Rubrics for Research Papers

CHRISTIE KITTLE: So I'm Chris Kittle. Again, Academic Outreach Innovation. Thank you for coming, Haley. We have Lisa Johnson-Shull here again to talk to us about research for writing papers-- research rubrics for research papers. We'll get there. I know, we're going to go ahead and get started off.

If y'all are not in Pullman, did you all receive the handouts to print out? You did? Perfect. And we all's do another follow-up to make sure everybody has the digital copies, including the presentation and some empty rubrics for you all to do. So welcome, Lisa.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: All right, well, thank you. And welcome to the new people. And then I see a lot of familiar faces, both here in Pullman and at WSU Tri-Cities. And so what I'm hoping is that even though this is its own presentation, you don't have to have attended a previous one that those of you who did attend the previous one, might feel maybe more comfortable asking questions or generating a little bit of conversation.

So I'm going to try to do a little bit of a linear presentation, although, that's kind of a challenge for me. So that will be one of those things that you might want to ask questions, bring me back by if I wander off topic. And not really off topic, but off the linearity of the presentation here.

So Rubrics for Research Papers. I'll just start by reiterating that a rubric is pretty much just an articulation of a set of criteria that you have in mind for leveling an evaluation on something, right. So the way we use rubrics in our educational system is to evaluate student work. And we can evaluate student work both formatively, informatively by giving them information for improvement.

We can evaluate student work summatively by giving them a grade, which labels the work. But the rubric is designed for us to externally articulate-- explicitly articulate-- what the criteria we are using are. And for most students, it's really helpful, because that way, then they don't have to read our minds.

When people say that they don't use a rubric, what they really mean is they don't use a rubric that they've articulated outside of their head. If you are evaluating anything, you're using a rubric. It might be in your head instead of outside of your head. The benefit of being outside of your head is that students, then, can see what you're thinking and then can hopefully map what they do to what you have determined that you most value. So that's why rubrics are really important.

So want to start with a negative example. Sometimes, I like to work from negative examples, because I think its academics are really good at taking things apart-- really good at analyzing things. So here's the negative example. I'm going to try to put it up on the document camera here.

In this-- actually-- we're going to work towards the middle where it's highlighted here. This example comes from a standardized assessment for students. And the direction here is think-pair-share. And that's just something that certain teachers might have students do as a collaboration.

Think pair share your findings to help you consider your ideas. So in that particular think-pair-share directive, your findings assume that students have done some research. Narrow your focus and generate a research question. So that's this directive. In the same directive, draft a working thesis that answers your focused question and that can be used as a guiding factor to guide your research.

This kind of directive is actually more common than we would like to see. But what's going on here is several things are being requested simultaneously that are actually a process that's very different depending on the kind of research you're doing. And that cannot be done all at the same time.

So for example, if you generate a research question and then draft a working thesis, you've essentially drafted a thesis to a question you haven't had time to research the answer to. And what we end up with when we do that-- and there are research requirements that say this-- you end up with a diatribe.

And I don't know how many of you is assigned a research paper to students where you end up with a diatribe, because what they do is they choose a thesis that already establishes something that they believe to be true. And they do it, because the linearity of how it is presented to them actually precedes the research that they have that they need to do.

And that's what this directive does that's still confusing. So to draft a working thesis that answers the focus question before the research has even happened is completely out of the linear sequence of how most research works. And then it says, that could be used as a guiding factor to guide your research.

And I would say, it's not a good idea to use a thesis to guide your research. It's probably a better idea to use your research to guide a thesis. And so it's really important to start thinking in these terms so that we don't end up with students who very often want to gravitate to a topic or a thesis that already claims something they believe to be true.

And one of the ways to wrestle them out of that is to change the sequence of how we do this-- so want to look at different kinds of research-- document camera, go off now-- now, let's try it. There we go, OK. So I want to look at the different kinds of research that different disciplines or different courses might ask students to do and think about how the difference-- Christie, I'm going to need you to-- oh, I have my own-- never mind. I'm in control of my own destiny here.

