

# The 2014 Senior Literacy Assessment Report

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## I. Overview

The Gallaudet University Mission Statement (2007) declares, in part, “Gallaudet University, federally chartered in 1864, is a **bilingual**, diverse, multicultural institution of higher education that **ensures the intellectual and professional advancement of deaf and hard of hearing individuals through American Sign Language and English**. Gallaudet maintains a proud tradition of research and scholarly activity and prepares its graduates for career opportunities in a highly competitive, technological, and rapidly changing world.”

Undergraduate Student Learning Outcome 1 (2007) states, in part, “**Students will use American Sign Language (ASL) and written English to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, for a variety of purposes, and in a variety of settings.**”

Learning opportunities to support students’ achievement of Gallaudet’s institutional learning outcomes are introduced to students in the general studies curriculum (GSR), and continue throughout their undergraduate experience (for more information see [http://www.gallaudet.edu/general\\_studies\\_program/curriculum/the\\_five\\_competencies.html](http://www.gallaudet.edu/general_studies_program/curriculum/the_five_competencies.html)). Institutional outcomes are assessed each semester during GSR, and then again during the senior year. For the literacy outcomes, assessment is done through a key course-based assessment, and scored using an institutional rubric. Although Gallaudet is interested in understanding the extent to which graduating seniors achieve all five of GU’s institutional learning outcomes, we initially focused on UG SLO #1, Literacy, because it is core to all other outcomes.

To assess the ASL and English skills of graduating seniors, Gallaudet has conducted Senior Literacy Assessment (SLA) since an initial pilot of English Writing in 2009. In spring 2011, the University implemented a parallel version of SLA for ASL presentation skills. Each year has built on the work of the previous year. This report summarizes data from the 2014 Senior Literacy Assessment<sup>1</sup>. After this year, Senior Literacy Assessment will be an integral part of a comprehensive Senior Assessment process which examines senior outcomes on all five of the Gallaudet institutional outcomes.

## II. The Senior Literacy Assessment Process

### Goals

Senior Literacy Assessment was designed to accomplish five goals:

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Literacy Reports for 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 can be found at [http://www.gallaudet.edu/office\\_of\\_academic\\_quality/assessment\\_of\\_student\\_learning\\_outcomes/senior\\_literacy\\_assessment.html](http://www.gallaudet.edu/office_of_academic_quality/assessment_of_student_learning_outcomes/senior_literacy_assessment.html)

1. Engage programs in the use of ASL and English literacy assessment
2. Engage faculty in professional development regarding assessing literacy
3. Provide data about Gallaudet graduating seniors that can be used for institutional and program improvement
4. Provide data that can be used by appropriate groups to establish target literacy performance levels for Gallaudet undergraduates
5. Describe the changes in Gallaudet student writing performance as they progress through the undergraduate curriculum
6. Recommend improvements to future assessment processes

### **Literacy Data Collection**

Senior Literacy Assessment consists of two components:

- A. Assessment of Gallaudet Senior Writing Skills.** This assessment process was a continuation of the writing assessment conducted each Spring since 2009. This year's project was designed to assess the writing of seniors enrolled in capstone (or capstone-equivalent) courses.
- B. Assessment of Gallaudet Senior ASL Presentation skills.** This project was structured similarly to the assessment of senior ASL skills conducted in Spring 2011, and was designed to parallel the process used for English writing assessment.

Procedures and timelines for both senior ASL and English product collection can be found in Appendix A.

### **Literacy Data Scoring, Summary and Dissemination**

ASL and English products are scored by faculty from a variety of disciplines across the university using an institutional literacy rubric which is the same rubric used in General Studies (GSR) outcomes assessment (see the Annual Report of Achievements for a summary of GSR data on Literacy and other institutional outcomes.) Prior to scoring the ASL and English products, faculty participate in scoring calibration sessions led by faculty from the ASL and English departments respectively. Each product is evaluated by a team of two scorers. Data is then summarized by the Coordinator for the Office of Assessment. Data is distributed in the following ways for both Senior Literacy Assessment strands:

- a. Each department receives a full report on the scores for each product in each of the five criterion areas.
- b. Each Dean and the Provost receives all scores for all Departments in both CAS and SEBHS.
- c. A report on the distribution of scores for each category in the rubric is made public.

### **III. Senior Literacy Assessment Outcomes: Programs and Faculty**

#### **Goals:**

- Engage programs in the use of ASL and English literacy assessment
- Engage faculty in professional development regarding assessing literacy

### Participation in Senior Literacy Assessment: Products and Evaluators

One measure of engagement of programs in the use of ASL and English literacy assessment is the extent to which programs are utilizing both ASL and English assessment in their senior year culminating experiences. We assess that through **the number of ASL and English senior assessment products submitted out of the pool of graduating seniors.**

Another goal of Senior Literacy Assessment has been to broaden the university's capacity for supporting literacy development. One method of assessing this is by **reviewing the extent to which programs and faculty are participating in the senior assessment products.** Program participation is evidence submitting written English and ASL presentation products, while faculty participate in the actual assessment of the products. Table 1 shows the number of senior literacy products submitted, and the extent of program and faculty participation in the literacy assessment process.

