

# BOOTING THE BULL

Guiding Student Affairs Professionals in  
Conducting Effective Assessment of  
Student Learning Outcomes

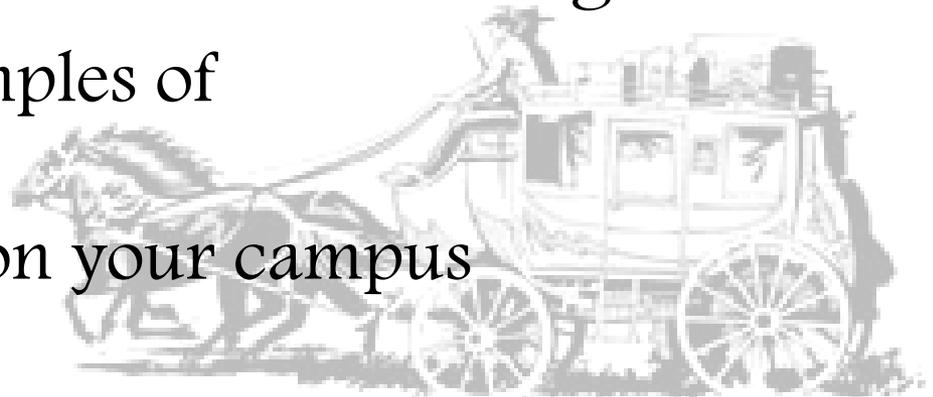
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The University of Texas Arlington

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# Session Outcomes

- You will be aware of the professional standards & the organization that guides SA in their practices
- You will understand why SA is interested in assessing student learning
- You will have some tips for assisting SA professionals in their quest to assess learning
- You will have some examples of assessment tools that can be shared with SA units on your campus

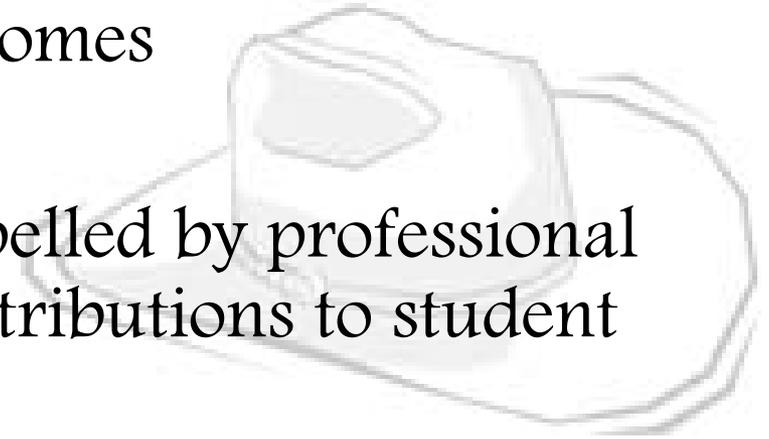


# First, A Little Context...

At UTA, all units – academic, academic support & administrative support – conduct outcomes assessment; academic units SLOs and non-academic units assess administrative outcomes

As far as IRPE is concerned, SA units are only required to assess administrative outcomes

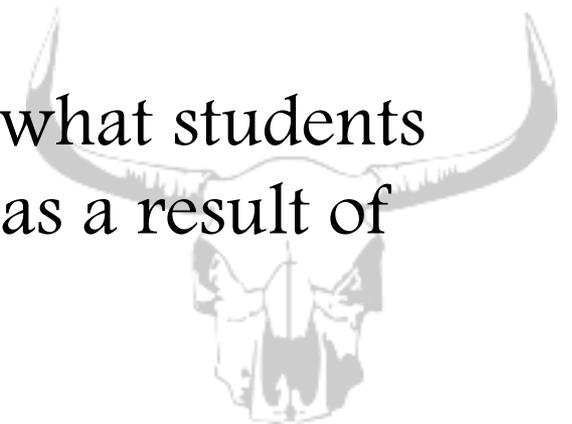
BUT, SA units at UTA are compelled by professional standards to assess their contributions to student learning & development



