

Special Progress Report

Coventry High School

November 1, 2007

1. Design and begin to use a template for the development of curriculum documents using a format that ensures that the documents prescribe content, integrate relevant school-wide learning expectations, includes course-specific learning goals, suggests instructional strategies and suggests assessment strategies including the use of school-wide rubrics.

Classification: *Completed*

There has been a tremendous effort district-wide to ensure that curriculum documentation prescribes content, integrates relevant school-wide expectations, includes course-specific learning goals, suggests instructional strategies and includes school-wide rubrics. This initiative has been spearheaded by the superintendent of schools, Dr. Donna Bernard, with the support of building-level administrators in each of the four schools which comprise the Coventry Public School system. In April 2006, Dr. Bernard introduced the building level administration to an on-line curriculum development software program called a Balanced Curriculum. The design of this software requires the development of time-bound “Unit Introductions” and “Significant Tasks”. The “Significant Tasks” are aligned with the school-wide learning expectations, the Connecticut State Frameworks, Bloom’s Taxonomy, and Character Education standards. Assessment strategies are clearly written into each unit and actual assessment documents are being added for easy access by the teacher. The faculty is currently using the school-wide rubrics to assess student work defined in the curriculum. The increase in effective implementation of the school-wide rubrics will ensure that every unit of study in every high school course will include several measures of student progress and achievement using school-wide rubrics. The implementation of this on-line software in all Coventry Public Schools brought a common curriculum template which will be used over the coming years to articulate, balance and align the K-12 curriculum. The purchase of this on-line curriculum development program included consultative support and training from two renowned curriculum specialists, Dr. Mary Jo Kraemer and Dr. David Squires, both of whom serve as professors at Southern Connecticut State University.

Implementation Timeline: In June 2006, a cohort 1 group of teachers representing each of the content areas at Coventry High School, and each of the grade levels at sending schools, received training in the application and use of the Balanced Curriculum software. The “trainer of trainers” model of professional development was designed to create a cadre of experts who would then work within their departments and grade levels to begin implementation and use of the Balanced Curriculum software. Throughout the 2006-07 academic year, time, training and financial support was provided for *all* teachers district-wide to upload curriculum into this common web-based template. Throughout the summer of 2007, additional time, financial support and technical support was provided to teachers in all content areas at Coventry High School. Additional time and financial support will be provided for Coventry High School teachers to develop and articulate their curriculum using the Balanced Curriculum throughout the 2007-2008 school year. For example, a district curriculum team has been assembled and includes a part time teacher working on K-7, and two part-time teachers working on 8-12 curriculum. The two 8-12 curriculum coordinators are high school teachers who have been released from teaching two classes for the purpose of leading and supporting the staff in our curriculum efforts. By the end of the 2007-2008 school year we plan to make at least a portion of our curriculum accessible to the public on-line.

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2. Develop a timeline and a plan for the regular evaluation and revision of curriculum based on assessments of student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations and course-specific learning goals.

Classification: *Completed*

The Coventry High School teachers and professional staff have developed a cyclical timeline for the review and revision of curriculum based on student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations and learning goals. This timeline involves the following cycle:

2006-07 Academic Year: The district began development of curriculum using the Balanced Curriculum on-line template. Once completed, *all* Coventry Public School teachers will be expected to adhere to the scope and sequence of the articulated curriculum. The on-line curriculum may be accessed and commented on using a bulletin board style electronic messaging component available on the Balanced Curriculum website by parents, students, teachers, administrators, curriculum consultants and members of the extended community. In addition to the curriculum development and articulation process, the teachers and professional faculty at Coventry High School redeveloped the school-wide academic expectations and associated school-wide rubrics used to measure student progress in achieving the school-wide academic expectations. This review was completed in April 2007. As of April 2007, Coventry High School teachers were utilizing the school-wide academic expectations and associated school-wide rubrics to assess student work.

2007-08 Academic Year: Starting in the 2007-2008 school year teachers will meet together and share student work samples which have been assessed using school-wide and classroom rubrics which are derived from school-wide rubrics. This analysis will ensure that the quality and content of student work clearly demonstrates students have met the expectations for student learning and that the implementation of school-wide rubrics is consistent throughout the school. Teachers will use the quantitative and qualitative data from the analysis of student work to make revisions in the curriculum. Attached to this special progress report are the revised Coventry High School Academic Expectations and the associated school-wide rubrics. Coventry Public Schools will publicly post a portion of the K-12 curriculum at www.balancedcurriculum.com. Parents, students, teachers, administrators, curriculum consultants, and the public-at-large will be able to post comments on the curriculum. This feedback in conjunction with ongoing analysis of student work and student performance data will be used in the review and evaluation process which will continuously refine the school's curriculum. Any and all curricular modifications based on qualitative and quantitative data and feedback will be completed by the end of the corresponding academic year and implemented the following year. This will begin an effective cycle of curriculum development and revision consisting of: Implementation → Analysis Based on Quantitative and Qualitative Data/Feedback (Looking at Student Work) → Revision → Implementation.