**Table 1: Participation in Senior Literacy Assessment: Products and Evaluators**

	2012 Spring	2013 Spring	2014 Spring
# of graduating seniors (Srs) <sup>2</sup>	158	179	164
<b>Written English Product Assessment</b>			
# of written English products submitted	131/ 83% of graduating Srs	152/85% of graduating Srs	123/ <b>75%</b> of graduating Srs
# of written English products evaluated	128/ 81% of graduating Srs	144 <sup>3</sup> /80% of graduating Srs	123/ <b>75%</b> of graduating Srs
# of departments/ programs submitting English products	19 out of 21 Programs (90%)	19 out of 21 Programs (90%)	16 out of 21 programs ( <b>76%</b> )
# of evaluators for English products	14 faculty	17 faculty	16 faculty
<b>ASL Product Assessment</b>			
# of ASL products submitted	58/ 37% of graduating Srs	123/ 69% of graduating Srs	137/ <b>84%</b> of graduating Srs
# of ASL products evaluated	44/ 28% of graduating Srs	110/61% of graduating Srs	122 <sup>4</sup> / <b>89%</b> of graduating Srs
# of departments/programs submitting ASL products	10 out of 21 Programs	17 out of 21 Programs	18 out of 21 Programs ( <b>90%</b> )

<sup>2</sup> Data from OIR via Peoplesoft as of June, 2014. The final numbers of graduating seniors each year increase throughout the summer.

<sup>3</sup> 144 written English products were each evaluated by a team of two scorers. 8 products were submitted past the deadline thus were not evaluated.

<sup>4</sup> 122 ASL products were each evaluated by a team of two scorers. 15 products contained invalid links.

	(48%)	(81%)	
# of evaluators for ASL products	12 faculty	17 faculty	16 faculty

**Assessment Products** The percentage of graduating seniors (as of June) for which written English products were submitted dropped considerably, from 75% to 85%, between 2013 to 2014. However the percentage of graduating seniors for which ASL presentation products were submitted increased from 69% to 84% between 2013 and 2014. For the first time in three years, more ASL products were submitted than the written English products.

**Participating Programs** The decrease in written English products submitted this year can likely be accounted for by the decrease in the total number programs submitting written English products in 2014 (76% of programs in 2014 compared to 90% of programs in 2013). 90% of programs submitted ASL products in 2014, while in 2013 81% of programs.

Over two assessment cycles (AY 2012-2013 and AY 203-2014), a total of 13 out of 21 programs have consistently submitted products for **both** English and ASL assessment. The number of programs/departments submitting their written English products has dropped from 19 in 2013 to 16 in 2014. However, the number of programs/departments submitting their ASL products rose from 18 in 2013 to 17 in 2014. Table 2 shows participation in the Senior Literacy Assessment process by program.

**Table 2: Participation in the Senior Literacy Assessment Process by Program**

Spring 2013		Spring 2014	
ASL (n=17)	English (n=19)	ASL (n=18)	English (n=16)
		Art	Art
ASL		ASL	
Biology	Biology	Biology	Biology
Business Admin/Accounting	Business Admin/Accounting	Business Admin/Accounting	Business Admin/Accounting
Chemistry & Physics	Chemistry <sup>5</sup>		Chemistry
Communication Studies	Communication Studies	Communication Studies	Communication Studies
	Deaf Studies	Deaf Studies	Deaf Studies
Education	Education	Education	Education
English	English	English	English
Government	Government	Government	Government
History	History		
Honors	Honors	Honors	Honors
Information Technology	Information Technology	Information Technology	Information Technology
International Studies	International Studies	International Studies	International Studies
Interpretation	Interpretation	Interpretation	
Mathematics & CS	Mathematics & CS	Math	Math
Physical Education & Recreation			
Psychology	Psychology	Psychology	Psychology

<sup>5</sup> Products were submitted past the deadline or contained invalid links thus were not evaluated.

Social Work	Social Work	Social Work	Social Work
	Sociology		
	Theatre <sup>6</sup>	Theatre	

**Participating Faculty** 32 faculty (18%) participated in assessment of senior products in English and/or ASL. The number of faculty assessing senior products decreased by one in both ASL and English, when 2014 is compared to 2013.

One encouraging sign is that, although the number of faculty literacy assessors has remained approximately the same across the years, and each year the pool of assessors has had a core of the same faculty members returning from previous years, each year has also added some new faculty members who participate in both the professional development sessions aimed at understanding and calibrating literacy assessment in both ASL and English, and the actual assessment of products. During the first year of ASL Presentation only ASL-DST faculty assessed ASL products. In subsequent years ASL faculty have provided professional development to faculty in a wide variety of programs to strengthen their ability to understand criteria for assessing ASL presentations.

In the 2014 Senior Literacy assessment sessions, faculty from 11 different programs participated in the written English, and 11 different programs participated in the ASL Presentation assessment. Seven faculty assessed both ASL Presentation and English products.

#### **IV. Senior Literacy Assessment Outcomes: Graduating Seniors**

##### **Goals:**

- Provide data about Gallaudet graduating seniors that can be used for institutional and program improvement
- Provide data that can be used by appropriate groups to establish target literacy performance levels for Gallaudet undergraduates

To provide data about graduating seniors that can be used for institutional and program improvement, ASL presentation and English written products were each rated in five parallel criterion areas on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest score and 4 the highest. The rubric for evaluating ASL products was adapted from the AACU Value Rubric for Public Presentation, while the rubric for written English products was the AACU Written Communication Value Rubric.