# Why is Student Affairs Assessing Learning?

## Three major philosophical movements in SA

- Student Services => provides specialized services to support academic mission
- Student Development => reflects theories of human growth; well-rounded, whole person as primary goal
- Student Learning => focuses on what students will know, be able to do & value as a result of engagement in our programs



# What is Guiding the Philosophical Movement?

- The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs since its inception in 1979
- CAS is a consortium of representatives from functionally specific professional organizations across SA



# What are the CAS Standards?

- Mission
- Program
- Leadership
- Organization & Management
- Human Resources
- Financial Resources
- Facilities, Technology & Equipment
- Legal Responsibilities
- Equity & Access
- Diversity
- Ethics
- Assessment & Evaluation



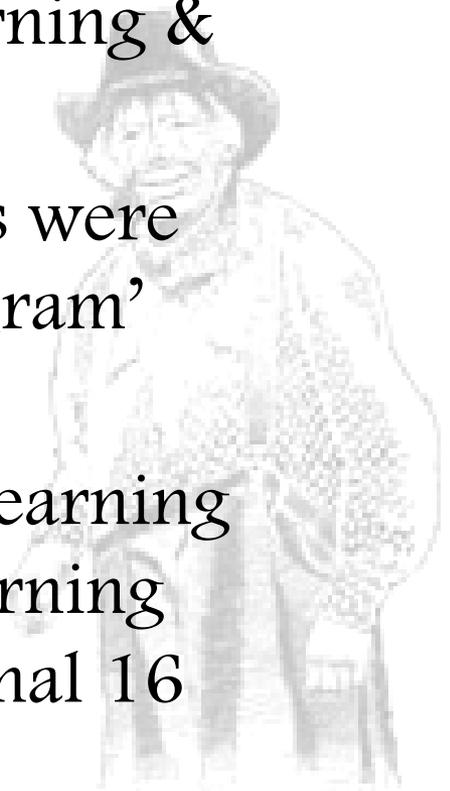
# How are CAS Standards Used?

- Program development
- Continuous improvement
- Self-study for accreditation or review
- Staff & student development
- Program Planning
- Program Evaluation
- Education about student affairs services and programs



# How Does CAS Guide Assessment of Student Learning?

- Sets forth guidelines for SA units to provide evidence of impact on achievement of student learning & development outcomes
- Sixteen learning & development domains were originally identified by CAS (under 'Program' standard, aka Standard 2)
- Recently, Oct. 08, CAS teamed up with Learning Reconsidered 2, which also describes learning outcomes in SA, & consolidated the original 16 domains into 6

