



College Portrait

Voluntary System of Accountability

# USING THE AAC&U VALUE RUBRICS FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING

VSA Webinar  
July 16, 2013

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Why campus-level student learning outcomes evaluation and reporting is necessary
- Virginia Tech's use of the VALUE Rubrics, including as part of SACS
- University of Kansas's experience implementing the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics campus-wide

# VOLUNTARY SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- Initiative launched in 2007 by public universities
- Supply straightforward, comparable information on the undergraduate student experience through a common web report – the College Portrait. [www.collegeportraits.org](http://www.collegeportraits.org)
- Support innovation in the measurement and reporting of student learning outcomes

# THE HEAT IS ON

- Accompanying external demands for information about student and institutional performance are growing calls for institutions and accreditors to become more transparent about what they do and the results they achieve. (Ewell, 2010)
- AASCU's New Compact
  - Make Institutional Accountability the Foundation of a New Compact
  - Convey Institutional Outcomes



# **AAC&U VALUE Rubrics at Virginia Tech**

**Ray E. Van Dyke**  
**Executive Director**  
**Office of Assessment and Evaluation**





# Examples of How VALUE Rubrics Are Being Used at Virginia Tech

- High-stakes institution-wide initiatives
  - SACS QEP – 1<sup>st</sup> year experience
  - General education reform
- Academic program assessment
  - Various degree programs (English, HNFE)
  - English composition program
- Student affairs/co-curricular program assessment
  - Office of Student Conduct leadership development
- Grants (e.g., NSF, HHMI) evaluation protocols



## Example: English Composition Program

- Four outcomes related to citing sources; e.g., (1) evaluates information and its sources critically and (2) demonstrates a knowledge of the conventions of bibliographic citation forms
- Samples of student writing collected from all sections of English 1106
- Five faculty members led through a rubric training process
- Rubric rating session held and feedback provided on number of students at beginning, proficient, and advanced levels



# More About English Composition Program

Questions faculty considered after seeing results:

- Do these results meet your expectations? Why or why not?
- What factors do you believe contributed to these results?
- What questions do these results raise in your mind about this program outcome?
- Based on these results, what specific adjustments will you make for this program outcome?





# Rubrics Used for SACS Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

- Pathways to Success – focuses on first year experiences
- Goal is for all freshmen and transfer students to take part in an FYE experience with some standard content
- Learning Outcomes
  - Problem-solving
  - Inquiry
  - Integration of Learning
- Process – artifacts gathered (some with ePortfolios) throughout experience and then rubric used to evaluate them



# Why the VALUE Rubrics?

- Closing the loop in the assessment of student learning means making informed changes to current practice.
- If we expect to impact students and their learning, we need to make those changes as “close to the action” as possible – in the immediate learning environment, in partnership with faculty.



# VALUE Rubrics vs. Standardized Tests

VALUE rubrics rely on course-embedded artifacts of student learning for evidence; scores based on the rubrics get **aggregated UP** for reporting at the programmatic and institutional levels

**VS.**

Administering a test which may have only tangential connections to curriculum and trying to **backwards engineer** the loop-closing process.

*Caveat: Rubrics often used in concert with a multiple choice test to follow assessment best practices; e.g., multiple measures, triangulation*



# Actionable and Meaningful Data

- For data to be *actionable*, it needs to be more than statistically significant; it needs to be *meaningful*.
- Unless a test
  - is aligned with the outcomes of our undergraduate curriculum, and
  - allows for disaggregation of data by program, it *lacks the capacity* to generate meaningful, actionable data and therefore would probably not improve student learning.



# Other Benefits of VALUE Rubrics

- Developed by interdisciplinary expert teams of faculty from around the nation, representing all institutional types
- Cost (free or low-cost vs. big bucks)
- Opportunity for faculty development in assessment practices – we invest heavily in best practices/methodologies vis-a-vis rubric rating
- Helps us be more transparent with stakeholders about the learning that takes place on **our** campus, in **our** curricula, designed by **our** faculty, achieved by **our** students. Rubrics give us a common language with which to communicate this information.