OK, the different kinds of research process types there are, and which of the types we might see in particular disciplines or how a particular instructor, regardless of the discipline, might

expect students to do research. So there's an inductive research process. There's a research report. There's a deductive, persuasive, or argumentative essay process.

And there might be a report that leads to an inductive question that leads to a deductive conclusion. So we're going to sort out what this language is, and why it matters in terms of how we create rubrics for research papers. All right, here are other combined research process types. And I've used these colored symbols, because I think they do a nice job of giving us some visual attachment to how these processes are different.

And Christie, do they have these in their handouts? OK, so I'm going to keep moving forward then. All right, so let's start with an inductive process. And this would be a potential rubric. And we're going to move from rubrics that are already filled in to rubrics that are not filled in rather than the other way around just to give you some grounding in how a rubric works.

So if you're asking students to do inductive research, you might be asking them to start with a reasonable conjecture, which is different than starting with a thesis. And scientists tend to ask students to do this where in the humanities, we might ask them to start with a thesis instead. And this is important to keep in mind, because most students are taught to write by English teachers.

That's how we do it in high school. English 101 is, by and large, taught by English teachers. And so we tend to think about argumentation in a particular way. But it's not the only way to think about argumentation. This is one way to think about it. This is one way that scientists often think about it.

So it's important that we look at these different epistemological or ways of knowing in terms of argumentation and decide which ones you're asking students to do and make sure your students know that. So in an inductive rubric-- and please, challenge me, raise your hand, question me at any point if you feel like I'm saying something that you have experienced to be untrue-- so it starts with a reasonable conjecture and uses data and ideas as evidence to establish the conjecture as true or not.

It would apply knowledge, then coming from that evidence or data to reach a conclusion. It would analyze and interpret data and ideas from experiment and sources, and reach a result that creates new knowledge. This is probably what you're asking students to do if they start with a conjecture. So and a conjecture is different from a question. And we're going to talk about that in just a minute.

And because one of the things that can happen with a conjecture, otherwise known as a hypothesis, is your evidence or your research or your experimentation may disprove it rather than prove it, which is not what you would do in a thesis-based argument. You would not make a claim and then work to disprove it. That's doubtfully what's going to happen there.

So what I want you to see also in this rubric-- and you'll see this repeated as we look at the different types-- we've mapped it out with struggling, achieving, and mastering with an arbitrary set of numbers of what would be the scoring on this if you're actually going to use a rubric to use a numerical score for students.

And so in this particular inductive rubric, we've decided that the thing that's worth the most points is about where the two things worth the most points are at the top of the bottom-- this idea that they have a reasonable conjecture and that they reach a result that creates new knowledge. And so we've waited those things with the most number of points.

And this will be repeated in each one of these rubrics so when we come back to the end, we can talk about the math if you're curious about that. All right. So here we've actually done the math. And I'm going to move through it. But it's simply a percentage of the total, which maps out at the bottom.

All of those things would be how you would use this thing to grade so that the mastering is 100% of the points, even though it's 150 points, it's 100% of the points. The achieving is 66% of the total points. And then the struggling is 33% of the total points. How you map that to a grade is your own decision. And we can come back and talk about that as I move through this.

All right. So the next thing we often ask students to do when we ask them to do research-- and again, the main point I'm selling here is that you know the kind you're asking them to do. And they know the kind you're asking them to do. And you use this language that helps them be clear about this would simply be in a informative report, which is to not make a conjecture just to choose a topic.

They might ask a question. And their information that they're seeking out might answer the question. But that's very different than making a hypothesis or a prediction or conjecture and using the paper to demonstrate the evidence that proves or disproves that conjecture or proves the claim in a thesis.

So in terms of an informative rubric, you might map out the things that are important here. These are the criteria for evaluation is it has a good focus topic or a good guiding question and answers it. And the reason that I put that in quotations is the definition of good is something that you might have to articulate for them.

And as we go through these two, the empty rubrics, we'll actually, hopefully if we have time generate some of the language, which specifies what you mean by good. What is a good focused topic? What is a good guiding question? Your determination when you're evaluating student paper is to let them know if it's good or not. And it really helps them to know what you think good is.