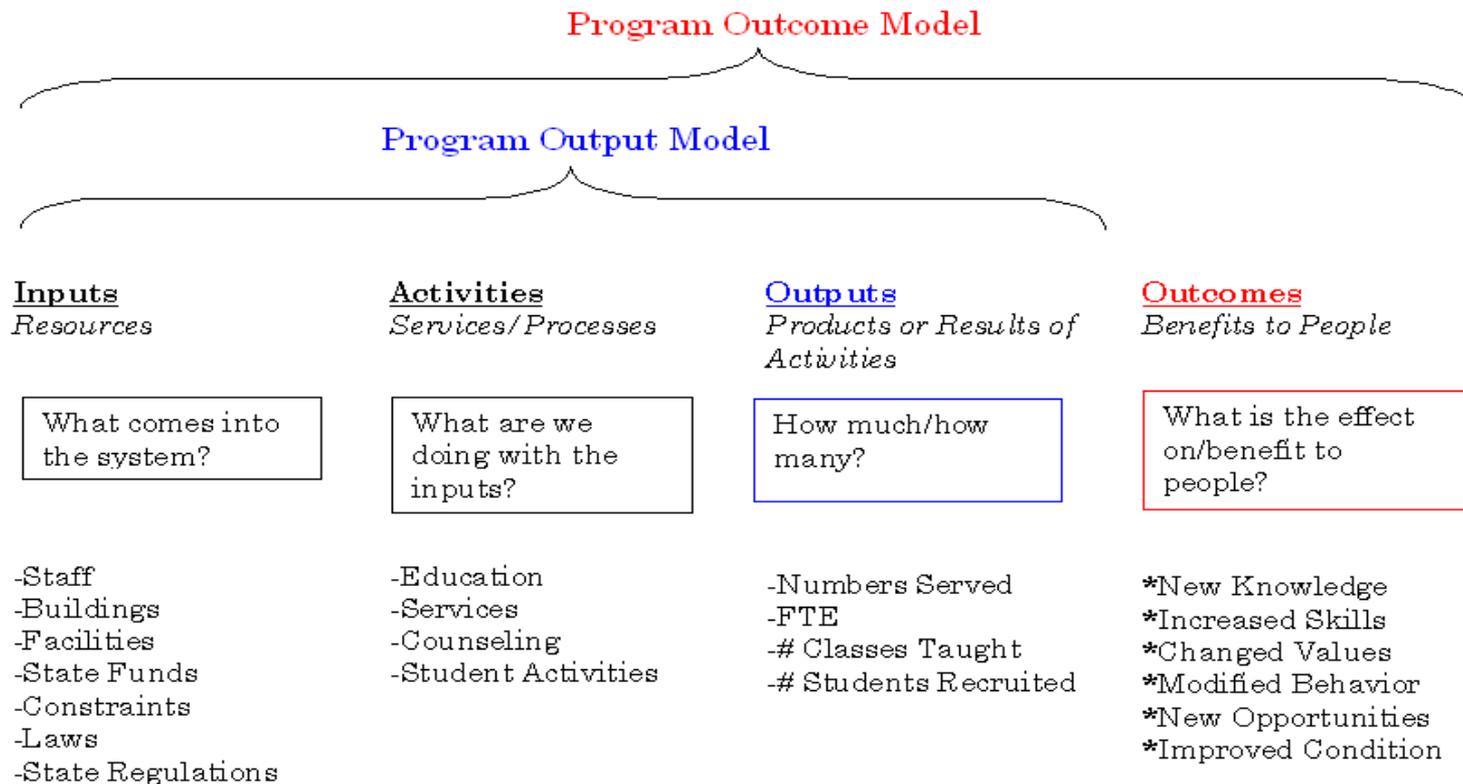


# What Are the New CAS Learning & Developmental Outcomes?

Student Outcomes Domain	Dimensions of Outcome Domain
Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application	Understanding knowledge from range of disciplines, ideas, & experiences - Connecting knowledge to other knowledge - Constructing knowledge - Relating knowledge to daily life
Cognitive complexity	Critical thinking - Reflective thinking - Effective reasoning - Creativity
Intrapersonal development	Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, & self-respect - Identity development - Commitment to ethics & integrity - Spiritual awareness
Interpersonal competence	Meaningful relationships – Interdependence – Collaboration - Effective leadership
Humanitarianism	Understanding and appreciation of cultural & human differences - Social responsibility - Global perspective - Sense of civic responsibility
Practical competence	Pursuing goals - Communicating effectively - Technological competence - Managing personal affairs - Managing career development - Demonstrating professionalism - Maintaining health & wellness - Living a purposeful & satisfying life

# How Can IR Help Student Affairs?

- Assist SA professionals in formulating SLOs appropriately (may need to educate on difference between output vs. outcome)



# How Can IR Help Student Affairs? Cont.

- Clarify the difference between direct & indirect assessment methodologies

Direct Measure Examples	Indirect Measure Examples
Exams (national; pre/post; practical, etc.)	Surveys of satisfaction & opinion
Portfolios	Interviews
Juried activities	Focus groups
Scoring rubrics	Questionnaires
Oral exams & presentations	Graduation & retention rates
Research papers, theses & dissertations	Graduate follow-up studies
Exhibitions & demonstrations	Job placement data
Surveys, interviews & questionnaires	Curriculum & syllabus analysis



# How Can IR Help Student Affairs? Cont.

- Explain appropriate methodologies & tools for measuring learning directly (esp. rubrics)
  - Analytic rubrics assess components of a finished product
  - Holistic rubrics assess the finished product as a whole

