ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Glossary of Key Terms

VALUE Rubric Terminology

Dimension:

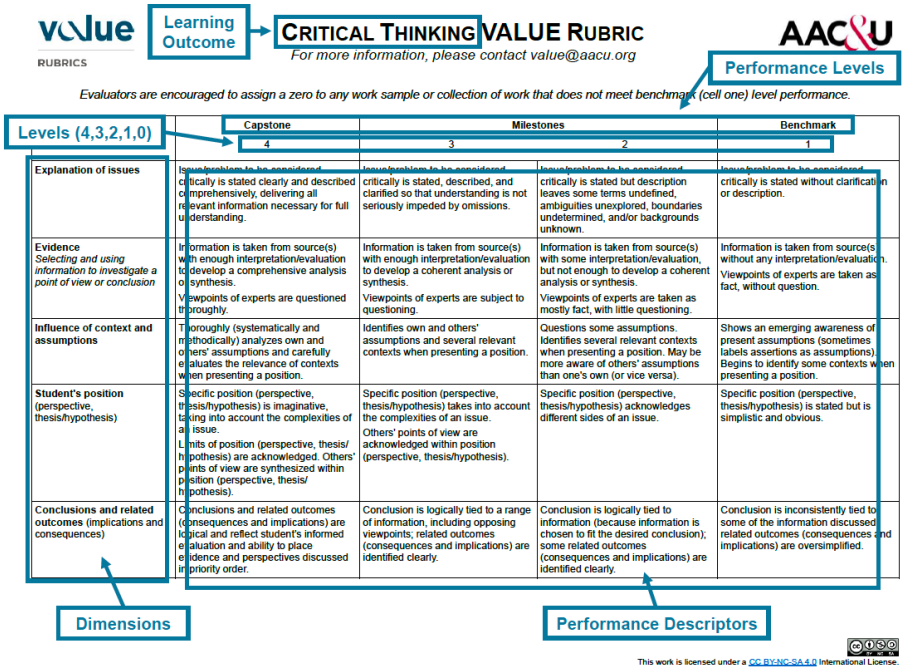
Along the left side of each VALUE rubric is a list of five to six rubric dimensions corresponding to the specific learning outcome and rubric. These dimensions were identified by the rubric creators as the most important, if not comprehensive, components of the learning outcome in the context of assessing the learning outcomes in undergraduate education. The dimensions of each learning outcome are also designed to assist faculty in creating assignments that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning of each dimension of the learning outcome.

Performance Level:

Each rubric has performance levels ranging from 4 to 0 (4, 3, 2, 1, 0). The order of the performance levels begins with level 4 and moves down to level 0, encouraging scorers to focus on what students *can do* with respect to each learning outcome dimension, using an asset-based approach to assessment. Only whole numbers can be assigned as scores. Please note that the performance levels are not equivalent to the student's year in college (e.g., first-year/freshman, second-year/sophomore, third-year/junior, fourth-year/senior). At times, we refer to the performance level as the "developmental level."

Performance Descriptor:

A performance descriptor (i.e., rubric cell) includes student behaviors expected at each performance level for each rubric dimension. Most performance descriptors call for the scorer to evaluate multiple student behaviors. All behaviors specified in a rubric descriptor *must* be present in the student artifact for the scorer to select the performance level associated with the performance descriptor.



VALUE Calibration Training Terminology

Student Artifact:

Student artifact—or simply *artifact*—refers to the student work product that is being evaluated by the scorer using an appropriate VALUE rubric.

Assignment/Assignment Instructions:

Assignment or *assignment instructions* are the faculty-designed prompts contained in an assignment that guide students' work. The resulting student artifact is assessed using the appropriate VALUE rubric. The assignment instructions are generally not available to scorers.

As noted previously, the learning outcome dimensions also provide a guide for faculty to intentionally and purposefully design assignments to align with a specific learning outcome. Ideally designed assignments ask students to demonstrate all dimensions of the relevant learning outcome in the student artifact.

Trainees:

The term *trainees* refers to the faculty and/or professional staff participating in the AAC&U VALUE Calibration Training.

Scorers:

The term *scorers* refers to the faculty and/or professional staff who have completed AAC&U VALUE Calibration Training and have met the calibration standards that qualify them to serve as certified scorers for AAC&U's VALUE Scoring Collaborative.

VALUE Scoring Collaborative:

The *VALUE Scoring Collaborative* (formerly called the VALUE Institute) enables any higher education institution, department, program, state, consortium, or provider to utilize the VALUE rubrics approach to assessment by collecting and uploading samples of student work to a digital repository and have the work scored by AAC&U-certified scorers for external validation of institutional learning assessment.

Digication:

Digication is the platform used when scoring student artifacts for the VALUE Scoring Collaborative. This platform is also used by trainees who would like to become certified scorers and participate in calibration scoring. When scoring artifacts for calibration—a required step before becoming a certified scorer—these trainees will use the Digication platform. Please see the resources in the Key Takeaways and Next Steps lesson for more information about Digication and scoring for the VALUE Scoring Collaborative.

Reliability:

In general, *reliability* refers to the accuracy of the instrument—in this case, the VALUE rubric(s). If the rubric is reliable, it will consistently yield the same or very similar results when used repeatedly under the same conditions. If, with repeated uses of the VALUE rubrics to evaluate student artifacts, they consistently result in the same or very similar measure of student learning, the VALUE rubrics are considered to be reliable.

Validity:

Validity refers to the extent to which the instrument (in this case, the VALUE rubric[s]) accurately measures what it is designed to measure. In the case of the VALUE rubrics, validity suggests that each rubric accurately measures the level of student learning for a specific learning outcome.

Rater Error:

A *rater error* refers to one or more behaviors that scorers display when evaluating student artifacts that result in biased scores. Rater errors threaten the reliability and validity of the instrument. Common rater errors include:

- **Leniency or Severity**: Scorers consistently assign higher scores (leniency) or lower scores (severity) with respect to students' demonstrated learning. This typically happens across rubric dimensions and student artifacts.
- **Halo Effect:** Scorers generate a general impression of the performance level demonstrated in a student artifact. This impression can be either positive or negative, although it is most often positive. This general impression influences how scores are assigned for each rubric dimension rather than relying solely on the evidence demonstrated in the student artifact to apply scores.
- **Restriction in Range:** Scorers avoid assigning scores at the extreme ends of the scoring range. As a result, a limited scoring range is employed. For example, a scorer demonstrating restriction of range may largely avoid assigning any learning outcome dimension a score of 4 or 0, even when it is merited.

