terms* – It shows how learners will be assessed and/or graded. A rubric provides a clear guide as to how what they **do** in a course will be **assessed**.

Depending on the rubric structure it often provides a narrative description of performance and products that not only indicate what should be addressed in an assignment but also expectations regarding quality work and various levels of acceptability of products/performance that can guide students.

## Why Use a Rubric?

- Clarifies and demystifies the grading process;
- Encourages learners to become aware of and monitor their own levels of performance;
- Allows learners to select and address their desired level of performance (and associated grades they will get);
- Decreases the number of questions regarding expectations for assignments, performance, and grades given;
- Increases objectivity of grading and learner awareness of their performance.

## Types and Uses of Rubrics

Types	Purpose/Distinction*	Focal Use	Samples**
<b>Holistic</b>	provide a single score based on an overall impression of learner achievement on a task.	To provide overall evaluation guidelines that clarify how grades relate to performance/achievement, such as in course grades	<a href="#">Course grading rubric</a> <a href="#">Presentation Rubric</a>
<b>Analytic</b>	provide specific feedback along several dimensions	To break assignments or scores down into separate components for grading (description, analysis, grammar, references, etc.)	<a href="#">Practicum Portfolio Rubric/Scoring Sheet***</a>
<b>General</b>	contain criteria that are general across tasks	Designed to provide general guidance as to expectations, such as for grading of written assignments	<a href="#">Course grading rubric</a> <a href="#">Position Paper Scoring/Feedback Sheet***</a>
<b>Task-specific</b>	are unique to a task/assignment	Designed to provide detailed guidance regarding a specific assignment or task	<a href="#">Practicum Portfolio Rubric</a> <a href="#">Research Paper Scoring/Feedback Sheet</a> ***

\* adapted from Schreyer Institute for Innovation in Learning

\*\* Samples of rubrics and scoring sheets available for viewing at: [www.tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm)

\*\*\* scoring/feedback sheets designed to be used with a full descriptive rubric (e.g. course grading)

### Creating a Rubric – Key Steps:

1. **Identify the type and purpose of the Rubric** - Consider what you want to apply assess/evaluate and why (see matrix above).
2. **Identify Distinct Criteria to be evaluated** - Develop/reference the existing description of the course/assignment/activity and pull your criteria directly from your objectives/expectations. Make sure that the distinction between the assessment criteria are clear.
3. **Determine your levels of assessment** - Identify your range and scoring scales. Are they linked to simple numeric base scores? Percentages? Grades or GPAs?
4. **Describe each level for each of the criteria, clearly differentiating between them** - For

each criteria, differentiate clearly between the levels of expectation. Whether holistically or specifically, there should be no question as to where a product/performance would fall along the continuum of levels. (Hint: Start at the bottom (unacceptable) and top (mastery) levels and work your way “in”).

5. **Involve learners and other stakeholders in development and effective use of the Rubric** - Whether it is the first time you are using a particular rubric or the 100th time, learner (and implementer) engagement in the initial design or on-going development of the assessment rubric helps to increase their knowledge of expectations and make them explicitly aware of what and how they are learning and their responsibility in the learning process.
6. **Pre-test and retest your rubric** - A valid and reliable rubric is generally developed over time. Each use with a new group of learners or a colleague provides an opportunity to tweak and enhance it.

**A Rubric for Rubrics** - Key levels and criteria to use when assessing the quality rubrics are proposed in this working matrix (attached and available online at: [www.tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm)).

### Using Rubrics

**In Class** - Develop and discuss rubrics with learners so they understand how they will be used to evaluate performance and determine grades. Provide rubrics as part of the syllabus at the beginning of the course and revisit and discuss them as each related assignment comes up.

**For Grading** – Use the rubric categories to develop scoring charts and/or feedback sheets to record your assessment and provide feedback on tasks, activities, papers and general achievement. Make sure your scoring/feedback sheets and rubric categories and terms are well matched and consistent.

### Scoring Charts and Feedback Sheets

Scoring charts help instructors to record and calculate scores when assessing assignments/performance based on analytic and task specific rubrics and can be structured directly into Feedback sheets. Feedback sheets are designed to be shared with learners in order to:

1. Explicitly relate the assigned rubric scores to the course grading scale;
2. Provide additional/specific feedback to learners in the form of comments, highlighted rubric narrative or notes.

