



Alliant International University

Center for Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

October 7, 2024

The Center for Teaching Excellence monthly newsletter provides information about events sponsored by the CTE as well as around the university and beyond. We also highlight resources available to Alliant faculty on the CTE site and elsewhere.

Dalia Ducker

Webinars



[Finding Balance: Integrating AI While Fostering Authentic Student Learning](#) [Register Now](#)

October 17, 2024
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. (PT)
Location: Zoom

By Jeremy Bond, D.E.T. & Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

Explore strategies to strike the right balance between using AI as a tool and fostering authentic student learning. This 60-minute webinar covers designing assessments that encourage original inquiry and problem-solving. It also covers adapting assignments to embrace AI while encouraging students to use skills like creativity, analysis, and reflection, all while promoting ethical AI usage. Gain insights into integrating AI responsibly to support student inquiry while promoting essential critical thinking and lifelong learning skills.

[Elevating Learning: The RISE Model for Effective Feedback](#) [Register Now](#)

November 21, 2024
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. (PT)
Location: Zoom

By Jeremy Bond, D.E.T. & Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

In this webinar, participants will explore the RISE Model, developed by Emily Wray, which focuses on providing feedback with the elements of Reflection, Inquiry, Suggestion, and Elevation. The model transforms feedback into a collaborative dialogue, encouraging students to use their skills of self-awareness, critical thinking, and agency. By emphasizing the unique human characteristics that contribute to rich learning experiences, this approach fosters meaningful discussions between students and instructors. By implementing the RISE Model, instructors can create a supportive learning environment that fosters student growth, engagement, and long-term success.

Center for Teaching Excellence On Demand Webinars



[Leveraging the Library to Make Your Job Easier and Your Instruction Richer](#) **By Scott Zimmer, JD, Ed.D.**

[View the recorded webinar](#)
[View the webinar slides](#)

Participants learned how to incorporate library resources into their courses at every stage of the course life cycle, from course design and development to resource selection, to skill development and evaluation. Need a textbook for a course you are designing? The library can help find ones that allow institutional purchase, so students can use the library eBook

instead of buying their own. Looking for a set of articles for students to compare and contrast? The library can help you search for them, provide you with copies, and check permissions to make sure you can use them. Wanting to scaffold students' understanding of plagiarism and APA style, without losing class time? The library has tutorials and quizzes that you can assign to your students. We'll cover these and other strategies you can use to build or improve your course, while not adding to your workload.

Resources from the Department of Online Teaching



Innovating Rubric Development: Using GenAI for Creating Rubrics

By Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

Podcast of article - [Rubric Development](#) [8:27] audio only

Created using [NotebookLM](#) by Google. An AI-powered tool which transforms documents and research papers into engaging podcasts, course materials, and content. Only this article was submitted to create this podcast.

Have you been standing at the edge of the AI pool, unsure how to take the plunge? Let's start by dipping our toes into the shallow end by using GenAI to create rubrics. This method is a good starting point for those with limited AI experience and beneficial even if you have some experience but haven't tried creating a rubric yet. I've found that creating rubrics using GenAI saves time and ensures quality assessments focused on the essential information provided.

Getting Started with GenAI Rubrics

When using GenAI for rubric creation, the process is surprisingly straightforward once you determine the tool you would like to use. You could use [Khanmigo](#), an AI tool from Khan Academy which is currently free for educators. Khanmigo assists educators by generating rubrics quickly and efficiently. Based on your responses to questions, which establish key rubric criteria and define performance levels, editable comprehensive rubrics are created.

Another option is to select a GenAI tool such as [ChatGPT](#), [Microsoft Copilot](#), [Google Gemini](#) or another of your choice. For these, you will create a prompt to guide the GenAI tool on what action you want it to take. For instance:

Create a rubric for a [course level] [subject] [assignment type] on [topic]. Evaluate [list 3-5 main criteria]. Use a(n) [X]-point scale.