ASL Presentation and written English products were scored by faculty from programs other than that in which the student was enrolled. Products were each assessed by at least two faculty scorers.

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<sup>6</sup> Products either were submitted past the deadline or contained invalid links.

## A. ASL Presentation Senior Products

122 ASL products from 18 programs were rated using the American Sign Language Senior Language Assessment Rubric. This rubric includes criteria in the following areas: Organization, Language, Delivery, Supporting Material, Central Message and Formatting. Each criterion area can be rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest.

**ASL Senior Product Means** Table 3 provides an overview of the mean scores on ASL products across the 18 programs.

**Table 3. Mean Scores on ASL Products by Program**

<b>ASL Products (n=122) Total Averages Across Programs</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Supporting Material</b>	<b>Central Message</b>
Art (n=7)	2.8	2.1	2	2.1	2.6
ASL (n=5)	3.3	3.1	3	3.1	3.3
Biology (n=6)	3.3	3.2	2.8	2.7	3.8
Business (n=12)	2.8	2.8	2.7	1.8	2.6
Communication Studies (n=3)	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.2	3.8
Deaf Studies (n=5)	3.4	3	2.7	2.7	3.1
Education (n=2)	3.3	2.8	2.3	3.5	3
English (n=6)	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.3	3.2
Government (n=6)	3.8	3.7	3.7	2.8	3.8
Honors (n=6)	3	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.3
Information Tech (n=1)	2.5	2	2	2	2.5
International Studies (n=3)	3.5	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.7
Interpretation (n=9)	3.6	3.1	3.6	3.3	3.8
Math (n=4)	2.6	2.5	2.3	3.1	3.1
Physical Education and Recreation (n=18)	3	2.6	2.5	2.9	3.2
Psychology (n=15)	2.5	2.1	2.1	1.8	2.4
Social Work (n=11)	3	2.5	2.6	2.6	3.2
Theatre (n=3)	3.3	2.3	3	3	3.3
<b>Mean for Criterion Area</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>RANGE ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS</b>	<b>2.5-3.8</b>	<b>2-3.8</b>	<b>2-3.7</b>	<b>1.8-3.5</b>	<b>2.4-3.8</b>

The average of the scores for Organization across all programs was 3.1 while Language and Supporting Material was 2.8 each. The rest of the averages were 2.7 for Delivery, 3.2 for Central Message. Formatting was eliminated from analysis because a large number of programs and evaluators noted that they were unable to assess Formatting in the ASL Presentation product. Delivery (2.7) showed the lowest average performance in ASL for all senior students across the 18 programs. Language and Supporting Material were the next weakest categories. Central Message (3.2) showed the highest average performance in ASL for all seniors; the next highest category was Organization (3.1). Supporting Material showed the greatest range in scores, while Organization showed the least range.

The programs of ASL and Interpretation are the only programs among those that submitted ASL products that received a score of 3 or higher in each category. The programs of Information Technology and Psychology had the lowest average scores in most areas.

As it was the case last year, formatting remained a concern as many of the evaluators chose not to score in this category which led to the result of insufficient data for further discussion. Chart 1 shows the formatting criteria descriptions from the ASL Presentation Rubric.

**Chart 1 : Formatting Criteria on the ASL Presentation Rubric**

	<b>4 (Exceptional)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 (Developing)</b>
<b>Formatting (if a video assignment)</b>	Background, clothes, and jewelry are appropriate choices with no distractions. Camera placement is appropriately sized. Correct brightness of light on camera. Editing is excellent and shows a completed product.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are good choices with few distractions. Mildly close or far from camera; few signs are out of picture. Mildly dark or bright to see signing. Editing is adequate and acceptable.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are average choices with some distraction. Little too close or too far from camera; some signs are out of the picture. Little too dark or too bright to see signing. Editing is choppy and unfinished.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are poor choices and often distracts. Too close or too far from camera; many signs go off the screen. Too dark or too bright to see signing.

**ASL Senior Benchmark Scores** One goal of the Senior Literacy Assessment process has been to develop baseline data that would enable Gallaudet to establish targets or benchmarks for this outcome. While targets would not necessarily be high-stakes (graduation or no graduation), they would be useful in helping faculty and students to know the benchmark towards with GU graduates are striving. The General Studies Requirement (GSR) uses 3 as a benchmark for Literacy. Therefore, for the past few years we have been examining the percentage of students who achieve scores at a level of 3 or above. Table 4 provides an overview of the percentages of students scoring 3 or higher on ASL products across the 18 programs.

**Table 4. Percentages of Scores 3 or higher on ASL Products by Program**

<b>ASL Products (n=122) Total % of Scores 3 or higher Across Programs</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Supporting Material</b>	<b>Central Message</b>
Art (n=7)	57%	14%	14%	14%	57%
ASL (n=5)	100%	60%	60%	80%	80%
Biology (n=6)	83%	83%	67%	33%	100%
Business (n=12)	42%	42%	33%	8%	42%
Comm. Studies (n=3)	100%	100%	100%	67%	100%
Deaf Studies (n=5)	100%	60%	60%	20%	80%
Education (n=2)	100%	50%	0%	100%	100%
English (n=6)	83%	67%	50%	100%	100%
Government (n=6)	100%	100%	83%	67%	100%
Honors (n=6)	83%	50%	67%	67%	100%
Information Technology (n=1)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
International Studies (n=3)	100%	33%	100%	67%	100%
Interpretation (n=9)	89%	89%	100%	89%	100%
Math (n=4)	25%	0%	25%	75%	100%

Physical Education and Recreation (n=18)	72%	33%	33%	56%	83%
Psychology (n=15)	40%	7%	7%	7%	33%
Social Work (n=11)	73%	45%	36%	36%	73%
Theatre (n=3)	100%	33%	67%	100%	100%
<b>Average % of Students Achieving a Score of 3 for each Criteria</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>76%</b>

The criteria of Organization and Central Message saw a high percent of students scoring a 3 or higher on their ASL products (71% and 76%). The other categories scored less than half (46% to 48%).