Time and/or fiscal compensation will be provided to teachers so that analysis and revision of curriculum becomes a meaningful part of the culture of the school, and the curriculum remains a living document.

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3. Develop and implement a plan to ensure that the curriculum in all areas engages students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking and provides students the opportunity for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.

Classification: *Completed*

The district-wide curriculum development plan hinges on the effective use and application of the Balanced Curriculum on-line curriculum development template. This template encourages and prompts the articulation of curriculum which engages students in inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking and provides students the opportunity for the authentic application of knowledge and skills. Teachers developing and articulating curriculum in their content areas will be required to use standards-based language and align “Unit Introductions” and “Significant Tasks” to the Connecticut State Standards, Bloom’s Taxonomy, Coventry High School Academic Expectations as well as our social and civic expectations. Review by administrators, curriculum consultants and colleagues will help ensure that curriculum is effectively aligned and ensures that students are engaged in learning activities at the highest levels on Bloom’s Taxonomy. As part of the professional dialog which occurs during the review of curriculum initiatives, teachers will confer with colleagues and be able to suggest improvements to Significant Tasks which are viewed as lower order thinking or as not fully engaging students in meaningful inquiry-based activities which encourage the authentic applications of content and skills.

In addition to the review of curriculum, the examination of student work will be used to suggest improvements in instruction and assessment practices. This review of student work will take place in departmental meetings, vertical team meetings with the middle school faculty, as well as in curriculum review teams that will meet at least three times per year. A rubric will be utilized to provide meaningful feedback to teachers and departments on the extent to which the student work provides evidence of inquiry, problem-solving, higher order thinking and the authentic application of knowledge and skills. (see attached rubric)

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4. Develop a plan to ensure the effective curricular articulation with sending school in the district.

Classification: Completed

Several of our faculty meetings during the 2007-2008 school year will be collaborative with the middle school staff. The focus of these joint faculty meeting will be to ensure a logical flow of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for Coventry students. This will be accomplished by creating curriculum, modeling instructional strategies and examining student work within vertical teams consisting of high school and middle school teachers. For example on October 9, 2007, a math vertical team made up of grade 5 through grade 9 teachers wrote curriculum together. One major focus was to ensure that the algebra I course at the middle school was comparable to the algebra I course at the high school. On November 6, 2007, our joint faculty meeting with the middle school will focus on formative assessment. We are planning three additional combined faculty meetings throughout the current school year and we plan to continue this collaboration each year. Other topics that we plan on addressing together include instructional strategies and examining student work. Our future plans at Coventry High School include the development of more advanced placement courses. As we progress in these plans we will continue to collaborate with the middle school to ensure that the pace of skill development of Coventry students prepares them for success in these challenging courses. Since the high school and middle school are physically connected the avenues for future effective collaboration are numerous. High School Teachers will be encouraged to develop professional growth plans with their middle school colleagues with the goal of increased student learning.

The district-wide curriculum development plan requires all district schools to make effective use of the Balanced Curriculum on-line curriculum development template. A natural byproduct of the use of this common curriculum template will foster effective curricular alignment between sending schools. All teachers will have access to the curriculum via the World Wide Web. Teachers will be able to post comments using an electronic bulletin board available on the Balanced Curriculum website. This will foster virtual and real-time conversations with colleagues revolving around transition and articulation issues associated with curriculum and instructional strategies. Time and/or compensation will be provided to district teachers so that meaningful conversation revolving around curricular articulation is facilitated. Additionally, technical support provided by consultants from Southern Connecticut State University will allow for ongoing review of the K-12 scope and sequence of the district curriculum. Using the Connecticut State Frameworks as a baseline source for effective curricular articulation, district staff and curriculum consultants will ensure the effective alignment of the Coventry Public Schools curriculum across and between grade levels.

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5. Ensure that all curriculum documents are appropriately integrated and emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.

Classification: *In Progress*

The application and use of the Balanced Curriculum on-line curriculum development template will effectively ensure that curriculum documents are appropriately integrated and emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of coverage. By publicly posting the K-12 curriculum on the World Wide Web, constituents will be allowed and encouraged to review the documentation and provide feedback on the curriculum. This feedback from teachers, students, parents, administrators, curriculum consultants and the community-at-large will serve as an effective quality control mechanism. If time-bound Unit Introductions and Significant Tasks are determined by the community of practitioners to lack sufficient depth of coverage, curriculum authors will revise the curriculum and teachers using the curriculum will be expected to modify their instructional practice.

