

# Liberal Education & America's Promise



EXCELLENCE FOR EVERYONE AS A NATION GOES TO COLLEGE

## ***Closing the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps: Strategies for Achieving our Shared Responsibility***

Dr. Tia McNair  
CSU Graduation Initiative 2025  
October 12, 2017



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# ***About AAC&U***

- The leading national association concerned with the **quality** of student learning in college
- More than 1,400 institutional members – half public/half private, two year, four-year, research universities, state systems, liberal arts, international
- A network of over 50,000 faculty members, academic leaders, presidents and others working for educational reform
- A meeting ground for all parts of higher education – about our shared responsibilities to students and society



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# ***CSU Graduation Initiative 2025***

## *Strategies to Better Serve Our Students*

- Limiting the number of units required to earn a BA/BS degree while maintaining **quality**
- Supporting faculty innovation and course redesign efforts to improve student outcomes, especially in courses with historically high failure rates.



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***Completion without Quality is  
an Empty Promise of  
Student Success***



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# *The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes*

## *Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World*

- **Focused** on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary

## *Intellectual and Practical Skills*

- **Practiced** extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

## *Personal and Social Responsibility*

- **Anchored** through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

## *Integrative and Applied Learning*

- **Demonstrated** through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems



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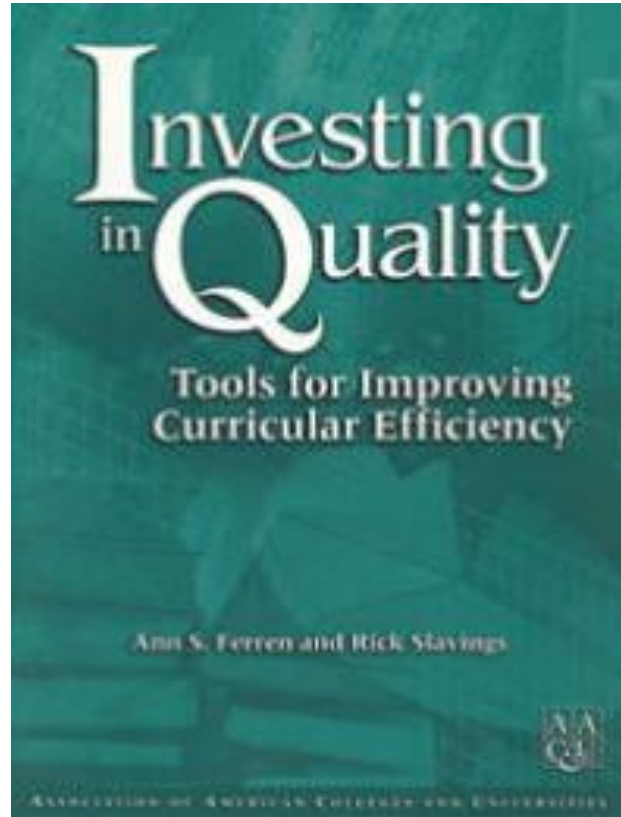
# *Essential Learning Outcomes*

- Inquiry and Analysis
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Written and Oral Communication
- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Teamwork and Problem Solving
- Civic Knowledge and Engagement—local and global
- Intercultural Competence
- Ethical Reasoning
- Lifelong Learning
- Across general and specialized studies



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# *Investing in Quality*



By: Ann Ferren and Richard Slavings

Published: January 1, 2000



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# *Investing in Quality*

- Focus is on student productivity (learning)
- Define student learning outcomes
- Identify essential faculty-student interactions
- Take advantage of new technologies and peer learning



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# *Investing in Quality*

- Deploy valuable faculty resources in new ways
- Conduct continuous assessment with feedback to students
- Use proactive curriculum development based on future needs of students



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# *Investing in Quality*

Good assessment tools to gather the data to examine quality.

Key Questions:

**What are your quality measures?**

**What are your measures for examining curricular efficiency and effectiveness?**



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# *Investing in Quality*

- Must understand how cost and quality are related.