Fiction-Writing Content Rubric - ANALYTIC

Criteria	4	3	2	1
PLOT: "What" & "Why"	Both <i>plot</i> parts are fully developed.	One of <i>plot</i> parts is fully developed & less developed part is at least addressed.	Both <i>plot</i> parts are addressed but not fully developed.	Neither <i>plot</i> parts are fully developed.
SETTING: "When" and "Where"	Both <i>setting</i> parts are fully developed.	One of the <i>setting</i> parts is fully developed & less developed part is at least addressed.	Both <i>setting</i> parts of the story are addressed but not fully developed.	Neither <i>setting</i> parts are developed.
CHARACTERS: "Who" described by behavior, appearance, personality, and character traits	Main <i>characters</i> are fully developed with much descriptive detail, reader has vivid image of characters.	Main <i>characters</i> are developed with some descriptive detail, reader has vague idea of characters.	Main <i>characters</i> are identified by name only.	None of the <i>characters</i> are developed or named.

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/creative-writing/rubrics/4531.html?detoured=1>

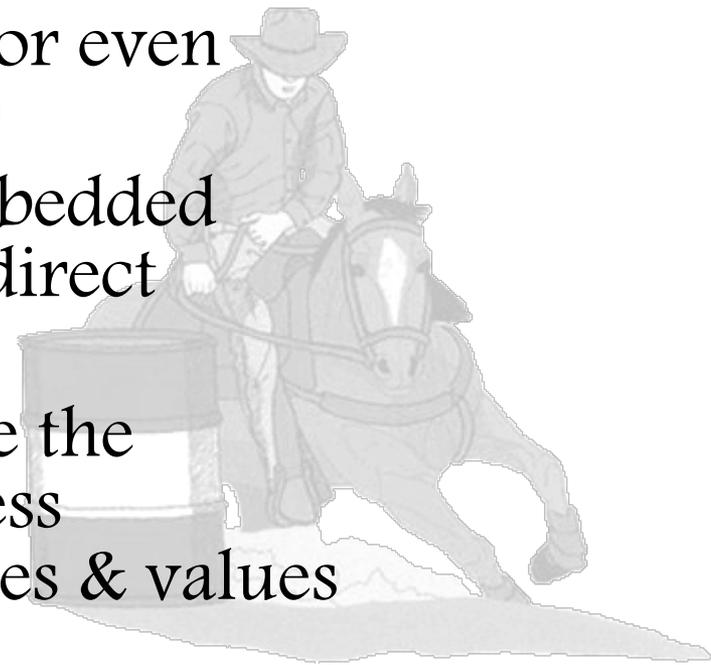
Fiction Writing Content Rubric – HOLISTIC

- 5 – The plot, setting, and characters are developed fully and organized well. The who, what, where, when, and why are explained using interesting language and sufficient detail.
- 4 – Most parts of the story mentioned in a score of 5 above are developed and organized well. A couple of aspects may need to be more fully or more interestingly developed.
- 3 – Some aspects of the story are developed and organized well, but not as much detail or organization is expressed as in a score of 4.
- 2 – A few parts of the story are developed somewhat. Organization and language usage need improvement.
- 1 – Parts of the story are addressed without attention to detail or organization.

<http://www.teacher-vision.fen.com/teaching-methods-and-management/rubrics/4524.html>