Seniors from Interpretation, Communication Studies, and ASL program scored a 3 or above in every category. The majority of students in the majority of programs attained a score of 3 or above in two criteria: Organization and Central Message.

### **B. Written English Senior Products**

123 written English products in 16 programs were evaluated using the AACU Written Communication Value Rubric. This rubric has a scale of 1-4 in five criterion areas: Context and Purposed for Writing, Content Development, Genre and Disciplinary Conventions, Sources and Evidence and Control of Syntax and Mechanics.

**English Senior Product Means** Table 5 provides an overview of the mean scores on the written English products across the 16 programs.

**Table 5. Mean Average Scores on Written English Products by Program**

<b>Written English Products (n=123) Total Averages Across Programs</b>	<b>Context and Purpose for Writing</b>	<b>Content Development</b>	<b>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</b>	<b>Sources and Evidence</b>	<b>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</b>
ART (n=5)	1.8	1.9	1.6	1	1.9
BIO (n=12)	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.7	2.6
BUS (n=20)	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.1	2.2
CHE (n=1)	3	3	3	1.5	3
COM (n=5)	3.4	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.8
DST (n=5)	2.8	3	2.7	2.8	3.4
EDU (n=1)	3	2.5	3	2	3
ENG (n=7)	3.3	3.1	3.1	<b>N/A</b>	3.4
GOV (n=8)	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.8	3
HON (n=6)	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.5
IT (n=1)	3.5	3.5	3.5	2	3.5
IntlStu (n=3)	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.3

MAT (n=5)	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.3	2.4
PER (n=19)	2.6	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.3
PSY (n=14)	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.5
SW (n=11)	2.6	2.5	2.4	1.5	2.9
<b>TOTAL N=123</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.1*</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>RANGE ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS</b>	<b>1.7-3.5</b>	<b>1.7-3.5</b>	<b>1.6-3.6</b>	<b>N/A/1-3.8</b>	<b>1.3-3.5</b>

Students from Honors had the highest scores for each category on the rubric. Excluding the N/A, the lowest mean across all programs is in the criteria of 1) Content Development and 2) Genre and Disciplinary Conventions. The range of mean scores was fairly consistent across programs, with the exception of Control of Syntax and Mechanics, for which the range was lower.

### **ASL Senior Benchmark Scores**

Since the General Studies Requirement (GSR) uses 3 as a benchmark for Literacy, we have examined the percentage of graduating seniors who achieve scores at a level of 3 or above. Table 6 provides an overview of the percentages of students scoring 3 or higher on ASL products across the 18 programs.

**Table 6. Percentages of Graduating Seniors Who Score 3 or Higher in Criterion Areas of Written English Products by Program**

<b>Written English Products (n=123) Total % of Scores 3 or higher Across Programs</b>	<b>Context and Purpose for Writing</b>	<b>Content Development</b>	<b>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</b>	<b>Sources and Evidence</b>	<b>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</b>
ART (n=5)	20%	20%	20%	0%	20%
BIO (n=12)	25%	42%	25%	58%	42%
BUS (n=20)	35%	30%	50%	20%	15%
CHE (n=1)	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%
COM (n=5)	100%	80%	80%	20%	60%
DST (n=5)	80%	80%	40%	40%	100%
EDU (n=1)	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%
ENG (n=7)	57%	71%	71%	N/A	100%
GOV (n=8)	75%	63%	38%	63%	63%
HON (n=6)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
IT (n=1)	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%
IntlStu (n=3)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
MAT (n=5)	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%
PER (n=19)	32%	16%	11%	21%	11%
PSY (n=14)	50%	29%	21%	50%	43%

SW (n=11)	27%	45%	9%	0%	82%
<b>% OF EACH CRITERION</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>29%*</b>	<b>46%</b>

Across all programs, the highest percentage of students scoring a 3 or higher on their written English products is in the criterion of Context and Purpose for Writing. Students from the English and Honors programs excelled on their written products as most of them received a 3 or higher in each category. 50% or more of the seniors in the following programs had scores at or above 3 for at least 4 out of 5 of the criteria: Chemistry (1 student), Communication Studies, English, and Government, IT (1 student). Sources and Evidence saw the lowest percentage of students scoring a 3 or higher. Assessment products will need to be reviewed to see whether or not the prompt for those assignments require a student provide Sources and Evidence. There were no criteria for which the majority of students in a majority of programs achieved a 3 or better.

### C. Comparative Overview of the Performance of 2013 and 2014 Seniors

#### ASL Presentations

The four charts below show a comparative analysis of the 2013 and 2014 seniors' performance in the area of ASL Presentation. Table 7 shows a breakdown of the total number of seniors who scored a 3 or higher in each criterion area on the American Sign Language Senior Literacy Assessment Rubric.