In addition, faculty will make adjustments in curriculum documents following the examination of student work during department meetings, faculty meetings, and review team professional days. We will be specifically analyzing student work for evidence of emphasizing depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.

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6. Conduct a formal survey to assess the degree to which instructional practices are aligned with the school's mission and expectations for student learning and act in response to the data.

Classification: *Completed*

A formal survey on instructional practices was conducted during a faculty meeting on Tuesday, September 11, 2007. Please see attached survey with results. At the faculty meeting on September 26, 2007, the faculty examined the survey results and brainstormed way to act in response to the data. All of these ideas were word processed and distributed to the entire faculty for discussion in department meetings. On October 19, 2007, the Academic Council (Department Chairs) discussed and approved a formal plan which addressed several major findings and suggestions. These include:

1. The faculty wants more time to collaborate with colleagues on instructional strategies.
2. Uncertainty exists about how to effectively use the school-wide rubrics in the assessment of student work.
3. Students need to be more aware of how their daily efforts are directly connected to the mission and expectations for student learning.
4. More feedback could be sought from parents and students on the effectiveness of instructional practices.

The plan includes the following:

1. Use of some faculty meetings to examine and discuss instructional practices. A joint faculty meeting with the Middle School on instructional practices will occur on November 6, 2007.
2. An after school instructional strategies discussion group will be offered. Teachers may elect to participate in this group as part of their professional growth plans. Activities of this group may include visiting other classrooms and looking at student work. This group also serves as an enhancement to our support of our numerous student teachers and new teachers.
3. Workshops on using the school-wide rubrics as a base for creating more specific departmental and assignment rubrics will be held. These workshops are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month.
4. Teachers will assist student in understanding how their work relates to the mission and expectations for student learning and include opportunities for students to reflect on their achievement of these expectations. Teachers will share their practice of doing this in departmental and faculty meetings.
5. The student portfolio is being redesigned so students reflect on how they have met the expectations for student learning.
6. Three times each school year departments and/or teachers will provide a review team of rotating membership with sets of student work that have been assessed with school-wide rubrics. Ideally each member of this team will bring a set of student work from his/her own classroom. This curriculum team will provide quality feedback to the departments and/or teachers who will then make appropriate adjustments to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. (see attached Rubric for Examining Student Work)
7. The High School Advisory Council will gather feedback about instructional practices and other perceptions of the high school from parents and students on an annual basis. Based on this feedback the High School Advisory Council will propose a school enhancement plan annually.

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7. Design a plan to ensure that instructional strategies in all courses make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, and promote student self-assessment and self-reflection.

Classification: *Completed*

A plan has been developed and implemented district-wide to ensure that instructional strategies in all courses make connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, and promotes student self-assessment and self-reflection. This plan is intricately connected to the development and articulation of the district's curriculum using the Balanced Curriculum on-line template. This template requires teachers to develop Significant Tasks using standards-based language. These Significant Tasks serve as the foundation for the development of lesson plans which comprise day-to-day instructional strategies in all courses. As part of the curriculum review cycle, instructional strategies used in all courses at Coventry High School will be reviewed. These reviews will take place during faculty meetings and paid after school hours. This team will meet in November, February, and May each year to examine sets of student work submitted by departments and individual teachers. Ideally each member of this team of reviewers will bring a set of student work from his/her own class for examination. The team of reviewers will use a rubric for examining student work (please see attached rubric). Feedback will be provided to the departments and teachers with suggestions on instructional strategies as well as the use of school-wide rubrics. Using this feedback, teachers will make adjustments in their curriculum, instruction, and assessment in collaboration with their colleagues in departmental meetings. The focus of this review will ensure that the pedagogy used in all courses engages students as active learners, engages students as self-directed learners, and promotes student self-assessment and self-reflection. This plan will begin during the 2007-08 academic year.

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8. Develop formal mechanisms to secure and use feedback from a variety of sources including other teachers, students and parents as a means of improving instruction.

Classification: *Completed*

The Balanced Curriculum on-line curriculum development template will effectively ensure that feedback from a variety of sources is used to inform and improve instructional practices. The Balanced Curriculum template requires teachers to develop Significant Tasks. Significant Tasks articulate 2-3 days worth of instructional expectations and are used as the foundation for the development of lesson plans which direct daily instructional practices. For each Significant Task, there is a “Comment” section where teachers, administrators, parents, students, curriculum consultants and the community-at-large may post feedback. When the curriculum is publicly posted on the World Wide Web, the community will be notified and encouraged to review and provide feedback on the articulated curriculum. This option to view and provide feedback will be advertised in several formats including school newsletters, open house and Parents Club meetings. This feedback will be reviewed by teachers, administrators and curriculum authors and used as a data source to inform and improve instructional practices.