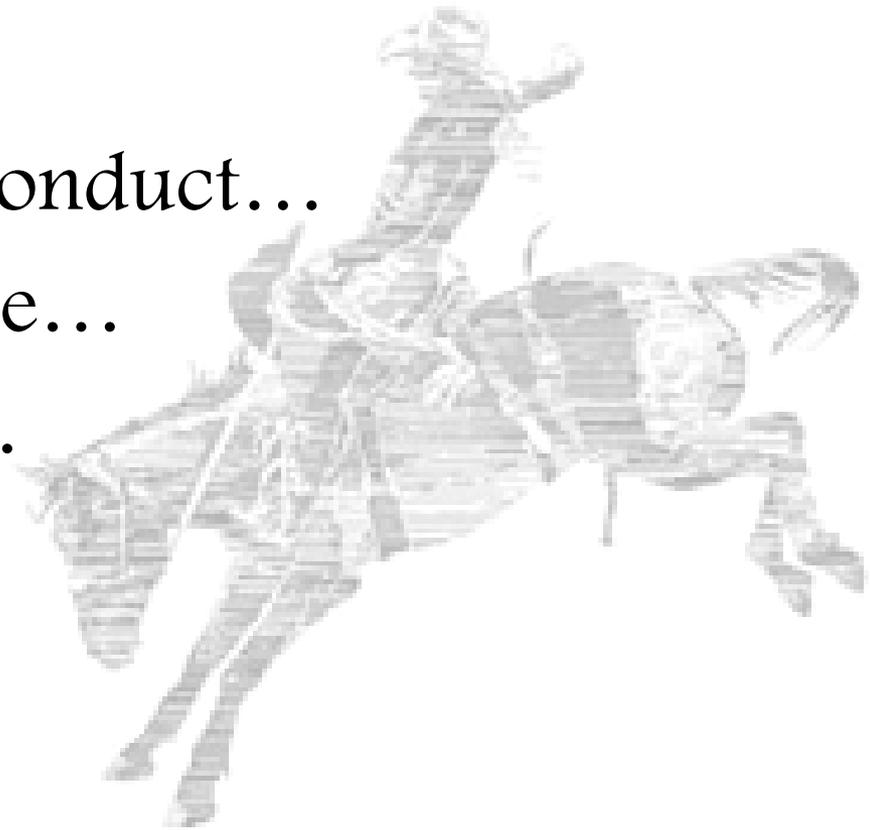
# How Can IR Help Student Affairs? Cont.

- Hold SA to same standards as academic units with regard to assessing learning directly
- Provide examples whenever possible of methods & tools used in other SA programs (or even from appropriate academic units)
- Help SA professionals identify embedded activities that lend themselves to direct assessment of learning
- Reassure SA professionals they are the experts & it is OK for them to assess students' knowledge, skills, abilities & values



# What is UTA Doing?

- Residence Life...
- Office of Student Conduct...
- Student Governance...
- Student Activities...



# Resources

- Council for the Advancement of Standards (2006). *Frameworks for Assessing Learning & Development Outcomes*. Washington, D.C.
- Council for the Advancement of Standards (2006). *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.*, Washington, D.C.
- Hurd, J. (2005). *Student Affairs Planning & Outcome Assessment*. University of West FL.





Questions?

<b>THE RA:</b>	<b>Criteria</b>						<b>Points:</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
<b>Approach</b>	Staff did not introduce themselves, Does not have grasp of proper approach.	Staff Approach is uncomfortable or awkward major issues present with approach.	Staff appeared nervous and slightly unsure but properly addresses situation.	Staff approached situation appropriately both calm and collected.	Handled superiorly displaying full knowledge.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	
<b>Assessment of Situation</b>	Staff did not assess situation correctly, was inappropriate with handling.	Staff had trouble assessing situation but continued in a professional manner.	Staff was able to assess situation but had difficulty with how to proceed..	Staff assessed situation appropriately and proceeded in an acceptable manner.	Staff Assessed situation and proceeded accordingly displaying greater knowledge than required.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	
<b>Addressing concerns</b>	Staff ignored residents concerns.	Staff acknowledged residents concerns but was distracted and never addressed them.	Staff acknowledged residents concerns but was unable to come up with proper solutions.	Staff addressed concerns at the surface level and gave sufficient answers.	Staff addressed all concerns with superior knowledge and went beyond required response.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	
<b>Policy Violations</b>	Staff did not notice that any violations were occurring.	Staff noticed there were violations occurring but was unable to determine exact policy violation.	Staff noted proper policy violations but was unable to give accurate explanation of them.	Staff noted correct policy violations and was able to give detailed explanation of them.	Staff noted correct violations, gave accurate descriptions, and then offered proper resources for help.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	
<b>Professionalism</b>	Staff was unprofessional throughout.	Staff approached situation professionally but became flustered and displayed unprofessional behavior.	Staff was able to remain professional for majority of situation but faltered when it became difficult.	Staff remained professional throughout entirety of scenario but not during debriefing of scenario.	Staff was professional for entirety of scenario as well as debriefing showing humility and teachability.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	
<b>Referral</b>	Staff did not acknowledge that resident would even need resources.	Staff acknowledged residents need for resources but didn't attempt to refer.	Staff acknowledged residents need for resources but was unable to supply correct ones.	Staff acknowledged residents need for resources and gave appropriate ones.	Staff saw need for resources and gave appropriate ones. Offering personal help in obtaining info from resources.	Unable to determine based on scenario.	