## Sample Rubrics and Scoring Feedback Sheets:

Sample Course/Assignment Rubrics listed below are available for your reference, modification and use at: [www.tltgroup.org/mullinix/rubrics.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/mullinix/rubrics.htm) (please credit their origin as appropriate):

- Course Grading Rubric
- Team Presentation Rubrics: Self Assessment & Peer Assessment
- Practicum and Portfolio Assessment Rubric
- Feedback and Scoring Sheets\*\*: Reaction/Position Paper Feedback Sheet, Research Paper Feedback Sheet, Abstract Assessment Feedback Sheet

*\*\* scoring/feedback sheets designed to be used with a full descriptive/holistic rubric (e.g. course grading)*

## Sample Rubrics

### Course Grading Rubric

*Grades will be calculated and assessed as follows:*

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	94-100%	Exemplary
A-	90-93%	<i>Excellent</i>
B+	87-89%	Very Good
B	84-86%	<i>Good</i>
B-	80-83%	Satisfactory
C+	77-79%	
C	73-76%	<i>Acceptable</i>
C-	70-72%	<i>Marginally Acceptable</i>
D+	67-69%	
D	63-66%	Pass
D-	60-62%	<i>Minimal Pass</i>
F	below 60%	Fail

### General Grading Rubric/Criteria:

- A** Work is complete, original, insightful, and of a level and quality that significantly exceeds expectations for the student's current level of study\*. Products demonstrate in-depth understanding of course issues, a high level of analytical skills, are clearly and creatively presented with negligible errors in grammar, citation and source referencing, in proper and consistent style (APA or other) and drawn from an extensive and wide range of quality sources. Technology was explored and where appropriate, effectively utilized in research, analysis and presentations.
- B** Work is complete, of a level that meets expectations and is of a quality that is acceptable and appropriate given the student's current level of study\*. Products demonstrate a solid understanding of course issues, good analysis and are clearly and neatly presented with limited errors in grammar and citation and source referencing in generally consistent style (APA or other) drawn from a good range of sources. Technology was explored and where appropriate, utilized in research, analysis and/or presentations.
- C** Work is partially incomplete, late (with instructor permission/approval) and/or of a level that only partially meets expectations and/or that does not meet acceptable standards given the student's level of study\*. Products demonstrate inconsistent or superficial understanding of course issues with little analysis demonstrated and/or contains significant grammatical errors and incorrect/inconsistent use of citation and referencing drawn from limited and/or mixed quality sources. Technology was minimally or inappropriately used in research, analysis and/or presentations.

- D** Work is incomplete, late and/or of a level that only partially meets expectations and/or is largely unacceptable given the student’s current level of study\* and standing. Products demonstrate limited understanding of course issues and exhibit little analysis and/or contains significant grammatical errors and insufficient/incorrect/inconsistent use of citation and referencing drawn from few (if any) low-quality sources. Technology was not used or inappropriately used in research, analysis and/or presentations.
- F** Major assignments are missing, incomplete or excessively late without permission of instructor and/or demonstrates lack of effort and/or lack of understanding of central course concepts.
- W** Withdrawal [Note: last day to withdraw from classes with an automatic grade of “W” is \_\_\_\_\_ (date)].

\* *level of study* refers to the student’s current status (i.e senior undergraduate, beginning or advanced masters’ candidate).

**Practicum and Portfolio Assessment Rubric and Scoring/Feedback Sheet**

Assessment of Practicum Experience and Portfolio

**For:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Portfolio - Documentation of Practicum Experience	(60%)	Score	Comments
Learning Agreement and Documentation of 75+ hours spent on a variety of field activities	15%		
Documentation of and Reflection on Initial Activities	10%		
Documentation of and Reflection on Progressive Activities	15%		
Documentation of and Reflection on Culminating Activities	15%		
Other Components and Overall quality of Portfolio (organization, clarity, access, supporting documentation: journal/self-evaluation, other letters/information)	5%		
<b>Participation in class and web-based discussions</b>	<b>20%</b>		
<b>Mentor and Instructor's Ratings and Evaluation of Field Experience</b>	<b>20%</b>		
<b>Total/Grade</b>			