# RESOURCES

- Our First Year Experience Program: [www.fye.vt.edu](http://www.fye.vt.edu)
- Our office's website: [www.assessment.vt.edu](http://www.assessment.vt.edu)  
(Information here on a number of topics I talked about.)
- The AAC&U site for rubrics:  
[http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index\\_p.cfm?CFID=13998287&CFTOKEN=40761019](http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index_p.cfm?CFID=13998287&CFTOKEN=40761019)
- Contact email: [rvandyke@vt.edu](mailto:rvandyke@vt.edu)

# AAC&U VALUE Rubrics at the University of Kansas

Paul Klute

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Academic Affairs

Principal Analyst, Office of Institutional Research  
and Planning

# UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

- Introduced to the campus community fall 2011
  - Kansas Board of Regents began talks about learner outcomes
  - Reacting to feedback from HLC regarding improving assessment practices
  - Capitalizing on small scale assessment work being done in CTE

# FALL 2011

- Undergraduate Written Communication Learner Outcomes
  - AAC&U Value Rubrics provided to departments to start the discussion
  - 60% of departments used the AAC&U Value Rubric with no changes
  - 95% of all UG departments participated
  - 90% response rate (student-level assessments)

# KU's PROCESS

- Making it easy for departments to participate



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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.

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## Student being evaluated:

Please Select One ▼

If other, please specify:

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## Context of and Purpose for Writing

- 4 - Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.
- 3 - 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).
- 2 - Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).
- 1 - Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).

## Content Development

- 4 - Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.
- 3 - Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.
- 2 - Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.
- 1 - Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.

## Genre and Disciplinary Conventions

- 4 - Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline.
- 3 - Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization and presentation.
- 2 - Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation.
- 1 - Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.



