

CRITICAL THINKING RUBRIC

DEFINITION

Critical thinking is the ability to use information, ideas, and arguments from relevant perspectives to make sense of complex issues and solve problems. Degree graduates will create, evaluate, interpret, and combine information to reach well-reasoned conclusions or solutions.

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. 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.

GLOSSARY

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

- **Context:** Conditions in which something exists or occurs (Merriam-Webster); the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed (Dictionary.com).
- **Degree of Credibility:** Recognition that some sources are more accurate than others and can endure scrutiny by authority in the field (TCC Faculty).
- **Probative Value:** Makes use of sufficient and relative facts or data to prove/support the issue, establish the existence of other facts, and weigh against alternative points of view. Evaluates the strengths and relevance of arguments on a particular question or issue within a given context (adapted from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).
- **Rationale:** An explanation of controlling principles of opinion, belief, practice, or phenomena; an underlying reason (Merriam-Webster).
- **Reasoning:** The process of thinking about something in a logical way to form a conclusion or judgement (Merriam-Webster).

*Note to assessor: Source(s) are determined by the assignment. Student may not be required to do research. Not all sources may be academic and/or popular sources may be appropriate. See assignment instructions.

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CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

For more information, contact value@aacu.org.

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

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
Topic/issue identification	Topic/issue to be considered is clearly stated and the relevance of context is acknowledged and comprehensively explained. The descriptions are extensive, delivering all relevant information for full understanding.	Topic/issue to be considered is stated and the relevance of context is acknowledged and explained. The descriptions are clear, unambiguous, well-defined, and with minor omissions.	Topic/issue to be considered is stated and the relevance of context is acknowledged. The descriptions are unclear, ambiguous, undefined terms, and with serious omissions.	Topic/issue to be considered is stated without any clarification, relevance of context, or descriptions.
Information use	Comprehensive information is derived from source(s) to support the topic/issue. It is accurately quoted and/or correctly paraphrased and conveys the intended meaning.	Some information is derived from source(s) to support the topic/issue. It is accurately quoted and/or correctly paraphrased and conveys most of the intended meaning.	Some information is derived from source(s) to support the topic/issue. It is accurately quoted and/or correctly paraphrased and conveys some of the intended meaning.	Little to no information is derived from source(s) to support the topic/issue. It is not accurately quoted and/or correctly paraphrased and does not convey the intended meaning.
Conclusion(s)	Conclusion(s) is well developed, strongly supported based upon the probative value of evidence/information, and reflects the student's informed evaluation.	Conclusion(s) is well developed and supported, but the value of evidence is not weighed to differentiate degrees of credibility when informing the student's evaluation.	Conclusion(s) is based upon partial support or weak evidence. Data is incorrectly interpreted or does not support all claims, Data reflects some informed evaluation but is mostly superficial.	Conclusion(s) is based upon little to no support. Evidence/information seems unconnected and reflects little to no informed evaluation beyond restating the topic/issue.
Rationale	Rationale demonstrates a well-reasoned justification for the conclusion(s) connected to the topic/issue being considered. The reasoning is coherent, comprehensively explained, and consistent.	Rationale demonstrates a reasoned justification for the conclusion(s). The reasoning is coherent, clearly explained, and consistent.	Rationale demonstrates some coherence and consistency to justify the conclusion(s) but is not clearly explained or is disconnected from the identified topic/issue being considered.	Rationale is not coherent or consistent. Conclusion(s) is not justified.