*Please share with your faculty:*

**Turning generic rubrics into task-specific rubrics**

Rubrics are a helpful grading tool for both instructors and students because they identify expected grading criteria and performance levels on a given assignment. As a result, an effective rubric ensures that the grading of an assignment is reliable, valid, and transparent. In addition, rubrics provide both instructors and students with concrete feedback about students’ performance on an assignment so that students can improve their learning, and instructors can target their instruction to areas in need of improvement.

Many publicized rubrics are generic in nature. A generic rubric is a rubric that can be used across different academic tasks because it contains general criteria. An example, of a generic rubric would be an oral communication skills rubric that can be used in different academic courses to evaluate students’ oral presentation skills in variety of courses such psychology, science, English or business. While such rubrics have the advantage of being flexible in nature, often they are so general that they are not meaningful. In general, rubrics are most effective when they are task-specific. A task-specific rubric contains criteria unique to a particular academic task. An example of a task-specific rubric would be a rubric for evaluating an experimental psychology student’s research proposal. Task-specific rubrics are generally more effective than generic rubrics because they provide more specific and concrete feedback to students and instructors about performance on a given task so that performance on that particular task can be improved.

Generic rubrics, however, can serve as an excellent starting point for creating a more task-specific rubric. More specifically, a generic rubric can be useful for providing a general framework of criteria people in academic community agree is important for a particular skill, such as oral communication skills. Instructors can then adapt and make more detailed general criteria on a generic rubric so that the criteria are specific to the demands of their particular assignment. For example, an instructor can start with a generic oral communication skills rubric and then adapt the criteria to the specific expectations for an effective oral presentation in their class.

**Check out!** Fulbright, Sydney (2018). Using rubrics as a defense against grade appeals. *Faculty Focus.* Retrieved March 28,, 2019 from https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/course-design-ideas/rubrics-as-a-defense-against-grade-appeals/

**Please share examples** of ways your program has been using rubrics to assess students’ attainment of program and/or course-level objectives, please email them to me, and I will feature those examples on [YU’s Learning Assessment Website](https://owa.yu.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=qfPSe4wRYkKrpT3C8vPq8A7wjn94UtMIlXPnm4uIb63uPB_8kYqY2U_p2t2TYINMonFFOW1vbo0.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fyu.edu%2fprovost%2fassessment%2f)