

Communicating Effectively
Appalachian State University, September 2024
Modified version of Written Communication* and Oral Communication* VALUE Rubrics (AAC&U)

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. This rubric has been adapted by a committee with representation from the faculty, General Education Program, and Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning for assessing Appalachian's General Education learning goal of Communicating Effectively. For more information about the VALUE rubrics, see <https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics>.

Rationale

Communication is diverse and encompasses multiple modes of expression including, but not limited to, written, verbal, visual, and aural. Successful communicators are reflective and use appropriate modalities that respond to audience and purpose, as well as interact with people of both similar and different experiences and values. They strive to develop sophisticated reading and observational skills and to refine and adapt their quantitative, technological, and information literacies for increasingly complex situations. Effective communication leads to discovery, connection, and transformation and can help communities or reach consensus.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

Audience: the individuals or groups the communicator intends to persuade, entertain, inspire, or inform with the message

Civilly: formal politeness and courtesy in behavior or speech

Compelling: as in convincing, inspiring, or captivating

Credible Source: coming from one who is reliable given the context and purpose of the work

Evidence: sourced material or relevant personal experience that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, the communicator's ideas in the message.

Organize: shaping or structuring the content

Source: place from which information is obtained. Sources could include but are not limited to oral and written forms, print and audio-visual media, research findings, internet sources, historic documents and correspondence, data repositories, and established scientific principles. Communicators draw on this information as they work for a variety of purposes – to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

Syntax and Mechanics: includes typical writing considerations such as verb tense, sentence structure, paragraph construction, and clarity as well as medium-specific conventions such as speaking clearly and highlighting key points in slide presentations, intuitive design in website development, and clearly labeled, appropriate charts or graphs in data visualizations.

Synthesizes: integrating ideas/information from multiple sources to form a new idea

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

Student Learning Outcome	4 Capstone	3 Milestone (Higher)	2 Milestone (Lower)	1 Benchmark	0 No Evidence	N/A Not Applicable
Context and Purpose. Students will utilize the context, audience, form, and purpose to shape the message.	Integrates context, audience , form, and purpose in shaping the message.	Demonstrates understanding of context, audience , form, and purpose in shaping the message.	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience , form, and purpose in shaping the message.	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience , form, and/or purpose.	No evidence	N/A
Content Development. Students will use content appropriately to organize the message.	Synthesizes ideas using appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to convey the communicator's understanding and organize the whole work.	Develops and explores ideas using appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to organize the whole work.	Develops and explores ideas using appropriate and relevant content to organize most of the work.	Presents simple ideas using appropriate and relevant content to organize some parts of the work.	No evidence	N/A
Sources and Evidence. Students will integrate credible, relevant sources and other supporting material to formulate the message.	Synthesizes evidence drawn from credible , relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the context, audience , and purpose of the work.	Consistently uses evidence drawn from credible , relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the context, audience , and purpose of the work.	Occasionally uses evidence drawn from sources that are appropriate for the context, audience , and purpose of the work.	Demonstrates a minimal use of evidence to support ideas in the work.	No evidence	N/A
Articulation. Students will communicate with clarity and fluency.	Uses language that skillfully communicates meaning to the audience with clarity and fluency while remaining true to the genre and style of the work.	Uses language that clearly conveys meaning to the audience and is appropriate to the genre and style of the work.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to the audience , although may include some inconsistencies in syntax and mechanics , and is appropriate to the genre and style of the work.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of inconsistencies in syntax and mechanics .	No evidence	N/A
Civil Communication. Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in civil and reasoned discourse informed by thoughtful consideration of diverse perspectives.	Engages in civil and reasoned discourse that includes thoughtful consideration of diverse perspectives.	Engages in civil and reasoned discourse informed by diverse perspectives	Communicates civilly throughout the work with acknowledgement of diverse perspectives.	Communicates civilly throughout the work.	No evidence	N/A

*Adapted from “Written Communication VALUE Rubric” and “Oral Communication VALUE Rubric” by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009, <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>. This derivative work is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.