**Overall Comments:**



<b>Total: 15</b>	<b>Learning Agreement and Documentation of 75+ hours spent on a variety of field activities</b>	
<10.5	Incomplete, late or otherwise unacceptable submission of Three Party Learning Agreement, Practicum Designs, and/or Activity Logs and/ or insufficient hours or inappropriate activities.	
10.5-11	Mismatched documentation or occasional late submission of Three Party Learning Agreement, Practicum Designs (initial and final), and/or Activity Logs and/or insufficient hours or activities.	
12-13.4	Completion, timely submission and inclusion in portfolio of Three Party Learning Agreement, Practicum Designs (initial/planned and final/actual), and Activity Logs totaling at least 75 hours with adjustments in submissions made in response to requests and guidance from instructor	
13.5-15	Accurate completion and timely submission of Three Party Learning Agreement accompanied by Practicum Designs (initial/planned and final/actual) with appropriate communication and updates regarding any changes required in the practicum design; Exemplary and regular communication regarding Activity Logs and/or evidence of hours or activities undertaken during practicum exceeding those required.	
<b>Total: 10</b>	<b>Completion/Documentation of Initial Activities</b>	
< 7	Incomplete and poorly organized submission that does not match practicum design or is unsupported by activity logs; submissions that contain errors in grammar/spelling; submissions that fail to demonstrate awareness, reflection and growth as a professional.	
< 7 - 7.9	Incomplete submission that does not accurately reflect the final practicum design or are unsupported by activity logs; submissions contain errors in grammar, spelling; submissions that only minimally demonstrate awareness, reflection and growth as a professional.	
8 - 8.9	Includes submissions organized and clearly linked by section headings to listed initial practicum design activities and supported by activity log entries. The submissions represent a complete and clear summary of the activity and its relationship to professional growth and include: description of activity, reflection on observation/actions within the context and personal reactions to the information learned.	
9 - 10	Exemplary submissions organized and clearly linked by section headings to listed initial practicum design activities and supported by activity log entries. Entries demonstrate comprehensive observation, clear and deep reflection and analysis of situations that are grounded in both context and professional knowledge/experience and demonstrate growing awareness of personal styles and increasing understanding of the practicum context. Appropriate/occasional reference is made to relevant professional sources.	
<b>Total: 15</b>	<b>Completion/Documentation of Progressive Activities</b>	
< 10.5	Incomplete and poorly organized submission that does not match practicum design or are unsupported by activity logs; or submissions that contain errors in grammar, spelling, or inadequate organization; or submissions that fail to demonstrate awareness, reflection and growth as a professional..	
< 12	Incomplete submission that does not accurately reflect the final practicum design or are unsupported by activity logs; submissions contain errors in grammar, spelling; submissions that only minimally demonstrate awareness, reflection and growth as a professional.	
12 - 13.4	Includes submissions organized and clearly linked by section headings to listed progressive practicum design activities and supported by activity log entries. The submissions represent a complete and clear summary of the activity and its relationship to professional growth and include: description of activity, reflection on observation/actions within the context and in relation to information previously learned (through experience, coursework, professional readings, etc.).	
13.5 - 15	Exemplary submissions organized and clearly linked by section headings to listed progressive practicum design activities and supported by activity log entries. Entries demonstrate clear and deep reflection and analysis of situations grounded in both context and professional knowledge and experience and demonstrating growth of awareness of personal styles and approaches to specific skills. Citation or use of relevant professional sources are incorporated and documented within the submission as appropriate.	
<b>Total: 15</b>	<b>Completion/Documentation of Culminating Activities</b>	
< 10.5	Incomplete and poorly organized submission that does not match practicum design; final documents contain significant errors in grammar/spelling, are irrelevant or of sub-professional quality.	
10.5 - 11	Incomplete or poorly organized submission, partial mismatch with practicum design, or final documents contain errors in grammar/spelling, are irrelevant or of poor professional quality.	
12 - 13.4	Includes final documents that correspond to listed culminating practicum design activities and are professional, polished documents that can be shared with relevant individuals at the practicum site. The submissions represent a complete and clear summary report of the activity with description, analysis, reflection and recommendations.	
13.5 - 15	Exemplary final documents corresponding to the culminating activities listed in the final practicum design. Documentation is of a high professional quality are both appropriate and useful products demonstrating both learning and professional skills application relevant to the practicum participant's future position. Reflection and recommendations are clear and citation or use of relevant professional sources are incorporated and documented within the product as appropriate.	

<b>Total: 5</b>	<b>Other Components and Overall quality of Portfolio</b>	
< 4	Unorganized, unclear or difficult to access; Incomplete supporting documentation or lack of evidence of regular reflective journal entries or self evaluation.	
4 - 4.4	Complete, clear, well-organized and easy to access; most supporting documentation available and/or in logical and clearly marked locations including regular reflective journal/self-evaluation, other letters/information;	
4.5 - 5	Complete, clear, well-organized and easy to access; all supporting documentation located in sections clearly designated and linked/referenced where appropriate; reflective journal includes regular entries with both clear descriptions and evidence of initial reflections and identification of questions which are followed up in activity reflections.	
<b>Total: 20</b>	<b>Participation in class and web-based discussions</b>	
< 14	Infrequent and inadequate/insubstantial participation in class and web-based discussions.	
14 - 16	Infrequent or inadequate/insubstantial participation in class and web-based discussions.	
16 - 17	Regular (at least weekly) participation in class and/or web-based discussions with significant or meaningful contributions and appropriate postings.	
18 - 20	Frequent and regular participation in both class activities and web-based discussions with regular and significant postings, contributions, reflections and dialogue with colleagues.	
<b>Total: 20</b>	<b>Mentor and Instructor's Ratings and Evaluation of Field Experience</b>	
<14	Both mentor and instructor feel that the candidate may have made progress over the course of the practicum, there remains need for significant improvement or need for additional critical practicum experiences to round out the professional preparation the participant prior to accepting a leadership position in this field.	
14 - 16	Both mentor and instructor feel that, while acceptable progress may have been made, the end result of the practicum experience was the obvious need for candidate improvement and/or need for additional experiences to round out the professional experiences of the participant prior to accepting a leadership position in this field.	
16 - 17	Mentor and/or instructor feel that participant made appropriate use of the practicum experience to develop awareness of, skills for and ability to serve as a professional.	
18 - 20	Mentor and instructor agree that the participant made full use of the practicum experience to develop awareness of, skills for and ability to serve as a professional, strove to extend the experience and responsibilities at every appropriate opportunity and demonstrated a clear understanding of and ability to perform duties associated with the future profession.	