**Table 7: Comparison of Percentage of Seniors Scoring 3 or More for each Criteria on the American Sign Language Senior Literacy Assessment Rubric 2013 & 2014**

2013 Senior ASL Assessment (n=110)		2014 Senior ASL Assessment (n=122)	
Rubric Scale: Rating of 3 or higher	%	Rubric Scale: Rating of 3 or higher	%
Organization	42%	Organization	71%
Language	37%	Language	46%
Delivery	42%	Delivery	46%
Supporting Material	42%	Supporting Material	48%
Central Message	42%	Central Message	76%
Formatting	38%	Formatting	12%

In 2014, the 50% benchmark for a score of 3 or higher was met in the areas of Organization and Central Message. The criteria of Language, Delivery, and Supporting Material were close to the 50% benchmark as well.

Table 8 displays the percentage of the ratings at or above three potential performance levels for the seniors in 2013 and 2014 for each criteria.

**Table 8 (a & b): Comparison of Percentage of Seniors Scoring at Three Different Performance Levels on the American Sign Language Senior Literacy Assessment Rubric 2013 & 2014**

2013 ASL Assessment (n=110)			
Rubric Scales	Performance Levels		
	2 or above	3 or above	4
Organization	83%	42%	14%
Language	95%	37%	4%
Delivery	90%	42%	5%
Supporting Material	83%	42%	13%
Central Message	85%	42%	8%
Formatting	55%	38%	12%

2014 ASL Assessment (n=122)			
Rubric Scales	Performance Levels		
	2 or above	3 or above	4
Organization	98%	71%	16%
Language	94%	46%	12%
Delivery	93%	46%	10%
Supporting Material	86%	48%	7%
Central Message	98%	76%	25%
Formatting	24%	12%	0%

### Written English

The four charts below provide a comparative analysis of the 2013 and 2014 seniors' performance in the area of Written English. The first two charts show a breakdown of the total number of seniors who scored a 3 or higher in each criterion area on the AACU Written Communication Value Rubric.

In 2014, all of the areas except Control of Syntax and Mechanics fell short of the 50% benchmark as seen on the 2013 rubric.

**Table 9 (a & b): Comparison of Percentage of Seniors Scoring 3 or More for each Criteria on the Written English Senior Literacy Assessment Rubric 2013 & 2014**

2013 Senior Writing Assessment (n=144)		2014 Senior Writing Assessment (n= 123)	
Rating of 3 or higher on Rubric Scale	%	Rating of 3 or higher on Rubric Scale	%
Context and Purpose for Writing	58%	Context and Purpose for Writing	46%
Content Development	45%	Content Development	41%
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions	49%	Genre and Disciplinary Conventions	35%
Sources and Evidence	37%	Sources and Evidence	29%
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	46%	Control of Syntax and Mechanics	46%

Table 10 (a & b) provides another comparative angle: the criterion performance levels.

**Table 10 (a & b): Comparison of Percentage of Seniors Scoring at Three Different Performance Levels on the Written English Senior Literacy Assessment Rubric 2013 & 2014**

2013 Senior Writing Assessment (n=144)				2014 Senior Writing Assessment (n=123)			
Rubric Scales	Cut Point Levels			Rubric Scales	Cut Point Levels		
	2 or above	3 or above	4		2 or above	3 or above	4
Context and Purpose for Writing	88%	58%	15%	Context and Purpose for Writing	89%	46%	2%
Content Development	90%	45%	15%	Content Development	88%	41%	2%
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions	84%	49%	13%	Genre and Disciplinary Conventions	85%	35%	2%
Sources and Evidence	69%	37%	14%	Sources and Evidence	63%	29%	6%
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	88%	46%	12%	Control of Syntax and Mechanics	87%	46%	2%

In 2013, over 69% of the seniors scored a 2 or above in all rubric scales. In 2014, over 63% of the seniors scored a 2 or above in all rubric scales. However, there is a substantial decrease in students who scored a 4 in all rubric scales from 13% in 2013 to 2% in 2014

#### **Next Steps in Senior Literacy Assessment - 2014**

- **CONCERN:** Submission of English products decreased this year. A number of products submitted late, after the assessment period, in spite of posting the timeline well in advance.
  - ✓ Continue to assure early in the academic year that Department Chairs are aware of the expectations for assessment of literacy outcomes during the senior year so that every Department and Program can provide English and ASL products for senior literacy assessment. This will be especially important this year as we move from a separate Senior Literacy Assessment to a program-based comprehensive assessment of all outcomes in the senior year. (2013 continued in 2014)
- **CONCERN:** We wonder to what extent faculty inability to score an assessment product on a criteria may be the result of a misalignment between curricular expectations in the program, and institutional outcomes.
  - ✓ Continue to encourage Department Chairs to distribute ASL and English senior institutional outcomes and assessment rubrics to faculty and include discussions of the alignment between the assessment criterion (as defined in the rubrics), learning opportunities, and assessment prompts. (2013 continued in 2014)
- **CONCERN:** Scores on English writing assessments dropped this year
  - ✓ Provide support to achieve the goals of the Writing Center as one of the means of supporting students
- **CONCERN:** On cursory review, seniors are not achieving benchmark scores at a higher percentage than are students during GSR.
  - ✓ Do a separate analysis comparing GSR student achievement of benchmark scores with senior achievement of benchmark scores
  - ✓ Discussions related to the ASL Assessment will want to address the improvements needed to bring up the performance in all areas (Language, Delivery, Supporting Material, and Formatting).
  - ✓ Discussions related to the Senior Writing Assessment will want to address the necessary improvements needed in raising the performance bar in the areas of Content Development, Genre and Disciplinary Conventions, Sources and Evidence, and Control of Syntax and Mechanics.
  - ✓ Discuss what needs to happen to support continued development of literacy across the UG experience
    1. Provide support to achieve the goals of the Writing Center as one of the means of support
- **CONCERN:** The need for constant and consistent faculty development in ASL and English assessment must be a priority if institutional outcomes assessment is to be meaningful.
  - ✓ Continue to increase the pool of faculty assessors for ASL and English products.  
Continue to offer professional development opportunities for assessing (and for