An informative report might also summarize relevant literature data and ideas, present analysis and interpretation of others. It's not making a claim. It's not proving anything, right? And so one

of the things you may notice with students-- if you've asked them to do a conjecture or ask them to make a claim, some of them might do this instead.

They might just do a report. And that might be because that's something that they have a [INAUDIBLE] feel for that they've been asked to do reports. And so then part of your evaluation moves them in the direction of seeing that if you've asked them to do a conjecture, and they've done this, show them the pieces that are missing for what you are really after when they just reported information.

This is great. You told me all about American wedding traditions. I now know why people wear a white dress. And I now know why they have ring bearers. But I don't know why you're telling me this. So a report may just give you information.

There's the rubric, right? The exact same thing. You've got your criteria that you've decided are the really components or ingredients in this thing simply lists what you would expect in one of these. That's what creates the ultimate criteria. And then now, all this does is map again to more points. This is not doing any descriptive language yet about what good is.

And then now we're to deductive. So the deductive research paper is the one most commonly found in the humanities. This is the one where students start with a claim in the form of a good thesis. They might address, hopefully, the audience appropriately, use logic as a primary, but not only rhetorical appeal. The others would be like ethos, pathos, mythos.

But what we really usually want in the Academy is a logical defense of a claim. I mean, we see that you can be a very persuasive rhetorician using other claims. But in an institution, we want evidence-based logical claims support. It includes maybe the unique perspective and conclusion of the arguer-- might not-- but applies known evidence and knowledge to reach the conclusion.

So this is what a deductive process looks like. And keep in mind, though, again, the important thing about this one is the research has to have happened prior to the establishment of the claim. And one of the things we find often when students are assigned maybe a deductive or thesis-based research paper and given a couple of weeks or two or three weeks to do it, it's very hard to do enough research to prove a claim in that short amount of time. So that's that.

There we go with our points-- whoop-- am I stuck here? It's really important slide. Oop, OK, there we go. All right, so here would be where these things are working together, which is often how the linearity of this might actually work where a student goes and researches something.

They find out all the information on American weddings, because they really don't know anything about it. Then they might make a conjecture based on that where they ultimately, then, after they've answered the conjecture or proven or disproven, then they're ready to make a claim. They make a claim about American wedding traditions, and then they defend it. So that would be how all of these three processes might work together.

And I think what's important to see these three processes is to also recognize the amount of time it would take. We talk a lot about in teaching writing, scaffolding assignments so that students are asked to do things in sequence stages, because if we don't, sometimes we find, as I did yesterday when I was tutoring a student in the Writing Center on a paper for History 105, is that at noon with a paper that was due at midnight, she had a thesis, but she really hadn't done any of the research yet.

So scaffolding it with these stages that maybe even are enforced in terms of due dates-- although that's not necessarily a topic of this conversation-- could help a student move through each one of these or maybe just move through two of them, depending on the kind of argument that you're wanting. Again, these are the scoring examples of how students would get points for these things.

Some people with rubrics are interested in how to do the math so we can talk about that. Now, we're to the point where I wanted to invite you to help me find some of these categories, right. So if you have any questions-- let me take a minute, maybe even a breath to stop from the first explosive blather about this and see if anybody has any questions or concerns or challenges or anything they want to add before we move to this.

OK. All right, so with rubrics, you can actually do them multiple different ways, right. There's a rubric that simply does this [COUGHS] and then expects students to maybe know. But for the most part, I would argue that at the very least, we would want to do something called a single-point rubric. And at the very most, we'd want to fill in all of these cells.

So let's start with the single-point rubric, which would mean filling out the language for achieving on this particular rubric. And I'm going to switch now to the document camera if it'll let me-- whoops. OK, so if we're going to do a single-point rubric, what it might mean that we do is decide that we define what we mean by achieving.

And then when we evaluate students' performance on the paper that they've given us on this inductive piece of research, then everything we look at is measured through the lens of what we decided on achieving in this particular criteria means. So what would you say it would mean to achieve a reasonable conjecture? What's a reasonable conjecture look like so that a student could notice if they had one?