**Position Paper Scoring/Feedback Sheet**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Clarity/Effectiveness of Description/Rationale	30		
Appropriateness and links to/Acknowledgement of influencing theories/theorists/research/researchers	25		
Clarity of Articulated Position	15		
Quality and Formatting of Citations & References	15		
Structure of paper/Grammar and Expression	15		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>		

Overall Comments:

**Research Paper Scoring/Feedback Sheet**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Quality/Depth of Information Presented	25		
Depth of Reflection / Analysis	25		
Discussion of Application/Usefulness	20		
Research Base, Citations and Referencing Format (APA Style)	10		
Clarity, Flow and Structure of paper	10		
Grammar and Expression	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>		

Overall Comments:

## References and Guides to Rubric Development

A wealth of information regarding Rubric Development is available. Below are some collected online reference for your continuing use and exploration.

### ***For Guides to developing Rubrics in support of teaching, learning and self reflection:***

This Rubric reference page - <http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/Rubrics.htm>

Flashlight Resources - TLT Group assessment, evaluation and survey tools

- Flashlight Rubric Samples - <http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/flashlight/rubrics.htm>
- Flashlight Online 2.0 - [www.tltgroup.org/flo2.htm](http://www.tltgroup.org/flo2.htm) - An online survey tool that supports rubric construction and assessment

Scoring Rubrics - [http://ericae.net/faqs/rubrics/scoring\\_rubrics.htm](http://ericae.net/faqs/rubrics/scoring_rubrics.htm) - Definitions & Construction

Rubric Basics - <http://www.inov8.psu.edu/toolbox/RubricBasics.pdf> - Definitions, types, purposes, learner involvement, learning enhancement and rubric use (Schreyer Institute for Innovation in Learning) .

Rubric Builder - [https://www.e-education.psu.edu/facdev/id/assessment/rubrics/rubric\\_builder.html](https://www.e-education.psu.edu/facdev/id/assessment/rubrics/rubric_builder.html) - An interactive web page rubric that can score and give item specific feedback Rubistar - <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/> - Helps you construct online rubrics

Roobrix - <http://roobrix.com/> - Converts your rubric scores into percentages.

Waypoint - <http://www.waypointoutcomes.com/> - online, interactive rubrics that let you create tailored narrative feedback for students based on your rubric and, on a larger scale (multiple classes, programs, institution-wide) collect and analyze longitudinal data on student performance.

### ***Search for sample rubrics at:***

Merlot - <http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm> - Online repository of learning objects and materials for higher education (particularly online teaching, but contains face-to-face and hybrid options).

The Rubric Bank -

[http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas\\_and\\_Rubrics/Rubric\\_Bank/rubric\\_bank.html](http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_and_Rubrics/Rubric_Bank/rubric_bank.html) - Some examples of rubrics in key disciplines (mostly K-12, many at state levels).

The POD Network Custom Search Engine - <http://www.podnetwork.org/search.htm#faculty> – allows you to search Centers for Teaching and Learning within Higher Education for sample rubrics. Example:

- Carnegie Mellon, Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, Examples of Rubrics - <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching//designteach/teach/rubrics.html> - higher education rubrics developed by faculty in different disciplines

For a chance to revisit the topics covered in these rubrics sessions and explore some creative uses of Rubrics (at WSU, AAC&U and beyond), join me for an Online Institute on: ***The Power of Rubrics: Assessment as a Guide to Learning***, July 14, 21 & 28 at 2 pm (ET). See more information and registration links at: <http://www.tltgroup.org/OLI/workshopINFO/rubrics200907.htm>. If you decide to attend (alone or with a group) let me know and I can help arrange a discounted attendance rate.