

Assessment Rubric for Written Communication Skills

Intended Outcome: The student will demonstrate the ability to write effectively using standard English

| Criteria | 4 Exemplary | 3 Accomplished | 2 Developing | 1 Beginning | Score |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|-------|
| Main Idea or Thesis and Support | The writing has a clearly-articulated main idea or thesis and subordinate ideas supported by reliable and relevant evidence. | The writing has a clearly-articulated main idea or thesis supported by adequate evidence and sound logic. | The writing has a main idea or thesis and related subordinate ideas supported by some evidence. | The writing may need a more clearly articulated main idea or thesis and/or appropriate related subordinate ideas. Supporting evidence is lacking. | |
| Organization | The writing flows smoothly and logically from a well-defined main idea or thesis. It contains a superlatively-developed structure for the writing assignment. | The writing is organized logically and flows well. It contains a well-developed structure for the writing assignment. | The writing demonstrates rudimentary organization and logical structure, but ideas need to be more fully developed and supported by more appropriate evidence. | The writing is noticeably lacking in organization. There is no clear structure to the writing assignment. | |
| Style | The writing engages the reader through an original prose style appropriate to the subject. Language is precise. Sentences are varied but not noticeably so. | The writing keeps the reader's attention through a carefully crafted prose style. Language chosen is appropriate to the subject, but may call attention to itself in minor ways. | The writing is clear but could be expressed in a style more appropriate to the subject. It is jargon-free but may require a more complete explanation of some terms used. | The writing lacks clarity and is sometimes confusing. The language chosen is not appropriate to the subject or the assignment. | |
| Syntax/Grammar | The writing contains sentences that are always complete and grammatically correct, and free of confusion and ambiguity. | The writing contains sentences that are complete or which imply unstated connections and/or conclusions. The writing may exhibit a few minor errors in grammar or style, but they do not impair the flow of the reading. | The writing contains some grammatical errors easily corrected by adherence to a uniform style throughout. Additional proofreading would help eliminate errors. | The writing is confusing and ambiguous owing to substantial errors of grammar and syntax. There is no evidence of proofreading, editing, or rewriting. | |

An appropriate assignment (e.g., paper, homework, project) would allow students to demonstrate composition skills by asking them to do the following:

- develop a clear main idea or thesis statement;
- develop main points with appropriate and convincing supporting materials;
- utilize appropriate and effective organization of content;
- demonstrate a clear and coherent writing style that uses effective diction and sentence skills; and
- demonstrate correct mechanical skills including spelling and punctuation.

Student work *best suited* for evaluation would require a well-developed essay with a clear central point and supporting materials. It should require organization of ideas and the demonstration of good writing skills. Appropriate assignments could range from a single page essay to a multi-paged research paper. Length of the written work is not the most important factor, but it will need to be more than a short answer or listing response to a test or assignment question.

If you have created an assignment that meets the abovementioned criteria, it would make an excellent submission for general education assessment in this area. If you have not created an assignment in which a student could demonstrate the tasks listed above, please choose an assignment which allows the students to exhibit as many of the items as possible.