Key Questions:

**What is the impact of cost?**

**What is your unit of analysis?**



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# *Data Sources*

- Student Level Data
- Faculty Data
- Institutional Data
- Comparative Data



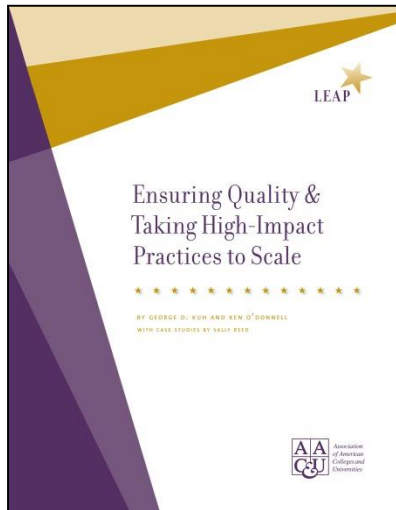
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# *What drives student and learning productivity?*



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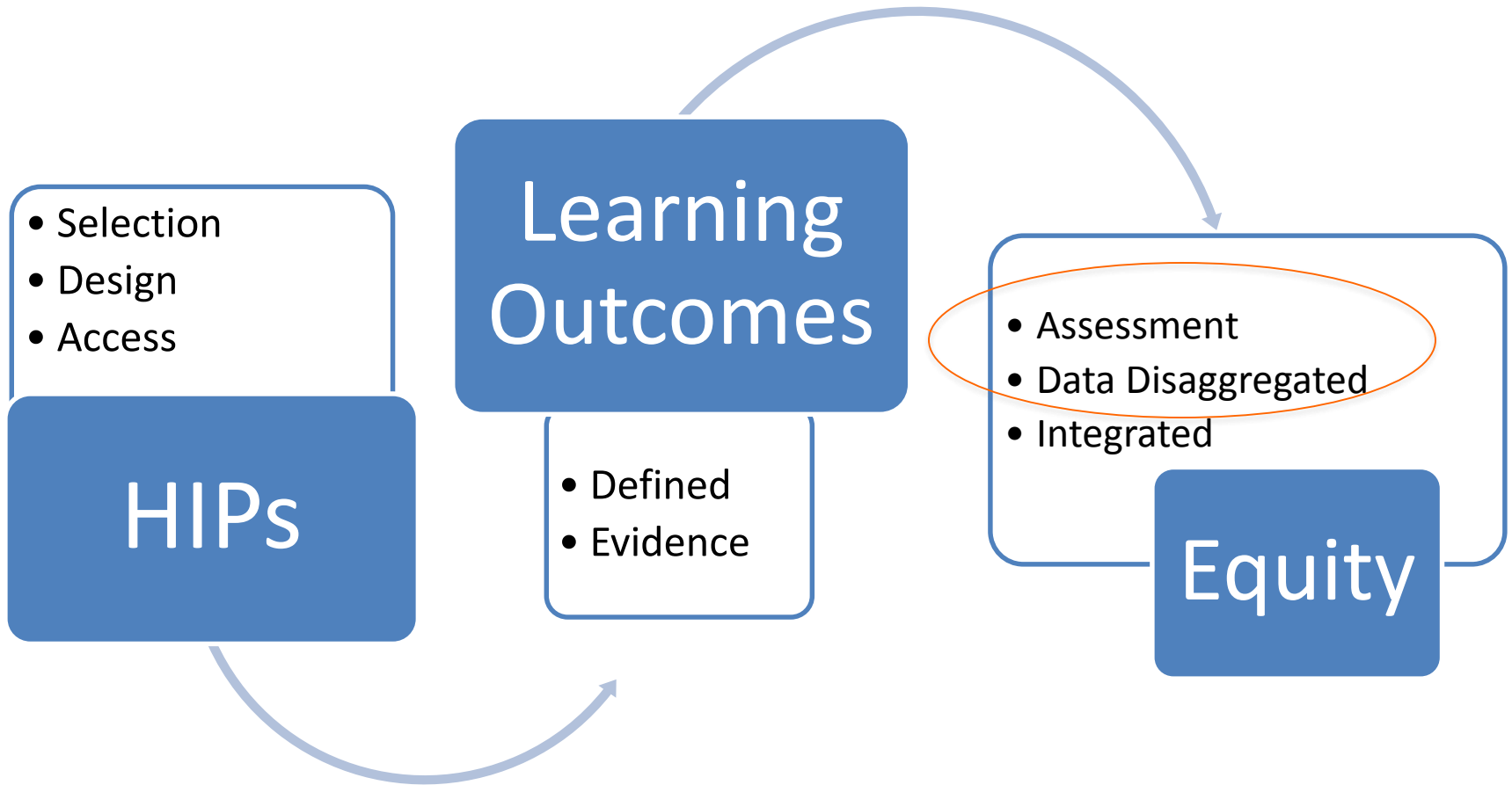
# *“High-Impact Practices” that Help Students Achieve the Outcomes*