AUDIENCE: Something that could be supported by evidence?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Something that can be supported by evidence. OK, so a reasonable co-- can be supported by evidence, right. And a certain kind of evidence, right? Yes.

AUDIENCE: We always say not trivial, not something obvious.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: OK, not obvious. And what's important about that is that different teachers differ about what they might think is obvious or not obvious, or what they would allow

their students to conjecture about versus other things. And so even being able to know what you think is obvious or not obvious, I've seen a lot of teachers over time have a little list of what their students could not argue about or could not check the conjecture about, because they were things that were too obvious or too well-worn-- too over-utilized in the conversation. Tri-Cities or Vancouver?

AUDIENCE: Sure. How about can be argued in the length that it needs to be. It's not too broad.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Yeah, absolutely. So the scope of the assignment, right. And that one's huge. And I think students need a lot of help with that in terms of class conversation. I talk a lot about what I call pitbull-sized assignments where students will often want to argue things having to do with global warming or gun control or the legalization of marijuana, or these things that are these greased slides of conversations that we're still culturally trying to figure out.

And it's outside of the scope of what they could actually research and support in a five to seven page paper or an 8 to 10 page paper or a three to five page paper. So part of a good conjecture and part of any class time or peer review is really helping students to determine what's a reasonable conjecture given the amount of time that they have and the amount of space that they have to actually present it, so yes.

So in terms of using data and ideas as evidence to establish a conjecture as true or not, what might achieving look like in how a student uses evidence or Marshall's evidence?

AUDIENCE: The synergies of evidence.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: The synergies of evidence, OK. And when you say, synergies of evidence, do you mean in terms of that the types of evidence they're using aren't like all over the map or from scholars that are from very disparate areas of or disciplines, OK. Synergies of evidence-- what else might be the definition of achieving good evidence or marshaling good evidence?

AUDIENCE: Evidence from credible sources.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Evidence from credible sources, right?

AUDIENCE: How did you define this?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Right. And then that's a huge one in terms of class conversation is what is a credible source? And depending on whether you're teaching a 100 level or a 400 level, you might spend more time on that or less time on that. By the time students are at a 400 level, you might be expecting them to understand what a credible source is.

But my experience with students at the 100 level-- most of them do not understand what a credible source is. And they do not understand the difference between a peer reviewed journal

or chapter in a book. And those are things that they, in my experience, need time to understand or need.

CHRISTIE KITTLE: That, in chance, like Wikipedia.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Exactly, right. Oh, but one thing they can do with Wikipedia is, at least, go to the source of [INAUDIBLE], right? I took a student through that route the other day, who was in the Writing Center, and who was writing the paper and really was about at a loss about what a peer review journal would be.

And so we just started at Wikipedia and went to the sources and then followed the map of the sources. And then in each source that we found, we went to the works cited page. And then finally, she started to understand. But was really interesting to me is, it's a couple days before the semester is over. And that five-minute tutorial was a light bulb going on for her.

So I think a lot of students do not understand credible sources or how to determine the difference or even how to find them. I'm not saying this is instructors' fault necessarily, because we all know students sometimes are not listening to us, but even recommending that she go to see a reference librarian, who was like, oh, OK.

So anything else you could think about what would determine for you whether a student was achieving the goal of marshaling good evidence.

AUDIENCE: Nonbiased interpretation of data.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: OK-- so that not all the evidence was stacked in the favor of one particular position or another-- that there's--

AUDIENCE: Well, they're not interpreting it correctly. They're interpreting it to support their argument.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Ah, so those are totally different things, right? So one would be that you might have a counterargument. That might be something that you require or not. And the other would be that you're not using the evidence and using your own interpretation. I think a lot of us find-- the other thing would be evidence that is actually relevant to the argument.

We all see students that pull it in by the hair. It was like, oh, here-- here's some evidence, because I got it out of a cited-- or a peer-review journal. And so I can site it as absolutely nothing to do with supporting the overall claim. And part of that is I think they start to see the forest for the trees or the trees for the forest.

And they have trouble backing up and realizing that yes, you have cited a source. Yes, you have cited a source from a credible journal. It has nothing to do with the point that you're making or the question you're asking.

