

Knowledge Outcomes Rubric – Social and Behavioral Sciences

Introduction

The University of Rhode Island Social and Behavioral Sciences disciplines rubric was developed by faculty volunteers from the Subcommittee on the Assessment of General Education, along with staff from the Instructional Development Program and the Office of Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment and Accreditation.

The rubric articulates fundamental criteria for student proficiency in a knowledge area, with competency levels that illustrate how students may demonstrate progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubric is intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading.

Definition

Social and Behavioral Sciences focus attention on the study of individual and social behavior as well as the functioning of society.

Framing Language

Social and behavioral science is the systematic study of society and individuals focused on the ways in which people behave collectively and individually. Social and behavioral sciences attempt to achieve systematic and objective knowledge of behavior through the formulation and testing of generalizing theories. Courses in these disciplines advance student learning of the systematic processes of inquiry and analysis. Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, object or works through the collection and analysis of evidence. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts. Through the inquiry and analysis process students will:

- Identify or recall the requested facts, vocabulary, definitions, terms, concepts and people within a discipline.
- Recognize relevant concepts to solve problems and ask pertinent questions regarding the subject of interest.
- Use appropriate sources to collect applicable information to address a task.
- Apply relevant concepts from multiple sources if needed to correctly solve a problem and describe the evidence used to support the argument.

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Full Coverage: Courses must address any 5 Elements. Partial Coverage: address any 3 of the Elements.

Elements	Competent	Approaches Competency	Beginning Competency
Identifies facts, vocabulary, definitions, terms, concepts, people	Correctly identifies or recalls most or all (e.g. 80% or more) of the requested factual information	Correctly identifies or recalls much (e.g. 70%) of the requested factual information	Correctly identifies or recalls some (e.g. 69% or less) of the requested factual information
Recognizes concepts or tools relevant for application to a task	Selects most or all (e.g. 80% or more) relevant concepts for solving a problem; shows thorough awareness of what principles, methods, and concepts are relevant to a problem situation	Selects many (e.g. 70%) relevant concepts for solving a problem; grasps the main points for making the connections to the problem, but misses some	Selects few (e.g. 69% or less) of the relevant concepts for solving a problem; misses a number of useful connections of concepts and/or misses the main “key” that could unlock the problem
Asks questions or frame hypotheses relevant to the task	Converts an ill-defined problem situation into a question (or questions) that can be addressed within the discipline; does this with a high degree of efficiency, accuracy, and thoroughness	Converts an ill-defined problem situation into a question (or questions) that can be addressed within the discipline; does this with mixed or moderate degrees of efficiency, accuracy, and thoroughness	Misses the major discipline-linked question(s) that could be derived from an ill-defined problem situation; focuses on irrelevant aspects; misses major aspects of the problem; and/or poses the wrong question
Collects information relevant to address the task – e.g. data; literature sources	Uses appropriate sources (literature or sample); cites/describes sources correctly; is careful, thorough, specific, accurate, and precise in recording and presenting information	Uses some appropriate sources; cites sources; is careful enough in recording and presenting information to have a reasonably accurate overall perspective on the problem	Misses the most important sources; uses inappropriate sources; does not cite, or incorrectly cites sources; is sloppy, imprecise, or incomplete in ways that may lead to a significantly distorted perspective on the problem
Analyzes: <u>Applies</u> concepts to address the task	Applies relevant concepts thoroughly and correctly to solve a problem	Applies some but not all of the relevant concepts to solve a problem; achieves only part of the correct answer after applying the concepts	Concepts are misapplied; incorrect use of concepts leads to incorrect answer
Analyzes: <u>Deconstructs</u> an argument by indicating claims and/or evidence and <u>synthesizes</u> evidence from multiple sources	Correctly describes the logic and/or evidence used to convey an argument; distinguishes between facts and inferences; accurately compares and contrasts positions; effectively builds a cogent synthesis	Generally follows the reasoning of the argument but misses some elements of the argument; correctly describes some important aspects of the evidence and logic but not all; builds a reasonable synthesis but misses important points	Argument is misunderstood; synthesis is ill-conceived or not present
Analyzes: <u>Evaluates</u> support for claims and <u>justifies</u> conclusions	Critically evaluates and justifies conclusions by examining strengths and weaknesses of an argument	Demonstrates some ability to critically evaluate and justify conclusions by examining strengths and weaknesses of an argument; misses some important strengths or weaknesses	Does not take an evaluative position or takes a position on weak evidence; does not defend position when called for or conclusions are not supported by evidence

Innovates: <u>Demonstrates</u> innovative and creative thinking with regard to an idea, claim, question, form or performance	Creates a novel or unique idea, claim, question, form or performance using or recognizing creative risk-taking	Experiments with creating a novel or unique idea, claim, question, form or performance	Reformulates a collection of available ideas
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