

Evaluation and Grading Workshop Reflection

Title of the workshop: Evaluation and Grading

Purpose statement: After the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the different types of grading rubrics
- Compare the pros and cons of rubric
- Practice creating a rubric for an assignment
- Practice giving constructive feedback
- Discuss best practices in grading and evaluation

Lead presenter: Dr. Barbi Honeycutt

Date: 3/25/2013

Location: Talley Student Center Room 3118

Number of people attending the workshop: ~20

Reflection (e.g. what you've taken from the workshop, how you will incorporate what you've learned in your teaching, how you feel your teaching can be improved given information shared in the workshop, etc.):

A well-written rubric can be a tool to help the evaluation of an assignment to be less stressful for the student as well as the teacher. A rubric can help establish an objective set of criteria for an assignment that aids in communication between the student and teacher. A student can benefit by seeing a standardized set of expectations that clearly define the areas of assessment for the assignment as well as the corresponding quality of work. By knowing the expectations of an assignment, a student is less likely to be frustrated when they work on the assignment and also after their assignment is graded. This is because a student will spend less time trying to interpret the assignment (and more time on completing the assignment) and can review their grade while knowing what they did/did not do well. This will help enhance a student's learning experience as they will focus more on the material at hand.

For the teacher, a rubric is a great way to cut down any frustration one has with the evaluation process as well as any student backlash from assignments. From my experience, the cause of student backlash on an assignment mainly comes from student expectations of their grade and these expectations are generally caused from a lack of information on assignments. When an assignment has a clearly established criteria, then student backlash diminishes because their expectations line up with my expectations.

In evaluating an assignment, a rubric will establish an objective criteria that strengthens the quality of assessment by streamlining the process. The evaluation can be broken down into different sets where you can grade based upon a certain criteria rather than trying to evaluate the entire assignment. Of

course, it also helps that there will be less time spent grading if the criteria is already set before one evaluates an assignment. While there can be a problem that a rubric may force the teacher to teach to the rubric, this should not be seen as a problem. The situation should be turned around and instead of thinking that the rubric comes before the teaching, one should consider that the rubric should be created as a way to support what one will teach. A carefully constructed rubric will actually be a roadmap that a student can use to help better understand the material being taught.

This workshop has helped me in how I construct writing assignments in courses. Previously, I assigned research papers that would give due dates for an abstract, outline, rough draft, and final draft. At each point of the research paper, I included a description of the required section but I failed to communicate the quality of work that is required for a given grade and I did not put any formal requirements (such as length of paper, number of citations, etc.). While formal requirements do not need to be met in order to have a high-quality paper, they can serve as a way to mark down low-quality papers with a justified response. While the goal of a rubric is to set forth an objective set of criteria that acts as a contract between the student and teacher for the evaluation of an assignment, not all aspects of evaluation will be objective. However, by reducing the number of subjective and seemingly ad hoc remarks that make up the grade for an assignment one can become a better teacher.