Providing essential information, as shown above in brackets, allows the AI to create a basic rubric. Including additional details such as learning objectives, assignment requirements, citation style, AI guidelines, and your preferred rubric format helps further customize it. Once the first draft is created, review and refine it so that the rubric reflects your ideas and preferences.

Adding a New Rubric to Canvas

Once your rubric is finalized, it can be added to [discussions](#), [assignments](#), and [quizzes](#) in Canvas. To add a rubric:

1. **Navigate to your course in Canvas.**
2. **Select the assignment, discussion, or quiz** where you want to add the rubric.
3. **Click on the "+ Rubric" button** (for assignments and discussions) or the options icon (three dots) and select **Show Rubric** (for quizzes).
4. **Choose to create a new rubric.**
5. **Input your criteria and point values** for each aspect of the rubric if creating a new one.
6. **Save and publish your rubric** once you have completed it.

- Note: Rubrics for quizzes can't be used to grade individual questions but can be used for feedback. Students won't see the rubric when taking the quiz, so consider

including it in the instructions.

Evolving Rubrics in the AI Era

When discussing rubrics, it's important to recognize that the student use of GenAI tools may require our assessment strategies to adapt, evaluating more critical higher-order skills instead of basic elements easily addressed by AI. For instance, a portion of your rubric may look like this, adapted from Kassorla, 2024:

Scoring	100%	85%	75%	60%	0
Originality and Authenticity of Author's Voice; Accuracy and Fact-Checking of AI Generated Information; Overall Appropriate Use of GenAI	The work maintains the author's unique tone and voice; all AI-generated information is accurate and thoroughly fact-checked; GenAI is used effectively and ethically with clear attribution.	The work maintains the author's tone and voice with minor deviations; most AI-generated information is accurate with minor factual errors; GenAI is used appropriately with minor issues in attribution.	The work struggles to maintain the author's tone and voice with noticeable inconsistencies; significant factual errors in AI-generated information; struggles with effective use of GenAI and attribution.	The work shows effort in maintaining the author's tone and voice with some inconsistencies; some AI-generated information is accurate with several factual errors; GenAI is used with noticeable issues.	The work fails to maintain the author's tone and voice; AI-generated information is inaccurate and not fact-checked; GenAI is used inappropriately with no clear attribution or enhancement.

Although this change may seem intimidating, it allows for a better evaluation of students' analytical and creative skills while preparing them for their future careers where working with AI may become standard.

Conclusion

Now that you've gotten your feet wet in the GenAI pool, you're ready to dive deeper into other AI tools that can augment your teaching. Educational innovation offers many new possibilities, all while maintaining the core goals of fostering critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning.

References

Kassorla, M. (2024, March 8). [Assessment of student writing in the age of AI](#). *The Academic Platypus*.

Teaching Tips



Course Ground Rules and Community Agreements

Ground Rules

One way to ensure productive collaboration and prevent disruptive behavior in a class is to establish course ground rules or community agreements. Their purpose is to clarify and codify expectations regarding how students participate and treat each other and the instructor. They can focus specifically on discussions or refer to general class behavior. Guidelines can be developed by the instructor and presented to the students or developed by the students, working either from a draft developed by the instructor or from ideas they generate themselves.

The Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence at Carnegie Mellon University advocated for establishing ground rules at the beginning of a course, with the instructor explaining their purpose and reminding students about them periodically.

Sample Ground Rules for Discussions:

- Listen actively and attentively.
- Ask for clarification if you are confused.

- Do not interrupt one another.
- Challenge one another but do so respectfully.
- Critique ideas, not people.
- Do not offer opinions without supporting evidence.
- Avoid put-downs (even humorous ones).
- Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding.
- Always have your book/readings in front of you.
- Do not monopolize discussion.
- Speak from your own experience, without generalizing.
- If you are offended by anything said during discussion, acknowledge it immediately.
- Consider anything that is said in class strictly confidential.

