

Rubric for Evaluating Integrative Thinking and Reflection

Students will use integrative thinking and reflection to demonstrate the ability to make connections across multiple academic contexts and educational experiences.

Instructions: Please select one option for each category that is applicable to the assignment.

	Capstone	Advancing	Milestone	Benchmark	Developing
Connections to Experience <i>Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge</i>	Assignment reflects mature understanding of connections between a broad range of experiences and academic courses.	Assignment reflects connections across a wide range of experiences appropriate to continuing academic and intellectual development.	Assignment reflects connections among a broader range of courses and experience, reflecting continuing intellectual and academic development.	Assignment reflects connections between general academic courses and relevant experience.	Assignment reflects little or no connection between course material and experience.
Connections to Discipline <i>Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives</i>	Assignment reflects mature understanding of interdisciplinary connections.	Assignment indicates a developed sense of connections of knowledge across disciplines.	Assignment reflects awareness to link the experience to academic disciplines relevant to student's course of study.	Assignment reflects the awareness to link the experience to other academic disciplines.	Assignment lacks connections between the experience and other academic disciplines.
Transfer <i>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations</i>	Assignment reflects sophisticated approach to adapting and applying skills, understandings, theories, and/or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations in order to solve problems or explore issues.	Assignment reflects consistent skill to adapt and apply skills, understandings, theories, and/or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations in order to solve problems or explore issues.	Assignment reflects skill to adapt and apply a wider range of skills, understandings, theories, and/or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations in order to solve problems or explore issues.	Assignment reflects skill to adapt and apply some skills, understandings, theories, and/or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations in order to solve problems or explore issues.	Assignment reflects undeveloped skill to adapt and apply skills, understandings, theories, and/or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations in order to solve problems or explore issues.
Integrated Communication <i>Makes strategic and meaningful communication choices across multiple contexts and purposes (professional, academic, and civic)</i>	Assignment demonstrates mature awareness of subject, purpose, and audience through language selection and use, and design and development of media that develops knowledge and enhances audience understanding.	Assignment demonstrates a developed sense of subject, audience, and purpose through language selection and use, and design and development of media that develops knowledge and enhances audience understanding.	Assignment demonstrates attention to subject, audience, and purpose, appropriate language selection and use, and design and development of media.	Assignment demonstrates awareness of and attention to audience, purpose, subject, and format.	Assignment lacks appropriate form of communication in the form of an essay, poster, video, PowerPoint presentation or other appropriate format.
Reflection and Self-Assessment <i>Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflective, or creative work.)</i>	Assignment indicates mature analysis, reflection, judgment, and evaluation of ideas; envisioning of a future self (e.g., making plans that build on past experiences, working with ambiguity and risk, dealing with frustration, considering ethical frameworks) within multiple and diverse contexts.	Assignment indicates developed skill to analyze, reflect, judge, and evaluate ideas; to envision a future self (e.g., make plans that build on past experiences, work with ambiguity and risk, deal with frustration, consider\ ethical frameworks) within multiple and diverse contexts	Assignment indicates some skill to engage in the following: analyze, reflect, judge, and evaluate ideas; envision a future self (e.g., make plans that build on past experiences, work with ambiguity and risk, deal with frustration, consider\ ethical frameworks) across varied contexts.	Assignment indicates beginning skill to engage in some of the following: analyze, reflect, judge, and evaluate ideas; envision a future self (e.g., make plans that build on past experiences, work with ambiguity and risk, deal with frustration, consider\ ethical frameworks) in varied contexts.	Assignment reflects little skill to analyze, reflect, judge, and evaluate ideas; envision a future self (e.g., make plans that build on past experiences, work with ambiguity and risk, dealing with frustration, consider ethical frameworks) in multiple and diverse contexts.

Adapted from the Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

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INTEGRATIVE LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC

For more information, please contact value@aacu.org

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Framing Language

Fostering students’ abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education. Initially, students connect previous learning to new classroom learning. Later, significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unscripted and sufficiently broad, to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions and benefiting from multiple perspectives. Integrative learning also involves internal changes in the learner. These internal changes, which indicate growth as a confident, lifelong learner, include the ability to adapt one’s intellectual skills, to contribute in a wide variety of situations, and to understand and develop individual purpose, values and ethics. Developing students’ capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today’s global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning becomes not just a benefit...but a necessity.

Because integrative learning is about making connections, this learning may not be as evident in traditional academic artifacts such as research papers and academic projects unless the student, for example, is prompted to draw implications for practice. These connections often surface, however, in reflective work, self assessment, or creative endeavors of all kinds. Integrative assignments foster learning between courses or by connecting courses to experientially-based work. Work samples or collections of work that include such artifacts give evidence of integrative learning. Faculty are encouraged to look for evidence that the student connects the learning gained in classroom study to learning gained in real life situations that are related to other learning experiences, extra-curricular activities, or work. Through integrative learning, students pull together their entire experience inside and outside of the formal classroom; thus, artificial barriers between formal study and informal or tacit learning become permeable. Integrative learning, whatever the context or source, builds upon connecting both theory and practice toward a deepened understanding.

Assignments to foster such connections and understanding could include, for example, composition papers that focus on topics from biology, economics, or history; mathematics assignments that apply mathematical tools to important issues and require written analysis to explain the implications and limitations of the mathematical treatment, or art history presentations that demonstrate aesthetic connections between selected paintings and novels. In this regard, some majors (e.g., interdisciplinary majors or problem-based field studies) seem to inherently evoke characteristics of integrative learning and result in work samples or collections of work that significantly demonstrate this outcome. However, fields of study that require accumulation of extensive and high-consensus content knowledge (such as accounting, engineering, or chemistry) also involve the kinds of complex and integrative constructions (e.g., ethical dilemmas and social consciousness) that seem to be highlighted so extensively in self reflection in arts and humanities, but they may be embedded in individual performances and less evident. The key in the development of such work samples or collections of work will be in designing structures that include artifacts and reflective writing or feedback that support students’ examination of their learning and give evidence that, as graduates, they will extend their integrative abilities into the challenges of personal, professional, and civic life.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- ⑩ Academic knowledge: Disciplinary learning; learning from academic study, texts, etc.
- ⑩ Content: The information conveyed in the work samples or collections of work.
- ⑩ Contexts: Actual or simulated situations in which a student demonstrates learning outcomes. New and challenging contexts encourage students to stretch beyond their current frames of reference.
- ⑩ Co-curriculum: A parallel component of the academic curriculum that is in addition to formal classroom (student government, community service, residence hall activities, student organizations, etc.).
- ⑩ Experience: Learning that takes place in a setting outside of the formal classroom, such as workplace, service learning site, internship site or another.
- ⑩ Form: The external frameworks in which information and evidence are presented, ranging from choices for particular work sample or collection of works (such as a research paper, PowerPoint, video recording, etc.) to choices in make-up of the e-portfolio.
- ⑩ Performance: A dynamic and sustained act that brings together knowing and doing (creating a painting, solving an experimental design problem, developing a public relations strategy for a business, etc.); performance makes learning observable.
- ⑩ Reflection: A meta-cognitive act of examining a performance in order to explore its significance and consequences.
- ⑩ Self Assessment: Describing, interpreting, and judging a performance based on stated or implied expectations followed by planning for further learning.