- ★ First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- ★ Common Intellectual Experiences
- ★ Learning Communities
- ★ Writing-Intensive Courses
- ★ Collaborative Assignments & Projects
- ★ Undergraduate Research
- ★ Diversity/Global Learning
- ★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- ★ Internships
- ★ Capstone Courses and Projects



# *Intentionality of HIPs*



# *AAC&U's VALUE Institute*

- Partnership with Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Research
- Institutions are invited to participate in the VALUE Institute by collecting samples of student work, uploading the work into the digital repository and having the work scored using the VALUE rubrics by certified VALUE Institute faculty scorers.
- Participating institutions receive data and reports from the tested VALUE nationwide database for benchmarking student learning.



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# New Insights

• "they aren't going to go to that much trouble"

• family has huge impact on whether they do or not

• there were mul condos that son

Star  
O: owner  
V: ed  
verb  
O: to do  
O: to do  
Recy

# ON SOLID GROUND / VALUE REPORT 2017

**What is VALUE?**

**What is the VALUE  
Approach to Assessment?**



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## *What is a VALUE Rubric?*

- Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education
- Articulation of expected, demonstrated learning at progressively more sophisticated and complex levels of achievement

# List of VALUE Rubrics

- **Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural Worlds**
  - Content Areas → No Rubrics
- **Intellectual and Practical Skills**
  - Inquiry & Analysis
  - Critical Thinking
  - Creative Thinking
  - Written Communication
  - Oral Communication
  - Reading
  - Quantitative Literacy
  - Information Literacy
  - Teamwork
  - Problem-solving
- **Personal & Social Responsibility**
  - Civic Knowledge & Engagement
  - Intercultural Knowledge & Competence
  - Ethical Reasoning
  - Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning
  - Global Learning
- **Integrative & Applied Learning**
  - Integrative & Applied Learning

# VALUE Rubric

## CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

*for more information, please contact [value@aacu.org](mailto:value@aacu.org)*



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. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

### Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

### Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of possibilities. Critical thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. Assignments that cut across presentation mode might be especially useful in some fields. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., how information sources were evaluated regardless of whether they were included in the product) is important, assignments focused on student reflection might be especially illuminating.

### Glossary

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

- **Ambiguity:** Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.
- **Assumptions:** Ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are "taken for granted or accepted as true without proof." (quoted from [www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/assumptions](http://www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/assumptions))
- **Context:** The historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events.
- **Literal meaning:** Interpretation of information exactly as stated. For example, "she was green with envy" would be interpreted to mean that her skin was green.
- **Metaphor:** Information that is (intended to be) interpreted in a non-literal way. For example, "she was green with envy" is intended to convey an intensity of emotion, not a skin color.

# CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [value@aacu.org](mailto:value@aacu.org)



## Criteria

### Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

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

## Levels

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
<b>Explanation of issues</b>	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/ problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
<b>Evidence</b> <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/ evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/ evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/ evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
<b>Influence of context and assumptions</b>	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
<b>Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)</b>	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imprecise, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position, perspective, thesis/hypothesis are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized with the position.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
<b>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</b>	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's information and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. Conclusions are logically tied to information because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion; some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.

## Performance Descriptors

# Thank you!

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