AUDIENCE: If the assignment allows for it, presenting both sides of an argument on both sides.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: That's right. So the nonbiased to both sides-- great, great. And then how well they apply the knowledge to reach a conclusion. We don't have to go through each one of these. But I think the point that is made-- we might look maybe at the deductive. The point that's being made here is, you are really the one as the educator that needs to translate what these criteria mean in terms of what it looks like.

When you look at a student paper, what are you looking for that shows you the evidence that they've actually achieved this criteria? And now in a single-point rubric, this is the only category that you would fill out. And that if they were struggling, you might make a note as to why, like one of these things they were missing. If they were mastering, you might make a note as to what about the presentation that they've given you has exceeded your expectations or surprised you.

One of the things-- a lot of people don't like rubrics, because they feel like they're too controlling. A single-point rubric can be less controlling in the sense that it gives you a category where you can give them extra points for something you did not predict they might do. So that's that. What time is it, Christie? Because I can't--

CHRISTIE KITTLE: 12:38.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: 12:38. OK. So the same thing, then, would happen here with an informative rubric. What is the achieving definition of a good-focused topic or a good guiding question? Again, I would answer that question a lot, maybe like Kevin did in the last slide, which is the scope-- right.

One of the things we hugely see with students that they struggle with is the scope. They want to solve the world's problems in a five to seven page paper. And then what you get is ridiculous, because it just can't be done. And so this idea, and students really struggle with scope.

What is the size of a topic that-- and usually, it's not very controversial. It's not very interesting at that level, because the controversy is not a world-class controversy, like whether or not you should be able to have pitbulls and city limits. It's not a world-class controversy.

But it is the right kind of size where you can demonstrate if you're using a thesis-based-- you can actually demonstrate the research skills of going out and finding how many people have been mauled or killed, or how many ordinances are there, or how many good bulls are there, or all of those things.

So this whole idea of the focused question or the scope, I think, is huge in terms of how educators might spend time that we often don't spend is to help them get that topic relative to the size of paper that you've assigned for them. Any questions or comments or challenges at this point?

AUDIENCE: I have a weird question…

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Christie.

CHRISTIE KITTLE: And it's really funny, because it's all about the math. I like the single point, because I feel like there's some things where like they check the boxes. I didn't communicate very well. But I feel like they're actually below where I want them to be. But the way I stated it, they matched it, right.

So I like giving that flexibility. But I struggle with points of the middle one, because the original one on this one was 66% of how to tell people like if you do this, you're only getting a 66%. And like I feel like there's not enough gap. So I don't know how other people have done that. Does that make sense?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Yes, it does. And I had this conversation with some people in biology yesterday. And I think it's a fair conversation to have that's not simple, because students if they feel-- and we weren't working with struggling, achieving, and mastering. We're actually working with meets expectations, exceeds expectations, and doesn't meet expectations.

So the student meets expectations-- they're going to think they should get an A, right? Hey, I met the expectations. And so whatever your relationship with grading is with your students, you're going to have to sort that out. One of the things we came to with the biology people is that maybe the exceeds expectations would be an extra credit category.

But then with a different faculty member, she didn't care whether they got an A or not. She thought A's were really something that you should not dispense liberally, that they truly mean on an absolute scale, that you've done above and beyond the call of duty. And that if you're just achieving, that's more like a B or a B-plus. And I would say, that is a personal relationship between you and the student and how you view grading.

AUDIENCE: What about meets minimal expectations?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Meets minimal expectations?

AUDIENCE: As a middle one.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Well, you might be, then--

AUDIENCE: Oh, yeah, you could go.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: As opposed to like--

AUDIENCE: Exceeds minimal expectations.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Yeah, exceeds basic expectations.

AUDIENCE: Which I might [? know ?] the word.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: What's really fun about noticing this is you've gone from a three-point scale to a five-point scale. And a five-point scale is what we always deal with anyway, which is A, B, C, D, right? I would say that on struggling, though, as an educator, I would never give a student f for struggling.