developing) written English and ASL presentation (Faculty Development/ASL-DS Dept/English Dept). (Progressing: 2013 continued in 2014)

- CONCERN: This is the fourth year of Senior Literacy Assessment and a substantial amount of data has been collected about senior literacy outcomes. It is critical that Gallaudet begin to make use of this data to inform resource and planning decisions to continue to strengthen senior outcomes in literacy and other institutional areas.

### **Review of 2013 Next Steps**

- Develop specifications for products (a one-minute vlog versus a 15-minute class presentation with dark lightning, etc) for submission. Share the list earlier in the year. (ASL Most ASL products this year were formatted in a way to enable their assessment)
- Review the ASL rubric's Formatting criteria since few faculty have been able to assess that criteria.
- Changes in rubrics used make it difficult to establish targets and to assess institutional process from year to year. There is a need to establish a formal consensus (e.g., through CUE) regarding the agreed upon rubric to be used for assessment of institutional outcomes (CUE/Senate). DONE
- Reinstate the Institutional Outcomes Assessment Senate Committee to enable discussions of appropriate responses to Senior Literacy (and later Senior Assessment) data. (In Progress)

## **APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES for SENIOR LEVEL LITERACY ASSESSMENT**

### **PART I: Assessment of Gallaudet Senior Writing Skills**

1. One capstone course--or course with a relatively high enrollment of undergraduate seniors--will be identified by department chairs. Chairs will inform Instructors in the identified courses about the project. OAQ will send all Chairs a list of students who are seniors during AY 2011-2012. Dept. Chairs will develop a list of seniors who will have appropriate written work to assess.
2. Student papers to be assessed can be of any type or length, produced for a grade in any major-level course. They should be double-spaced.
3. Instructors will submit either unmarked hard or electronic copies of each paper to the Office of Academic Quality ([Norma.Moran@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Norma.Moran@gallaudet.edu)) by close of business on Friday, May 4, 2012.
4. Each department of instruction will designate at least one of its members to serve as an assessor for this project. Assesors will serve for only one day: Tuesday, May 8, 2012, 9:00-3:30 PM. Assessors will be trained to use the Gallaudet Writing Rubric at the beginning of the day, then assess student writing until the project is complete that afternoon.
5. Writer, teacher, and course name, as well as any other identifying data, will be removed from each paper before it is read. Each paper will be scored independently and by two assessors. In the event that there is a significant difference between the two ratings, a third assessor will be asked to score the paper.

### **PART II: Assessment of Gallaudet Senior ASL Presentation skills.**

1. One capstone course--or course with a relatively high enrollment of undergraduate seniors—with an ASL presentation product will be identified by department chairs. Chairs will inform Instructors in the identified courses about the project. OAQ will send all Chairs a list of students who are seniors during AY 2011-2012. Dept. Chairs will develop a list of seniors who will have appropriate written work to assess.
2. ASL products to be assessed will be videos of signed presentations by individual students. Youtube videos are the preferred medium for these ASL presentations. Other formats can be accommodated if necessary.
3. Instructors will submit videos of ASL Presentation products to the Office of Academic Quality ([Norma.Moran@gallaudet.edu](mailto:Norma.Moran@gallaudet.edu)) by close of business on Friday, May 4, 2012.
4. The OAQ will form a committee of evaluators who will meet at an agreed upon time for the evaluation session, to occur between the end of final exams and Commencement. The evaluators will receive training in using the Gallaudet ASL rubric. Presentations are evaluated by two evaluators and the scores in each area are recorded. In case of significant difference in the two ratings, a third rater will be brought in.

## **APPENDIX B: PROPOSAL TO THE CUE FOR SENATE APPROVAL**

### **Memorandum**

**Date:** March 30, 2012

**Re:** One Proposal for CUE, related to institutional assessment

**To:** Council for Undergraduate Education

**From:** Senate Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee (Patricia Hulsebosch, Norma Moran, Kitty Baldrige, Kathy Wood, Max Kazemzadeh)

**Proposal:** Senior Assessment Project

**Summary of Proposal:** The Senate will require that all programs have a Senior Assessment Plan in place that assesses all of the programs' SLOs and the 5 Gallaudet institutional SLOs. Also, CUE will establish the Senior Assessment Project work group charged with overseeing this work.

