User Needs Report: Rubrics

Fall 2018

In 2018’s annual survey of NYU Classes and related DLE technologies, 36% of respondents listed Rubrics as their highest priority among unmet needs; since the Sakai community is also currently undertaking a Rubrics project, this is a propitious time to articulate the needs of the NYU community around the use of digital grading rubrics.

Definitions

- **Rubric**: a rubric is a table of pre-set responses to an assignment by which the evaluator gauges the level of success or proficiency in each of several categories of evaluation. For instance, a simple 3-point scale for Critical Thinking might read, “1=not proficient: no signs of critical evaluation; consists entirely of summary and paraphrase; 2=developing proficiency: sections of critical analysis are mixed with sections that merely summarize or paraphrase; 3=proficient: consistently analyzes subject critically; any summary or paraphrase serves the purpose of critical analysis.” Rubrics can be used to detail the areas in which students are and are not succeeding, as a means to convert qualitative to quantitative assessment for the purposes of program assessment, in evaluation of grant applications, etc.

- **Rubric Creator**: the person who develops the rubric language, categories, and weighting (if applicable) and shares it with the rubric grader(s).

- **Rubric Grader**: the person who actively uses the rubric to assign grades or formative feedback to the artifacts being assessed. In some cases, the rubric creator and grader are the same person; in other cases, they are not.

- **Feedback Recipient**: the person who receives the assessment provided by the rubric grader. In the case of a class, students are the feedback recipients; in the case of program or grant assessment, the chair of the assessment committee is normally the feedback recipient.

Needs

The user needs for a rubrics tool are organized by user role—Rubric Creator, Rubric Grader, and Feedback Recipient—each of which is subcategorized into three levels of priority:

1. **Immediate Needs**: without this, the tool would not meet minimal needs
2. **Eventual Needs**: without this, the tool won’t fully meet expectations; should be on roadmap for product
3. **Nice to Have:** an additional functionality that enhances tool use, but is not essential for successful use

These prioritized needs accompany a set of baseline needs that are applicable for all NYU platforms, and are thus included in all Immediate Needs:

- SSO
- Accessible
- LTI-compliant
- NYU Analytics standards compliant

**Rubric Creator**

1. **Immediate Needs**
   - Simple means for creating rubrics without pre-defining parameters (examples: default 3-column, 3-row template that can be expanded with additional rows and columns OR simple rubric table-creating function, such as the table tool in Google docs)
   - Ability to test rubric to ensure it is functioning as it should (from both user and student identity)
   - Ability to apply rubric to any Classes/LMS function that allows submission of work: Assignments, Forums, Tests/Quizzes, Resources, etc.
   - Ability to apply rubric to any standard file type (Google or Word docs, PDFs, jpgs, mp3, mp4 files, etc.) whether in or outside of NYU Classes
   - Ability to share rubric easily with rubric graders (e.g., ability to save rubrics for reuse on multiple submissions, or copy a rubric from one submission to another)
     - Share to rubric graders sites for their use
     - Ability to copy from one site to another
     - Share with rubric graders as editors for comment/revision before the rubric is in use (also, rubric creator must have ability to freeze rubric from further changes—see next item)
   - Ability to alter rubric at any time during its use cycle (but with saved record of changes) and to allow/not allow users to do same
   - Ability to create summative feedback rubrics (rubrics that include a grade for the piece of work under evaluation)
     - Ability to set scale of grades (simple numerical measure not tied to a formal grade (e.g., for program assessment or grant evaluation, 1.0-4.0, A-F, etc.)
     - Ability to set weights for different categories in rubric (e.g., “critical thinking = 30%; grammar and spelling = 10%, etc.)
     - Ability for rubric grader to add/not add own comment to canned rubric feedback
     - Ability to assign a range to rubric category assessments (e.g. <1 pt, where the system will accept decimal point values; not just whole numbers)
   - Ability to create formative feedback rubrics (rubrics that do not include a formal grade)
○ Ability to allow/not allow rubric grader to assign others to use the rubric as rubric grader (examples: departmental rubric shared to individual instructor who wants students to use it to give peer feedback to fellow students; instructor who shares rubric to TAs)
○ Ability to generate and share reports from results of rubric grading (averages, means, full list of responses, correlations with additional data (e.g., department for a grant application, etc.)
  ■ Export data set gathered via use of the rubric
○ Ability to anonymize either graders or submissions (or both)
○ Ability to add graders from outside NYU to receive and complete rubrics
  ■ Ability for those assessors to see a dashboard of rubrics that need to be updated or completed, organized by student

2. **Eventual Needs**
○ Ability to pull in rubric from an outside standard
○ Ability to apply rubric to Classes/LMS-integrated 3rd party tools (e.g., VoiceThread, Cerego, etc.) - i.e., to use user-created rubric in place of native 3rd-party rubric

3. **Nice to Have (n/a)**

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**Rubric Grader**

1. **Immediate Needs**
○ Ability to one-button share feedback to all recipients (with default message to any recipient who has not submitted the work to be assessed) or share with selected recipients (nb - each recipient only receives feedback on own work in either case)
  ■ Feedback could be:
    1. Only grade
    2. Only rubric comment (e.g., “developing proficiency: sections of critical analysis are mixed with sections that merely summarize or paraphrase”)
    3. Both grade and rubric comment
○ Ability to feed/not feed summative grade to gradebook
  ■ With weighted rubrics, automatic calculation of overall grade for the assessment
○ Ability to add individual comments along with pre-set rubric assessment
  ■ Comments that accompany pre-set assessment of a particular rubric goal (e.g., Critical Thinking)
  ■ Comments on overall success of submission
○ Ability to easily review all assessments for rubric
  ■ Option to see aggregated results in a saveable table
  ■ Option to see all results in a continuous, saveable document

2. **Eventual Needs**
○ Ability to share averages across class for a rubric goal (e.g., average for Critical Thinking was 2.3) along with individual feedback when sharing feedback with recipients
○ Show a warning if attempting to change a rubric (save as a new rubric vs. over-writing)
○ Ability to track student performance in different competencies/aspects of the rubric - (flag everyone scoring under 50% in classroom participation, for example, across all assessments)
○ Easy integration of third-party grading tools (ex: PrizmDoc) with rubrics tool (hence, with gradebook as well)
○ Ability to share feedback via NYU email
○ Toggle on/off feedback recipients ability to respond to feedback (default off)

3. Nice to Have (n/a)

Feedback Recipient

1. Immediate Needs (n/a)

2. Eventual Needs
○ Option to receive notification via text or other means when feedback shared to recipient
○ Ability to respond to feedback (if enabled by rubric grader)
○ Ability to view full rubric (not just the descriptive text for the level they attained - e.g., for someone who scored a level 2 on Critical Thinking to be able to see the text for all three levels of the Critical Thinking rubric).
○ Ability to view average scores (if enabled by rubric grader)

3. Nice to Have (n/a)