I would give them an F for not doing it or for doing it so absolutely not the way that they were asked to do it. But struggling, I would give at least credit for that. So that's a good question. And then it really have to do with, what do you think grades mean? And are you willing--

AUDIENCE: Got someone.

AUDIENCE: Yeah. So I wanted to make a suggestion-- instead of achieving-- developing. So you have struggling, developing, and mastering where then mastering would be they did everything at the highest level, whereas developing is above struggling, but--

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Yeah, absolutely. Or you could have struggling, developing, achieving-- something else-- mastering. And everything is-- that is up to you. And I think the thing that if you like that-- and I like emerging, developing, which is emerging puts a nice spin on struggling, although some people would be like, no, I'm not going to tell them emerging when they're struggling, because they're not.

It depends. And what I like about rubrics, and what I think are important about rubrics is that they're tools that are used by educators that have particular philosophies of education. That's why you have to make your own rubric or make your own rubric in conjunction with your students and not just use one that's been handed to you by someone else, because this rubric embeds a set of values. And they have to be your values.

And if you're a value, say, that you think the language of developing is more appropriate, than, by all means, use that language. And if you think, no way in a one or 200-level classes, anybody going to be mastering this, then don't use that language. And if there are examples of rubrics online, you can look to see, there's all kinds of creative things that people can do with that language. But yes, developing, I think, is a nice option.

So again, each one of these, if depending on the type of research that you tend to want to assign to your students, these are little maps that you can brainstorm what your definitions of these things are. Again, the same thing is here for the combination rubric. And then what we've done-- oop-- let's get to that in a minute-- what we've also done in some of your packets, I've given you these that have no writing on them at all, right.

So what you can do is, then, if it's an inductive research process that you've decided that you do with your students-- if you do conjecture-based research, maybe you have different definitions for what the criteria are for what a piece of research looks like. I'm imagining some of the things that we have are going to be closely related to what you have. But you might use different vocabulary.

And I think it's really important for you to establish a vocabulary, use it consistently. Like one of the things that I really recommend for people that like the kind of rubric that has language in every cell, which means not just the single point, but there's language here, here, and here that mastering defines achieving and define struggling is not to fill in each one of these as if it's a separate thing, because your lag, your vocabulary will drift.

It's to decide either the definition of achieving or the definition of mastering, cut it and paste it in each cell and then back off the level of proficiency as the cell moves up or down in terms of level proficiency, because, then, you don't end up with the word, organization, in one cell and the word flow in the other cell, because you're creating those as discrete things. And I see that again all the time.

And that really confuses students where we might say, well, flow on organization are the same thing. They don't necessarily see that. And other teachers don't necessarily agree that those two things are the same thing. So that would be another recommendation.

So then the last thing I want to talk about-- but before I shift here, let's take a minute, because I've dumped a lot of information. Anybody want to stop, talk about process, challenge-- any of this so far? Yes, sir, in Tri-Cities.

AUDIENCE: On the rubric, wouldn't you want to also have categories for grammar, length, and format?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Well, we do actually have-- yeah. So what I like to do-- and you can decide whether or not you want to do this-- but I really advocate for this.

I advocate that when there are things that you are evaluating that are not central to the core instruction of the course-- in other words, if you're not teaching grammar, if you're not teaching citation, that you actually do not give them points for that in the meat and potatoes section of the rubric-- but rather, you acknowledge it as worth nothing-- it's expected.

It's expected that you know how to write in English when you are creating this research paper. And that's worth no points at all. However, if you distract the hell out of me with all of your mistakes, I'm going to take some points out of that. Or if you modestly distract me because of your modest amount of mistakes, I'm going to take some points away from that.

So that detraction-- distraction ends up in a subtraction, rather than getting points for what we wish students already knew. Now, we know we can't make the assumption that they already

know those things, because we see students all the time that have the last grammar class when they were in the eighth grade or the 9th grade, and we learn by repetition.

And so that if they haven't had that repetition or they haven't had that instruction, we find that they do not know how to write complete sentences, that they do not know how to properly punctuate. If you're not teaching it in your class though, don't give them points for doing it.