### **Background and Rationale for Proposal:**

In the fall of 2011 the GU Senators requested that OAQ establish the Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee (IOA), charged with developing a process for assessing institutional student learning outcomes at mid-career and graduation. To this end, the committee has developed a proposal to establish a goal, timeline and process for assessing the five GU Institutional Outcomes in the senior year.

The IOA began its consideration of assessment of SLO's by referring to other models for assessment of students as they prepare to graduate. We focused, in particular, on the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU's) [Greater Expectations Project on Accreditation and Assessment Capstone Assessment Project](#) within their [Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree](#) initiative. The goal is to develop assessments in which (1) general education outcomes and major outcomes are assessed together, and (2) general education and major outcomes can be assessed at the highest levels of undergraduate education (i.e., in the senior year). Following AACU's principles for good assessment, the intent is to promote assessments that demonstrate good practices in assessment.

### **Proposal:**

Given that it has now been over five years since the Senate approved the five Institutional Outcomes for Gallaudet's baccalaureate program; and

Given that MSCHE has, since 2000, expected that universities: a) assess institutional outcomes within the institution's overall plan for assessing student learning and use assessment results for curricular improvement (Standard 12); b) provide assessment results that provide

sufficient, convincing evidence that students are achieving key institutional and program learning outcomes (Standard 14); and c) share and discuss assessment results with appropriate constituents and use them to improve teaching and learning (Standard 14); we propose the following:

**Part I. The Senate Institutional Outcomes Committee proposes that the Senate require that by fall, 2014 all UG programs have in place senior year assessments that accomplish two things:**

- (1) Institutional SLO's (there are five) and program SLO's are assessed together
- (2) Institutional and program SLO's are assessed at the highest levels of undergraduate education.

and

**that the Senate require that by January, 2014 all UG programs have a draft written senior assessment plan that describes the following:**

- (1) The institutional and program-specific outcomes that are required to be integrated by the student in performing this assessment activity
- (2) Disciplinary standards for the outcomes
- (3) The ways in which students, in explicit and cumulative ways, are prepared for senior assessments in prior semesters
- (4) The ways in which the senior assessment(s) are a learning experience for students
- (5) The breadth of faculty collaboration in the assessment activity

**Part II. The Senate Institutional Outcomes Committee proposes that CUE establish a Senior Assessment Project (SAP) Work Group with a timeline for this work group, which would be charged with developing an implementation plan for the Senior Assessment Project. The implementation plan would include a timeline for the development of senior assessment projects within programs, along with a schedule of professional development activities that would support the implementation of senior assessment projects. These professional development activities might include topics such as integrating institutional and program SLO's, curriculum mapping, and developing assessments that are learning experiences. The SAP Work Group would have their implementation plan ready for submission to the Senate by Fall, 2012 (OAQ will provide funding to support summer development work).**

**Suggested Timeline:**

- Fall, 2012 Senior Assessment Project Implementation Plan submitted to CUE
- Fall, 2012-Fall, 2013 Developing and program exploration of good practices in senior assessment

- Jan, 2014 All UG programs submit a draft written senior assessment plan to CUE
- Spring, 2014 Feedback and revisions to draft senior assessment plan; development of assessment tasks in programs
- Fall, 2014 Senior Assessment for all outcomes begins in all UG programs

## APPENDIX C: RUBRIC FOR ASL PRODUCTS



### American Sign Language Senior Language Assessment Project Rubric\*

Developed and created by the Office of Bilingual Teaching and Learning

#### Definition

A Public presentation is a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

#### Framing Language

Public presentation takes many forms. This rubric is specifically designed to evaluate public presentations of a single presenter at a time and is best applied to live or video-recorded presentations. For panel presentations or group presentations, it is recommended that each presenter be evaluated separately. This rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed, supported by one or more forms of supporting materials and includes a purposeful organization. An answer to a single question not designed to be structured into a presentation does not readily apply to this rubric.

#### Glossary

*The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.*

- **Central message:** The main point/thesis/"bottom line"/"take-away" of a presentation. A clear central message is easy to identify; a compelling central message is also vivid and memorable.
- **Delivery techniques:** Posture, gestures, eye contact, and use of ASL. Delivery techniques enhance the effectiveness of the presentation when the presenter stands and moves with authority, looks more often at the audience than at his/her materials/notes, uses sign language expressively, and uses few language fillers ("um," "uh," "like," "you know," etc.).
- **Language:** Vocabulary, terminology, and sentence structure. Language that supports the effectiveness of a presentation is appropriate to the topic and audience, grammatical, clear, and free from bias. Language that enhances the effectiveness of a presentation is also vivid, imaginative, and expressive.
- **Organization:** The grouping and sequencing of ideas and supporting material in a presentation. An organizational pattern that supports the effectiveness of a presentation typically includes an introduction, one or more identifiable sections in the body of the presentation, and a conclusion. An organizational pattern that enhances the effectiveness of the presentation reflects a purposeful choice among possible alternatives, such as a chronological pattern, a problem-solution pattern, an analysis-of-parts pattern, etc., that makes the content of the presentation easier to follow and more likely to accomplish its purpose.
- **Supporting material:** Explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities, and other kinds of information or analysis that supports the principal ideas of the presentation. Supporting material is generally credible when it is relevant and derived from reliable and appropriate sources. Supporting material is highly credible when it is also vivid and varied across the types listed above (e.g., a mix of examples, statistics, and references to authorities). Supporting material may also serve the purpose of establishing the presenter's credibility. For example, in presenting a creative work such as a dramatic reading of Shakespeare, supporting evidence may not advance the ideas of Shakespeare, but rather serve to establish the presenter as a credible Shakespearean actor.

