# Improving Institutional Corrections Training Academy:

## Analytic Scoring Rubrics for Observational Performance in Outcomes-based Training Evaluation

December 2024

This handout was created as supplemental material to the Outcomes-based Training Evaluation webinar series. During the webinars, trainers discussed the need for alternative scoring and data collection methods due to unique training assessment environments such as mock trial performances, virtual reality and simulations, role play, and more. Although scoring rubrics were not part of the original curriculum, this handout provides instructions to create rubrics for observational settings when other assessment tools like pre- and post-tests, surveys, interviews, and other data collection methods may not be appropriate or easily administrated.[1] This document is a supplement to the material covered in the webinar series and does not serve as standalone training. Please see the series linked here for more information.

### *What is an analytic scoring rubric?*
It is a scoring tool that outlines different criteria related to the assigned task or test to measure the trainee or learner's performance across the intended training outcomes. The rubric details the potential scores (or points) that can be earned for each criterion based on the learner's performance. Rubrics can help instructors communicate expectations to students, as well as aid in consistent and efficient evaluations of performance.

| PROS OF RUBRICS | CONS OF RUBRICS |
|---|---|
| • Clear expectations<br>• Efficient Scoring<br>• Consistent Scoring<br>   o From student-to-student<br>   o From instructor-to-instructor<br>• Detailed Feedback<br>• Concrete Measures of Progress | • Time Consuming to Create<br>• Requires Revision Over Time<br>• Not Diagnostic<br>   o Cannot Explain Why a Student Performed a Certain Way |

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[1] Note: Rubrics can also be used to score other assignments such as presentations, reports, and more.

### *What should a scoring rubric include?*

The table below provides an example scoring rubric focusing on evaluating performance in a mock trial. Your rubric should include:

- The overall description of the task or test (e.g., describe the assignment the learner will participate in, such as a mock trial) (Table 1)

- The *rating scale* (also known as performance levels) includes value labels as row headings. The rating scale comprises the potential scores for each criterion (ROW 1)

> **TIP:** It is a best practice for the rating scale to include three to fine performance levels (Suskie, 2009)[1]. The more performance levels you include, the more time it takes to create the rubric and grade with the rubric, and research shows that increasing the number of levels ultimately decreases consistency in grading across instructors (Brown University, 2024)[1].
>
> **TIP:** The rating scale should include value labels that are both numeric (e.g., 1, 2, 3, and 4 points) and textual (e.g., Above Average, Sufficient, Developing, Needs Improvement). This will help you and your learners to understand where points were missed in the overall score and pinpoint which performance criteria require additional training.

- The *performance criteria* are to be considered as column headings. The performance criteria should also include weighting criteria if all criteria are not valued equally. In the example below, the criterion of 'research preparation' is valued the highest—at fifty percent of the overall mock trial grade (COLUMN 1)

> **TIP:** At a minimum, a rubric should contain at least two performance criteria but no more than six (Brown University, 2024[Error! Bookmark not defined.]; Chaaban, 2019)[1]
>
> **TIP:** Do not include too many criteria so that the grading rubric is no longer efficient. Typically, the entire rubric should fit on one page.

- Detailed *descriptions* of each performance level for all performance criteria. The descriptions should list the associated expectations, and you should consider including an example of each (*see* CELLS in ROW 2, COLUMNS 2-4)

**TIP:** Use parallel language as much as possible across the descriptions so that it is easily understood how performance levels build upon one another.

**Table 1. Scoring Rubric for Mock Trial Prosecutor Example**

|  | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | Column 4 | Column 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | **Above Average (4)** | **Sufficient (3)** | **Developing (2)** | **Needs Improvement (1)** |
| **Row 2** | **Criteria 1**<br><br>**Example: Organization of Closing Statements (20%)** | • Strong introduction and inclusion of all arguments.<br><br>• Consistent and coherent logical progression of arguments.<br><br>• Meaningful concluding argument that appropriately aligns with the course materials. | • Clear introduction and inclusion of arguments.<br><br>• Illustrates some consistency and shows some logical progression of arguments.<br><br>• A clear concluding argument that incorporates some course material. | • Contains a thesis argument but is somewhat lost in focus.<br><br>• Generalized supporting details in arguments but less clear in the logical progression of arguments.<br><br>• The concluding argument is incorporated, but there is little incorporation of course material. | • Closing argument lacks a thesis or clarity of argument.<br><br>• Missing supporting details<br><br>• A summary of the relevant course material is missing. |
| **Row 3** | **Criteria 2: Performance (30%)** | … | … | … | … |
| **Row 4** | **Criteria 3: Research Preparation (50%)** | … | … | … | … |

**Steps to Creating a Scoring Rubric (Adapted from van Leusen (2013)[2]):**

1. Identify the learning outcomes for your outcomes-based training
2. From those learning outcomes, determine the skills and knowledge to be assessed in the trainees
3. Then, make a list of the observable criteria that will represent the skillsets and knowledge of interest (Note: These will become your performance criteria)
4. For each identified performance criterion, decide how to break out the levels of student performance. (Note: This will become your *rating scale*).
5. Once you have both your performance criteria and rating scale, create detailed descriptions that are distinct, easily understood, and meaningful to the assignment or assessment.

> **TIP:** Once you have followed Steps 1 through 5, you can use Arizona State University's Analytic Rubric Checklist to self-evaluate the quality of your rubric. The checklist can be downloaded from here: https://dev-teachonline.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Analytic-

6. Review and pilot your scoring rubric before incorporating it into your official grading schema. Ask other instructors to review the rubric for feedback and pilot the rubric in practice to determine if any performance-level descriptors need revision before implementation.

> **TIP:** It is recommended to have multiple instructors score the same group or groups of students using the scoring rubric in the pilot test. Then, compare the rubric scores by the student to verify if the resulting scores across the instructor match. If there are differences in the scores by the instructor, discuss where additional clarity can be added to the rubric for consistency in grading. If you do not have the resources for additional instructors to pilot the rubric, you can use the rubric on past student assignments (i.e., those that were scored without the rubric) and evaluate if the rubric results in parallel scores. Taking one of these steps is integral to ensuring the validity, reliability, and fairness in using the scoring rubric in practice (Andrade, 2005.)[1]

[2] P, Van Leusen (2013). Assessments with rubrics. *ASU TeachOnline.* Retrieved from https://teachonline.asu.edu/2013/08/assessments-with-rubrics/

**Additional Resources for Creating a Scoring Rubrics:**

- Designing elements of a rubric from Brown University: https://sheridan.brown.edu/resources/course-design/feedback-student-learning/grading-criteria-rubrics/designing-grading
- Best Practices for Designing Effective Rubrics by Arizona State University: https://teachonline.asu.edu/2019/02/best-practices-for-designing-effective-rubrics/
- Rubric Best Practices, Examples, and Templates by NC State University: https://teaching-resources.delta.ncsu.edu/rubric_best-practices-examples-templates/
- Creating High Quality Rubrics by University of Florida: https://citt.ufl.edu/resources/assessing-student-learning/providing-effective-feedback/creating-high-quality-rubrics/
- Rubrics by The University of Texas at Austin: https://ctl.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/build-rubric.pdf
- 16 Value Rubrics from The American Association of Colleges and Universities: https://www.aacu.org/initiatives/value-initiative/value-rubrics
- Example Grading and Performance Rubrics from Carnegie Mellon University: https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/rubrics.html
- Creating and Using Rubrics from Yale University's Center for Teaching and Learning: https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/Rubrics

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