Take away points that help them see the difference between the mastery and the content or the meat, potatoes in your course, and what's getting in their way, because they're not taking the time to go to online tutorials, to get a private tutor, to go to the writing center, or do whatever work needs to be done to bring them up to speed on the fundamentals of writing in the English language.

Now, with international students, you may decide that you're not going to take as many points away for the distraction of language interference, because you realize or you should realize that learning to write in another language is an astronomically challenging task. And it's not the same for native speakers, who, ideally, have been learning to write all their lives.

But for first-generation college students, they may not have had exposure to the English language in the same way that students who've got grammar instruction and good textbooks. So keep in mind your context. But I would argue that for things that are right or wrong or are not part of the meat and potatoes of the content of the course, they occupy a separate rubric.

And so for citations, unless you're teaching citations, that might be neutral. I expect them to be correct. It's not that hard. The cognitive heavy lifting of correct citation is not that hard. It's tedious. Nobody wants to do it. But you still can do it. You can open a book, or you can go to a website. You can figure it out, and so that you would take away points. That's how I would deal with that. What do you think about that?

AUDIENCE: Is she asking me?

AUDIENCE: Yeah.

AUDIENCE: Yep. Yeah, it sounds OK. [LAUGHS] It sounds good.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: OK, all right. Well, I think a lot of my growth as an educator comes when people are like, no, I don't like that at all. And these are the reasons. And then I move forward. So if at any point you really want to say, here's where I think you're really off base, then that gives me an opportunity to modify or moderate. But I like this because of that reason.

The other thing I think we can do with rubrics, because another thing I see students-- there are teachers often giving points for, and teachers often getting really bogged down in the tedium is not just things that are right or wrong, but things that are part and parcel of the directions that you've given the students to follow.

And so if you said-- because if it's important to you, it's not important everybody-- if it's important to you that the student write between five and seven pages, and they give you four pages, and you have to say, oh, god, now, how many points am I going to-- no, don't-- don't think about how many points am I take off, give it back. No. I asked for five to seven pages. That took you this much time, right.

One of the things we find that educators get resentful-- they spend a lot of time, because they come more than halfway. And their students aren't coming more than halfway. And so if you're spending all this time figuring out how do I grade this when asked for five pages, and they gave me four, don't grade it all-- give it that. I want five. Thank you. Abu, yeah.

AUDIENCE: So could this be made, a checklist that the students themselves can fill it and then attach it with the paper?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Absolutely. In fact, I think the more agency that students are asked to utilize in this process, the better. So if it's a checklist that says, did I meet the page requirement of five to seven pages, and they marked yes, then they probably, hopefully have looked to see how many pages they have. And then they will know if you said, and I'm not going to take it if it doesn't meet the page requirement.

Now, this is not to say that they didn't make the font really big, or they didn't add all sorts of filler into it. But it still means that they are respecting that as one of your non-negotiable criteria-- has a title. I have a faculty member I work with, who just is really all over that. It has to have a title-- then give it back if it doesn't.

Use citation appropriate to the discipline. So some of those things, I think, could save teacher time if you decide-- and, again, it's up to you as the teacher-- what are your non-negotiables? What are your things that I'm not even going to accept it? And then that teaches a certain discipline to students about following your directions.

So what time is it now?

AUDIENCE: 12:54.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: 12:54. All right, any questions or comments at this point? All right, so what I'm going to do now is I'm going to talk about peer review. So a lot of us are like, ah-- peer review-- it never works. Well, it never works if you have it be an evaluation instead of an observation.

So what you can do with all of these materials that you've been given today is if you want students to help you in the process of vetting each other's papers for the quality of the research that they've done or the quality of the presentation is you invite them into peer review as observers, not as evaluators.

One of the things we find in peer review all the time is say, she can't tell me whether my paper is good or not, because she's just as-- well, out of it as I am or however that is. And to a certain point, that's true. [COUGHS] Students are not necessarily good evaluators of each other's writing. And then they come to resent each other if then what-- so what you'll find is, oh, I liked it. It's good.

Well, number one, we don't care if you like it or not, because it's not about liking. It's about, does it have the constituent parts or the components that are supposed to go into this thing, which make it what it is, right? Doesn't matter if you like marinara sauce or not. It matters if it has tomato sauce, oregano, and garlic in it.