### ASL Senior Language Assessment Rubric\*

A Public presentation is a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. (adapted from AACU rubric for Public Presentation)

	4 (Exceptional)	3	2	1 (Developing)
<b>Organization</b>	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the presentation.
<b>Language</b>	Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience.
<b>Delivery</b>	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and visual expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and presenter appears polished and confident.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and visual expressiveness) make the presentation interesting, and presenter appears comfortable.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and visual expressiveness) make the presentation understandable, and presenter appears tentative.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and visual expressiveness) detract from the understandability of the presentation, and presenter appears uncomfortable.
<b>Supporting Material</b>	A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.
<b>Central Message</b>	Central message is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.)	Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.	Central message is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	Central message can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.
<b>Formatting (if a video assignment)</b>	Background, clothes, and jewelry are appropriate choices with no distractions. Camera placement is appropriately sized. Correct brightness of light on camera. Editing is excellent and shows a completed product.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are good choices with few distractions. Mildly close or far from camera; few signs are out of picture. Mildly dark or bright to see signing. Editing is adequate and acceptable.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are average choices with some distraction. Little too close or too far from camera; some signs are out of the picture. Little too dark or too bright to see signing. Editing is choppy and unfinished.	Background, clothes, and jewelry are poor choices and often distract. Too close or too far from camera; many signs go off the screen. Too dark or too bright to see signing.

# APPENDIX D: RUBRIC FOR WRITTEN ENGLISH PRODUCTS

## WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [value@aacu.org](mailto:value@aacu.org)



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

### Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

### Framing Language

This writing rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of educational institutions. The most clear finding to emerge from decades of research on writing assessment is that the best writing assessments are locally determined and sensitive to local context and mission. Users of this rubric should, in the end, consider making adaptations and additions that clearly link the language of the rubric to individual campus contexts.

This rubric focuses assessment on how specific written work samples or collections of work respond to specific contexts. The central question guiding the rubric is "How well does writing respond to the needs of audience(s) for the work?" In focusing on this question the rubric does not attend to other aspects of writing that are equally important: issues of writing process, writing strategies, writers' fluency with different modes of textual production or publication, or writers' growing engagement with writing and disciplinary thought through the process of writing.

Evaluators using this rubric must have information about the assignments or purposes for writing guiding writers' work. Also recommended is including reflective work samples or collections of work that address such questions as: What decisions did the writer make about audience, purpose, and genre as s/he compiled the work in the portfolio? How are those choices evident in the writing—in the content, organization and structure, reasoning, evidence, mechanical and surface conventions, and rhetorical systems used in the writing? This will enable evaluators to have a clear sense of how writers understand the assignment and take it into consideration as they evaluate.

The first section of this rubric addresses the context and purpose for writing. A work sample or collection of work can convey the context and purpose for the writing tasks it showcases by including the writing assignments associated with work samples. But writers may also convey the context and purpose for their writing within the texts. It is important for faculty and institutions to include directions for students about how they should represent their writing contexts and purposes.

Faculty interested in the research on writing assessment that has guided our work here can consult the National Council of Teachers of English/ Council of Writing Program Administrators' White Paper on Writing Assessment (2008, [www.nacacouncil.org/whitepaper](http://www.nacacouncil.org/whitepaper)) and the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2008, [www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123784.htm](http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123784.htm))

### Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- **Content Development:** The ways in which the text explores and represents its topic in relation to its audience and purpose.
- **Context of and purpose for writing:** The context of writing is the situation surrounding a text: who is reading it? who is writing it? Under what circumstances will the text be shared or circulated? What social or political factors might affect how the text is composed or interpreted? The purpose for writing is the writer's intended effect on an audience. Writers might want to persuade or inform; they might want to report or summarize information; they might want to work through complexity or confusion; they might want to argue with other writers, or connect with other writers; they might want to convey urgency or amuse; they might write for themselves or for an assignment or to remember.
- **Disciplinary conventions:** Formal and informal rules that constitute what is seen generally as appropriate within different academic fields, e.g. introductory strategies, use of passive voice or first person point of view; expectations for thesis or hypothesis; expectations for kinds of evidence and support that are appropriate to the task at hand; use of primary and secondary sources to provide evidence and support arguments and to document critical perspectives on the topic. Writers will incorporate sources according to disciplinary and genre conventions, according to the writer's purpose for the text. Through increasingly sophisticated use of sources, writers develop an ability to differentiate between their own ideas and the ideas of others, credit and build upon work already accomplished in the field or issue they are addressing, and provide meaningful examples to readers.
- **Evidence:** Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, writers' ideas in a text.
- **Genre conventions:** Formal and informal rules for particular kinds of texts and/or media that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices, e.g. lab reports, academic papers, poetry, webpages, or personal essays.
- **Sources:** Texts (written, oral, behavioral, visual, or other) that writers draw on as they work for a variety of purposes—to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

## WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [value@aacu.org](mailto:value@aacu.org)



### Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (all one) level performance.



	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
<b>Context of and Purpose for Writing</b> <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
<b>Content Development</b>	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
<b>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions</b> <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
<b>Sources and Evidence</b>	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
<b>Control of Syntax and Mechanics</b>	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.