[Creating Community Agreements](#)

The Boston University Center for Teaching and Learning laid out options for the ways students can participate in developing agreements:

- Create a list of suggestions that students vote on to highlight the behaviors and attitudes they feel are most important for the success of their learning environment.
- Ask students to brainstorm suggestions for the agreement in small groups and/or in whole class discussion.
- Ask students to reflect, individually and then in small groups, on the characteristics of positive learning experiences and contrast these with negative experiences. From these reflections, the class may develop a list of behaviors to frame their interactions.
- Provide options for students to express agreement with the principles before developing the final community agreement.

See the Alliant CTE pages [Managing Disruptive Student Behavior](#) [Creating a Positive Class Climate](#).

Other Resources



Balancing Expectations and Active Learning

[Balancing High Expectations and Flexibility](#)

This blog post on the MIT Teaching + Learning site is a summary of a presentation by Dr. Rose Cavanagh, who argued that teachers need to think about creating learning environments that support student mental health and wellbeing. These efforts can be guided by principles that embrace “compassionate challenge.” She believes that rigor, intellectual challenge, and high expectations are not incompatible with care, inclusion, and responsiveness. Rather, it is important to provide a safe setting where students are challenged to learn without the expectation that they get everything right on the first try. This might mean being a “warm demander” – an instructor who has high expectations, is actively demanding, and offers numerous cognitive challenges but does so with personal warmth, encouragement, and compassion. That is, courses shouldn’t just focus on an outcome; they should be structured to support students in achieving that outcome. This might include using low stakes assessment or leeway with deadlines (e.g., assessments are completed by the end of a unit or module). Instructors could also offer assignments or exams that allow for revision or opportunities to drop the lowest grade on assignments or quizzes. Grading practices can provide opportunities to revise after receiving feedback.


See the Alliant CTE page on [Balancing Structure and Flexibility](#)

[Active Learning](#)


This blog post on the MIT Teaching + Learning site summarizes a presentation by Dr. Sarah Eddy reporting on their research on factors related to variation in the effectiveness of active learning. Active learning strategies can positively affect student performance on exams and

	<p>decrease course failure rates as well as reduce the disparities between low-income and underrepresented minority students and their normative peers, but there is some inconsistency in the findings. Dr. Eddy and their research team believe that how students engage in active learning activities may help explain the variation in these outcomes. Dr. Eddy's research findings indicate that students' motivation and engagement in active learning environments are influenced by both direct actions and communication from instructors and the messages conveyed by the practices and policies they enact. Therefore, Dr. Eddy suggested that instructors can support students' active learning in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbally communicating that they care about student learning, thus establishing student-instructor trust • Being transparent about why they are asking students to engage in active learning and how this is designed to support their understanding of the material • Enacting flexible course policies that allow for opportunities to practice and iterate • Providing formative feedback so students can guide and control their learning process • Encouraging students to focus on understanding the material, not just getting the points • Fostering an environment of cooperation and support, rather than competition, among students and their peers <p>See the CTE page on Promoting Active Learning.</p>
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Shared Resources

	<p>Mid-Term Feedback</p> <p>Mid-term is a good time to collect feedback from students about how the course is progressing and to identify any mid-course corrections that can help improve their learning. The MIT Teaching + Learning site provided examples of questions to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What helps your learning in this course? • What hinders your learning in this course? • What suggestions do you have to improve your learning in this course? • What are you doing that helps or hinders your learning in this course? • What could you be doing to enhance your learning in this course? <p>More information about collecting mid-term feedback is available on the Alliant CTE site Developing and Implementing Midterm Feedback.</p>
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More CTE Resources

	<p>Ethical Teaching</p> <p>Descriptions of the elements of excellent teaching often include lists of attitudes and behaviors. Although not always identified as such, some of these attitudes and behaviors can be understood as characterizing ethical teaching. Teaching Excellence This new section on the CTE website presents one source of ethical guidelines for university teachers: a list of Ethical Principles developed by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. It also includes statements by the American Association of University Professors, professional associations, and the Alliant Faculty Handbook.</p>
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