So what we're looking at, really, with peer review, even at the evaluative end, is getting students away from I like it or I don't, because that doesn't matter. Is it functioning the way it's supposed to? But prior to students being able to determine whether or not something is functioning, does it have in it what it was supposed to have in it?

And since we've already gone through rubrics that demonstrate what goes into a conjecture-based research paper? What goes in a information-based research paper? What goes in a deductive-centered research paper? Students can simply be asked, what's the conjecture that's being made? There is no evaluation there. They just need to read it and see if they understand what the conjecture is.

AUDIENCE: By doing this, aren't we also evaluating the person who is doing the observation?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Well, you could. That adds another layer to it, right. If you, as a faculty member, want to collect these and see how well the students have peer reviewed each other, you can. But I would say, at a purely observational peer review, they can just do that for each other.

Because if you have traded with Sam, for example, and Sam knows what her conjecture is, and you've written a conjecture that's not her conjecture, she can say, well, you observed a conjecture, but it wasn't the one that I was making.

AUDIENCE: What I was trying to say is, to even say what kinds of data is being used as evidence, the student who is doing the observation should at least have that knowledge, right, to know between the different types of data.

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: The different types of data, yeah. And so I would argue, then, that how you set this up in terms of what you're asking them to observe is going to be on a spectrum of cognitive complexity. But you can stay in observation. Yeah, if you have them looking for certain kinds of stats or certain kinds of regression analysis kind of things, then it presupposes that they know what those things actually are, yeah.

So the cognitive complexity of the observation might change. But the fact, I think, remains that good peer reviews stay in observation or at least for a while until they've all gotten up to speed with what are the components in this thing that make it what it is, right? What are the things in inductive research that make it conjecture-based? What are the things in a thesis-based claim-based that make it what it is?

And that's where I would argue you can use your peer review to much greater success than getting them together to determine how well they did on these things. That would be late in a semester or with a group of students that you trusted knew that stuff already. Usually the evaluative component is where the teacher comes in, and where they have more trust for in doing that piece of-- Sam.

AUDIENCE: We actually do peer review in my senior class. The first week-ish of my capstone class we talk a lot about what are the pieces of a research abstract. And then they write the abstract for their project that they've already determined what their project is. And so then we take the names off, pass them around.

And it is very much an observational review. Basically I'm asking them, go through the abstract. Are all the pieces there? Is it too jargony? I mean, that's something that most students, even as a novice, if they don't understand it, they could circle that word and say, this is jargon word. And that's really what they're being asked to do.

And if they have comments, they can certainly add comments to the side, like, I felt like you were missing something about your methods, or I felt you went into too much detail. But very explicitly, it's not evaluative. It's, is something missing? Is there something wrong based on what we've learned in class, and then anything else you want to say?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Right. Yeah, and that's awesome. And there's a spectrum with that too. So, for example, you could observe it's too jargony. Or you could also observe that there are 20 words in one paragraph that are jargon. One is way more concretely observational. One is more on the spectrum of evaluative, but just to notice that spectrum.

Questions or comments, because I think we're probably out of time. All right, well, if you need me for anything, my email is at the front of this presentation. And I'm happy to talk to you on the phone or try to figure out Tri-Cities video conferencing or whatever.

AUDIENCE: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: Think about it.

[APPLAUSE]

AUDIENCE: Can you go to the last slide?

LISA JOHNSON-SHULL: Also--

AUDIENCE: Thank you.

CHRISTIE KITTLE: Yeah, if you went to all four of faculty live workshops this semester, you can go to li.wsu.edu/certificates. I will also submit in a follow-up email. And you can get a innovative teaching certificate. If you do not make it to all four of them, you can make up for the ones you didn't make in the spring.

That schedule will be posted pretty soon. We've got OER things, a teaching innovation day. And so you'll still be eligible for that. So feel free. And then Lisa's email's in the front of that presentation. Thank you, everyone-- grab food if you can. Sorry, if you're not Pullman.

Thank you, Tri-Cities. Thank you, guys.