**The University of Texas at Arlington**

**Student Pre-Survey to be completed prior to your Conduct Meeting and brought with you to your meeting.**

In order to be able to fully understand the information you gained by meeting with a conduct officer, we must analyze your knowledge prior to and after your meeting. Honest answers to the questions in this evaluation will help us make the process more effective for those who may be involved with this process at some point in the future.

Please respond to each question as fully as possible.

1. Why are you meeting with a student conduct officer?
2. What violation are you alleged to have engaged in?
3. What personal consequences have occurred or could occur as a result of your behavior?
4. What impact has your behavior had on others?
5. What caused you to engage in the behavior for which you are going through the conduct process?
6. Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Office of Student Conduct  
Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubric

Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Conduct Officer \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Identifies and Summarizes the Violation**

Emerging		Developing		Mastering		
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Ignores important facts; refers to a different problem/violation; is confused, off topic; uses misinformation		Identifies problem/violation at a surface level; limited details are provided.		Acknowledges problem/violation/behavior in full detail; identifies and frames impact(s) and ethical dilemmas; provides accurate details; recognizes implications to self and others		Pre-Survey
1	2	3	4	5	6	Post-Meeting

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Identifies Implications and Consequences for Self/Others**

Emerging		Developing		Mastering		
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Does not identify connection between personal choices and behavior to others and community; downplays sanction; dismissive		Identifies impact on a surface level; expresses moderate concern and/or remorse		Identifies impact(s) to self, others, and community with regard to health and safety; understands and accepts consequences; indicates remorse; seeks to make amends; willing to use personal experience as a teaching tool for others		Pre-Survey
1	2	3	4	5	6	Post-meeting

**Student Learning Outcome 3: Identifies and Assesses Individual Responsibility**

Emerging		Developing		Mastering		
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Assumes no involvement; places blame elsewhere		Assumes some involvement but refers to others as primary instigators; acknowledges the ability to make different choices on a surface level		Assumes full responsibility and identifies contributing factors to behavior at great length; acknowledges alternatives that could/should have been chosen; accepts consequences and seeks resources for support		Pre-Survey
1	2	3	4	5	6	Post-meeting

### Student Congress Resolution Rubric

Critical thinking skills are essential to effective communication and problem solving. To attain these abilities requires ongoing practice. This rubric represents a brief overview of the main points in the discussion process of Student Congress resolutions.

#### 1) Identifies and summarizes the problem/question at issue (is the reason for the resolution addressed).

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
Scant Substantially Developed

Does not identify and summarize the problem, is confused or identifies a different and inappropriate problem. Does not identify or is confused by the issue, or represents the issue inaccurately.

Identifies the main problem and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem, and identifies them clearly, addressing their relationships to each other. Identifies not only the basics of the issue, but recognizes nuances of the issue.

#### 2) Identifies and considers OTHER salient perspectives and positions that are important to the analysis of the issue.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
Scant Substantially Developed

Deals only with a single perspective and fails to discuss other possible perspectives, especially those salient to the issue.

Addresses perspectives noted previously, and additional diverse perspectives drawn from outside information.

#### 3) Identifies and assesses the key assumptions.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
Scant Substantially Developed

Does not surface the assumptions and ethical issues that underlie the issue, or does so superficially.

Identifies and questions the validity of the assumptions and addresses the ethical dimensions that underlie the issue.

