Essential Studies Assessment
Written Communication
Spring 2024

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

LEADERS IN ACTION

Assessing Essential Studies
Written Communication

Training Overview

1. Review of UND Essential Studies (ES)
2. Review of ES Assessment process
3. Assessing Written Communication
    a. AAC&U Written Communication VALUE Rubric overview
    b. Understanding and using the Written Communication VALUE Rubric
4. Reporting assessment results
5. Resources and Contact Information

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UND Essential Studies

Essential Studies courses must focus on at least one of the 6 ES learning goals:

Critical Inquiry and Analysis

Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them.

Quantitative Reasoning

Quantitative Reasoning is competency and comfort in working with numerical data, using it to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations, and to create and clearly communicate sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence, such as by using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate.

Written Communication

Written Communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing text, data, and images.

UND Essential Studies

Continued

Essential Studies courses must focus on at least one of the 6 ES Learning Goals:

Oral Communication

Oral communication involves a purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

Information Literacy

Information literacy is the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.

Intercultural Knowledge & Skills

Intercultural knowledge and skills foster the capacity to meaningfully engage with the perspectives of people whose cultures and identities are different from one's own. To meaningfully engage with others' perspectives, one must be aware of how those perspectives are shaped by larger social structures, by issues of contemporary importance, and by issues that arise in global society.

ES Learning Goals' Assessment

- Each Learning Goal is assessed every **3 years**

Spring 2024	Written Communication
Fall 2024	Critical Inquiry & Analysis
Spring 2025	Quantitative Reasoning
Fall 2025	Information Literacy
Spring 2026	Oral Communication
Fall 2026	Intercultural Knowledge & Skills

- ES course faculty are required to use the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics to evaluate each Learning Goal

Written Communication
Spring 2024 Courses

ACCT 450	CE 483	ENGL 130HON	KIN 491	MUSC 311	POLS 495
ACCT 501	CE 483HON	ENGL 271	LANG 380	MUSC 345	PSYC 433
ATSC 492	CHEM 495	ENGL 308	LANG 380HON	N&D 441	PSYC 460
ATSC 493	CJ 401	ENGL 415	LANG 480	NURS 450	PTRE 485
AVIT 485	COMM 339	ENTR 101	LANG 480HON	NURS 450HON	PTRE 485HON
BADM 225	COMM 360	GEOG 454	LEAD 101	NURS 453	SOC 306
BIOL 480	COMM 374	HIST 440	MGMT 475	NURS 453HON	SWK 442
BIOL 480HON	CSD 485	HON 489	MLS 449	OT 503	SWK 484
BIOL 481	ENGL 110	IDS 280	MUSC 201	PHIL 480	T&L 474
BIOL 489	ENGL 130	IDS 495	MUSC 202	PHYS 499	T&L 489

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Written Communication Rubric

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC
for more information, please contact value@aacu.org

Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Context of and Purpose for Writing *Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).*	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions *Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).*	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

[Written Communication VALUE Rubric](#)

Understanding and Using the Rubric

Definition of Written Communication

- Framing Language
- Glossary of terms used in the rubric

Five categories that make up the Written Communication construct:

- Context of and Purpose for Writing
- Content Development
- Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
- Sources and Evidence
- Control of Syntax and Mechanics

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Understanding and Using the Rubric

The rubric scores range from 1 (Benchmark) to 4 (Capstone)

– The ratings have been normalized based on national performance by students of the associated year of attendance.

  • A 1 for first-year students and a 3 or 4 for graduating students.

  • A zero indicates work that does not meet the minimum rating.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

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Using the Rubric

Evaluate each student's work using the Written Communication Rubric

- Use <u>one</u> course assignment/project/etc. that you think will best demonstrate the student's ability to showcase the Written Communication criteria.

- Assign a score based on student performance (0-4) within each category

Reporting Results

During finals week (May 2024), you will receive a survey link to report your course(s) aggregate results from the Rubric:

- Identify course
- Identify course delivery method
  - *Report data separately for on-campus/ online/ hybrid courses*
- Describe the measure (artifact/exam/portfolio/project/etc.) used to evaluate this ES Goal
- Number of students evaluated

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Reporting Results

- Report the **percentage of students** who performed at each level [0,1,2,3,4] *for each category*:

  - Context of and Purpose for Writing

  - Content Development

  - Genre and Disciplinary Conventions

  - Sources and Evidence

  - Control of Syntax and Mechanics

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Reporting Results

- Report the percentage of students who performed at each level for the **outcome overall**. (faculty opinion)

  – Did not meet benchmark level 1
  – Benchmark
  – Early Milestone
  – Advanced Milestone
  – Capstone
  – Total (100%)

Failure to submit your assessment data may result in removal of the course from the ES program for the next academic year.

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So, what now?

- Identify an assignment (project/ final paper/ etc.) in your course that will best demonstrate students' competence in Written Communication

- When that assignment is graded, also use the Written Communication rubric to evaluate
  - Compile the results from the Written Communication rubric
  - Or simply use the rubric to grade (if appropriate)

- Report the results (percent of students who are each criteria level) at the end of the semester (a link will be sent to you during finals week)

Resources

- UND Essential Studies Website
  - https://und.edu/academics/essential-studies/
  - Click on Faculty Info

    - Goals

    - Validation/Revalidation information

    - Assessment

    - Syllabus Language

    - Course Development

Contacts

Essential Studies Questions

- Karyn Plumm, Vice Provost of Undergraduate Studies and Student Success & Director of Essential Studies

OR

- Contact your college's [Essential Studies Committee](#) representative

Essential Studies Assessment Questions

- Karina Knutson, Assessment & Accreditation Specialist

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