



INQUIRY & PROBLEM-SOLVING COMPETENCY

Adapted from AAC&U VALUE Rubrics

LaGuardia's General Education Assessment (Gen Ed) rubrics have been developed and modified by college faculty and academic staff to define the foundational dimensions for each learning competency and communication ability, with performance measures that represent progress in each area students are expected to demonstrate across the first two years of college. The Gen Ed rubrics support institutional use in assessing and discussing student learning and are not intended for grading student performance or teaching.

Definition

Inquiry, analysis, and problem-solving support students in forming a habit of mind critical to their academic and career advancement, thoughtful participation in civic life, and sustained, life-long learning. They may be combined in complex intellectual activities.

- **Inquiry** and analysis are systematic processes that explore issues or questions by collecting evidence and breaking complex topics or issues into parts to draw informed conclusions or judgments. Through revision, rethinking, and reorganization, most products of inquiry and analysis advance a claim, hypothesis, or solution.
- **Problem-solving** is the ability to design, evaluate, and implement a strategy or strategies to answer an open-ended question, overcome an obstacle, or achieve a desired goal.

Framing Language

This rubric is designed for use across disciplines and focuses on the relationship between the process of inquiry OR problem-solving and the conclusions or results presented. It incorporates broad language which reflects multiple approaches and assignments while addressing the fundamental elements of sound inquiry, analysis, and problem-solving (including topic selection, existing knowledge, design, and collecting resources). Inquiry typically involves the selection of a topic and adherence to discipline-specific protocols; whereas, problem-solving uses the tools of disciplines within diverse settings, from scientific and engineering laboratories to art studios, libraries, historical archives, digital simulations, as well as workplaces, communities and other real-world settings. Effective products frame the issue sufficiently, include pertinent and diverse information and evidence, demonstrate keen analysis to support coherent conclusions, and acknowledge potential limitations in the process. The following definitions seek to clarify terms and concepts as used in this rubric:

- **Knowledge:** Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education.
- **Evidence:** Available body of facts or information used to substantiate the truth or validity of a belief or proposition.
- **Limitations:** Critique of the process or evidence.
- **Implications:** How inquiry results apply to a larger context or the real world.
- **Hypothesis:** An appropriate response or argument to a challenge or a problem.
- **Conclusions:** A synthesis of key findings drawn from research/evidence or discipline-specific reflection.

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Dimension	Proficient - 4	Competent - 3	Developing - 2	Novice - 1
<p>Frames the Issue <i>Selects a topic OR defines the problem</i></p> <p><i>Situates a topic or problem in its pertinent context</i></p>	<p>Synthesizes well-defined concepts to develop a strong research question or hypotheses, OR defines an open-ended question or problem</p> <p>Demonstrates strong knowledge of context by providing most-pertinent details</p>	<p>Sufficiently frames or addresses a research question or hypothesis, OR defines an open-ended question or problem.</p> <p>Demonstrates substantial knowledge of relevant context by providing useful details</p>	<p>Partially frames or addresses a research question or hypothesis, OR partially defines an open-ended question or problem</p> <p>Demonstrates some knowledge of relevant contexts with some details</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attempt to frame or address a research question or hypothesis, OR to define an open-ended question or problem</p> <p>Demonstrates minimal knowledge of relevant context</p>
<p>Evidence Gathering <i>Assembles pertinent information from diverse perspectives</i></p>	<p>Synthesizes, reviews, and assembles highly-pertinent information from relevant and appropriate sources with diverse points of view</p>	<p>Reviews and assembles pertinent information from relevant and appropriate sources with more than one point of view</p>	<p>Partially reviews and assembles information from sources showing similar points of view</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attempt to assemble relevant information</p>
<p>Analysis <i>Breaks a topic or problem into parts to support a claim or solution</i></p>	<p>Synthesizes and evaluates evidence to support insightful hypothesis, claim, or solution</p>	<p>Sufficiently analyzes, evaluates, and organizes evidence to support coherent hypothesis, claim, or solution</p>	<p>Partially analyzes, evaluates, and organizes evidence to support hypothesis, claim, or solution</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attempt to analyze and/or organize evidence to support hypothesis, claim, or solution</p>
<p>Conclusion <i>Draws conclusions or offers solutions supported by evidence</i></p> <p><i>Acknowledges limitations and implications</i></p>	<p>Synthesizes multiple conclusions effectively, or evaluates outcomes and offers insightful solutions supported by evidence</p> <p>Addresses limitations and implications with suggestions for future areas of study or exploration</p>	<p>Draws coherent conclusions, or offers sufficient solutions supported by evidence</p> <p>Discusses limitations and implications</p>	<p>Draws partial or underdeveloped conclusions, or offers solutions supported by some evidence</p> <p>Identifies some limitations and implications</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attempt to draw conclusions, or offers few solutions supported by evidence</p> <p>Does not identify limitations</p>