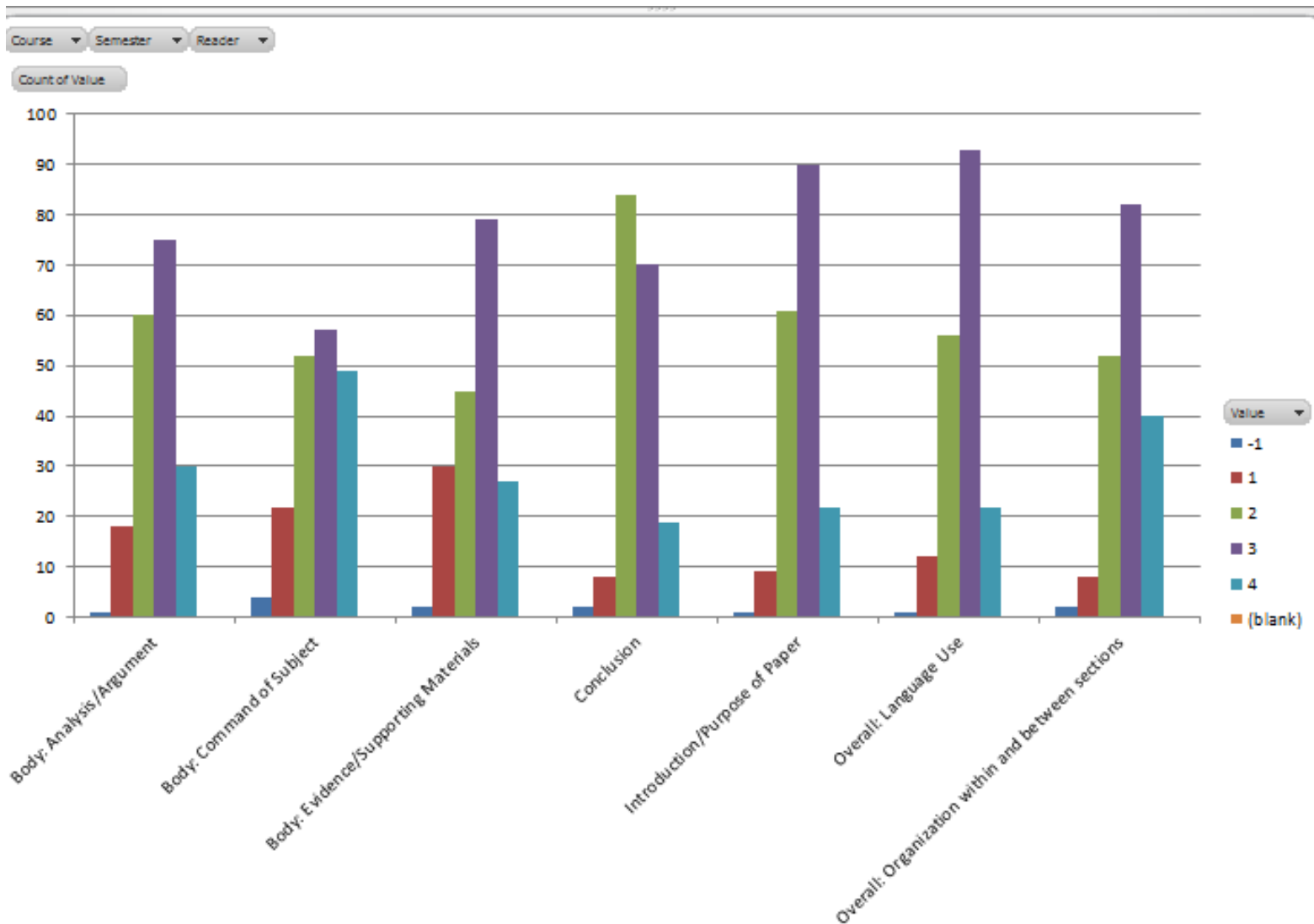
# KU's PROCESS

- Assessment Workshops
  - Primary and Secondary Readers
  - Undergraduate coordinators
  - Department Chairs
- Explanation of the process
- Calibration exercise
- Sharing of best practices
- Discussion about using the data

# KU'S PROCESS

Course	Semester	Reader	Count of Value	Column Labels	-1	1	2	3	4 (blank)	Grand Total
COMS_332	Fall 2011	Primary	Body: Analysis/Argument		1	18	60	75	30	184
COMS_356	Fall 2012	Secondary	Body: Command of Subject		4	22	52	57	49	184
COMS_435	Spring 2012		Body: Evidence/Supporting Materials		2	30	45	79	27	183
COMS_554			Conclusion		2	8	84	70	19	183
COMS_560			Introduction/Purpose of Paper		1	9	61	90	22	183
			Overall: Language Use		1	12	56	93	22	184
			Overall: Organization within and between sections		2	8	52	82	40	184
			Grand Total		13	107	410	546	209	1285

# KU's PROCESS



# TRAINING THE READERS

- Provost's Office
  - Provided process information – timeline, payment info, technical questions
- Center for Teaching Excellence
  - Calibration exercises for primary and secondary readers
  - Workshops for departments on using the LO data
  - Explained the difference between grading and assessment (and how 1 assignment can be used for both)

# ASSIGNMENT

- A local paper published an article featuring a scientist's alternative to global warming (a decline in sunspots).
  - By the end of this assignment you should have practice at: 1) critiquing such journalistic presentations of science; 2) researching credible information that can be brought to bear when discussing a specific claim made in the media; 3) synthesizing that information to make a coherent argument based on reliable evidence.



# AAC&U VALUE RUBRIC – WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3 2		Benchmark 1
<b>Context of and Purpose for Writing</b> <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	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 a 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).
<b>Content Development</b>	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.
<b>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</b> <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	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.
<b>Sources and Evidence</b>	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.
<b>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</b>	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.

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