#### 4) Identifies and assesses the quality of supporting data/evidence (this deals directly with resolution research)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
Scant Substantially Developed

Merely repeats information provided, taking it as truth, or denies evidence without adequate justification. Confuses associations and correlations with cause and effect. Does not distinguish between fact, opinion, and value judgments.

Examines the evidence and source of evidence; questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, completeness. Observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences. Clearly distinguishes between fact, opinion and acknowledges value judgements.

#### 5) Identifies and assess conclusions, implications and consequences. (are possible future problems considered)

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
Scant Substantially Developed

Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences of the issue or the key relationships between the other elements of the problem, such as context, implications, assumptions, or data and evidence.

Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications, and consequences considering context, assumptions, data, and evidence. Objectively reflects upon their own assertions.

Additional notes/comments:

## Using Rubrics to Assess Journal Entries\*

The instructor in charge of the service-learning course must rely on the student's journal entries and other types of feedback to ascertain the quality and value of the service experience. Reflections the university student gives to the instructor needs to be insightful and succinct, while the feedback the university instructor gives to the student must be clear and consistent.

Rubrics provide a useful means to assess quickly a student's writing and to reiterate consistently the criteria expected of him or her. Rubrics are an assessment instrument laid out in a grid format. The assessment criteria are listed along one axis, and a ranked scale (such as "Excellent," "Very Good," "Satisfactory," "Needs Work," "Unsatisfactory") is projected along the other axis. Each cell of the matrix contains short phrases or sentences describing what must be done to attain those criteria at that level of achievement. These descriptors do not, of course, exhaust everything that might be done at that level; they are indicators typical of that level of achievement.

By providing specific responses to written journal entries according to clearly defined criteria, students see immediately where they need to improve their performance. Moreover, by responding to each journal entry with a rubric, the criteria are constantly reiterated. Rubric assessments are a very quick, efficient, and accurate way to evaluate student's writing. It is suggested that instructors share the rubric with students as a part of the course syllabus as a strategy to assist students in understanding how to write their journal entries.

One disadvantage of rubrics is that they can appear stiff and arbitrary to the student. In practice, when reviewing a student's journal entry, written comments can be made by the instructor to soften any rigidity the rubric form might suggest to the student.

\*Adapted from, "A Service Learning Rubric," by David Burton, *VCU Teaching*, March 1999.

<b>CRITERIA</b> Score	<b>EXCELLENT</b> 4	<b>VERY GOOD</b> 3	<b>SATISFACTORY</b> 2	<b>NEEDS WORK</b> 1	<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b> 0
<b>Writing Quality</b>	Strong writing style with clear ability to express thoughts and point of view. Excellent grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.	Good writing style with solid ability to convey meaning. Very good grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.	Writing style conveys meaning adequately. Some grammar, syntax and spelling errors.	Difficulty expressing ideas, feelings or descriptions. Limited syntax. Needs to work on grammar, spelling, etc.	Considerable difficulty expressing ideas or descriptions clearly. Many grammatical, syntactical, and spelling errors.
<b>WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Description of Service-Learning Session(s)</b>	Clear incisive description that reveals situation and dynamics vividly. Excellent use of adjectives, metaphors, etc. Sensitive and perceptive.	Solid description that fully discloses the scene. Some interpretation of events, meanings, etc.	Factual description of sequence of events with little "texture" or interpretation. Clearly not fully developed.	Brief or general statement with few details. Little if any sense of meaning.	Little description at all, or brief, perfunctory statements glossing over the event(s). The reader has little idea what transpired.
<b>SO WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Insights and Understanding</b>	Definite insights into issues and implications of events for self and students. Aware of increased complexity of issues and situations.	Some insights into situations, issues and personal change/growth. Making connections with implications for self or students. Some sense of complexity.	Positive experience at an intuitive or emotive level. Gains affectively from the 'experience' but insights based on conscious reflection are few or simplistic.	Doing the assignment. Neutral experience without personal resonance or impact.	Rigid attitude. Resistant to change in established point of view.
<b>NOW WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Commitment and Challenge</b>	Creates a personal plan of action or personal challenge based on commitment to class or insights into teaching.	Creates a 'next step' based on previous events or progress in teaching.	Committed to class through rapport or personal caring. Notes class' progress.	Somewhat committed to class and/or teaching. Unchallenged.	Not committed to the class or teaching. Definitely not exerting self to a level of commitment.
<b>Progress and Leadership Development</b>	Significant growth or personal development. Evidence of synthesis of experience into goals or plan of action, with implications for the future.	Increased sensitivity, change of attitude, and awareness of connections.	Steady course. Incremental progress of which the teaching assistant may not be personally aware.	No progress. Repetitious experience and reflection.	Losing ground. Bored or frustrated. Negative attitude in reflection.

Created by Dr. David Burton

<b>Rubric for Team Work</b>			
	<b>Level of Achievement</b>		
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>Group Functioning</b>			
<b>Attending</b>	Most, if not all, members attend all meetings.	Most members are present at most meetings. When members have to be absent they inform and/or seek the agreement of the team.	Many members frequently miss meetings and do not inform the team.
<b>Participating</b>	There is a clear definition of tasks to be accomplished, anticipating future needs. All members take an active role. Tasks are defined by the group and assigned to all members. The team engages in follow-up activities to monitor progress.	Tasks are defined informally, and most but not all members understand them. Most members contribute. Follow-up is sporadic.	Tasks are not defined, and few members participate actively. There is no follow-up.
<b>Defining Members' Roles</b>	Every member's role on the team is defined and understood by all. Each team member can explain the role of others.	Members' roles are defined informally and may not be completely understood by all. Some members may not be able to explain the role of others.	There is little understanding of who does what.
<b>Making Collective Decisions</b>	Clear procedures for making decisions are established and documented. Decisions, the process by which they were made, and the involvement of members are also documented.	Decision-making procedures are established informally, leading to inconsistency in implementation and a failure to involve all members in decision making.	Because there is no decision-making process, decisions are made by individuals, and they do not reflect the thinking or the desires of the team.
<b>Team Member Support</b>	Every team member is treated with respect. All members listen to all ideas. The work of each person is acknowledged. Members feel free to seek assistance from others or to ask questions.	There is a general atmosphere of respect for team members, but some members may not be heard as much as others. Acknowledging others' work is serendipitous rather than planned. Some members may not feel free to turn to others for help.	The team atmosphere is competitive and individualistic rather than cooperative and supportive.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Managing Conflict</b>	Conflicts are consistently resolved through open discussion and compromise.	Members are generally able to resolve conflicts through open discussion and compromise.	Conflicts that arise are either not dealt with or cannot be resolved.
<b>Process Management</b>			
<b>Meeting Regularly</b>	Weekly or biweekly meetings are scheduled and held at defined times.	Meetings are schedule sporadically to keep the project going.	Meetings are rare.
<b>Establishing Goals</b>	Realistic, prioritized, and measurable goals are agreed upon and documented.	Goals are establish, but some may be too general or unquantifiable. Priorities may be unrealistic. Documentation may be incomplete.	Clear goals are nt formulated or documented.
<b>Keeping Meeting Notes</b>	Written minutes summarize attendance, discussions, and actions. Minutes are distributed electronically within two days of the meeting.	Minutes summarizing attendance, discussion, and actions are written and distributed but not consistently. Some minutes are more complete than others.	Minutes are either nonexistent or sketchy, containing little beyond attendance lists.
<b>Adjusting</b>	When working to achieve goals, the team is able to adjust plans as needs arise. There is a clear understanding of the nature of min-course corrections and why they were needed.	The team is not always able to adjust as needed to meet goals. Realization of the need for mid-course corrections sometimes comes too late.	The team seems to be thrashing about. Activity plans (if they exist) are unfocused, and thus there is no ability to adjust and make corrections.
<b>Timely Submission of Work Assignments and Reports</b>	Team is self-motivated and can complete work assignments and reports in a timely manner without being reminded.	Work assignments and reports are submitted but are sometimes late.	Work assignments and reports are submitted inconsistently. The team is no self-motivated and needs constant chasing to get the work submitted.