The newly formed High School Advisory Council consisting of teachers, students, parents, and other community members will provide a diverse view point as we examine the results of our instructional practices. The High School Advisory Council will gather and examine data from a variety of sources including standardized test scores, alumni surveys, Balanced Curriculum comment section as well as other sources of feedback from students, staff, parents, and other members of the community about their perceptions of the high school. After analyzing this data the High School Advisory Council will create a proposed school enhancement plan which will be presented to the faculty for approval and implementation. Each year the school enhancement plan will be approved before the end of the school year so that it can be implemented at the very beginning of the next school year. When necessary a team of teachers will be offered the opportunity to create implementation strategies during paid summer hours.

A review team a rotating membership will meet in November, February, and May each year to examine sets of student work submitted by departments and individual teachers. Ideally each member of this team of reviewers will bring a set of student work from his/her own class for examination. The team of reviewers will use a rubric for examining student work (please see attached rubric). This particular method of reviewing student work will not be part of the teacher evaluation process. Feedback will be provided to the departments and teachers with suggestions on instructional strategies as well as the use of school-wide rubrics. Using this feedback, teachers will make adjustments in their curriculum, instruction, and assessment in collaboration with their colleagues in departmental meetings.

Each teacher is encouraged to informally seek feedback from their students on an on-going basis and gather formal feedback using student surveys. Teachers already using student surveys will be asked to share these documents with their colleagues during faculty meetings.

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9. Provide formal opportunities for teachers to collaborate and engage in discussion of instructional strategies as a significant part of the culture or the school.

Classification: *Completed*

Teachers are provided opportunity to collaborate with colleagues and discuss curriculum and instructional practices. Throughout the 2006-07 academic year, the entire professional faculty at Coventry High School engaged in a wholesale review and revision of the school-wide academic expectations, school-wide rubrics, and curriculum documentation. A natural byproduct of these initiatives involved opportunities to reflect upon and meaningfully discuss instructional strategies. The professional faculty is committed to ensuring that this dialog continues. As such, a culture focused on engaging the community of practitioners in meaningful collaboration and discussion of instructional strategies is beginning to take root in the school. Formal time and opportunities for this discussion to occur have been provided during contractually obligated department meetings, faculty meetings, and in-service days. Additional time has been provided through paid curriculum writing summer work. Outside of time built into the teacher contract, the district administration is committed to providing the release time and/or compensated extra work time necessary for teachers to have formal and structured opportunities to collaborate and engage in discussion of instructional strategies.

Several faculty meetings will be used to examine and discuss instructional practices. We conducted a survey on instructional practices during a faculty meeting on September 11, 2007, and then analyzed the results and discussed proposed actions at a faculty meeting on September 26, 2007. This work resulted in the identification of several needs and a specific plan to ensure that they are met. In addition, a combined faculty meeting between the High School and Middle School on instructional practices will occur on November 6, 2007.

Three times per year a review committee of rotating membership will review student work and provide suggestions using a rubric that specifically addresses instructional strategies. This team will meet in November, February, and May each year to examine sets of student work submitted by departments and individual teachers. Ideally each member of this team of reviewers will bring a set of student work from his/her own class for examination. The team of reviewers will use a rubric for examining student work (please see attached rubric). This particular method of reviewing student work will not be part of the teacher evaluation process. Feedback will be provided to the departments and teachers with suggestions on instructional strategies as well as the use of school-wide rubrics. Using this feedback, teachers will make adjustments in their curriculum, instruction, and assessment in collaboration with their colleagues in departmental meetings.

As part of their professional growth goals teachers can elect to participate in an instructional strategies discussion group throughout the year which meets after school. This group will also serve to support our numerous new teachers and student teachers.

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10. Review the existing school-wide rubrics and revise them based on school-wide feedback.

Classification: *Completed*

Throughout the 2006-07 academic year, the professional faculty at Coventry High School engaged in an extensive review of the school-wide academic expectations and school-wide rubrics. Feedback from *all* Coventry High School teachers was used during the revision process. In December 2006, revised academic expectations were brought to the faculty for a vote. A strong majority of the faculty voted to accept the revised academic expectations. The faculty then engaged in the process of developing school-wide rubrics associated with each academic expectation. Feedback from *all* teachers was used in the development of these school-wide rubrics. In April 2007, the revised school-wide rubrics were brought to the faculty for a vote. The faculty voted unanimously to accept the school-wide rubrics. The administration at Coventry High School has made it clear to teachers that they are expected to use the school-wide academic expectations to inform the development of learning activities, and use the school-wide rubrics in the assessment of Significant Tasks defined in the curriculum. Attached to this special progress report are the revised school-wide academic expectations and the revised school-wide rubrics.

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11. Ensure that the library media center is adequately staffed at all times before, during and after school.

Classification: *Completed*

The Coventry High School Library Media center is adequately staffed before, during and after school. At the start of the 2006-07 academic year, the Coventry High School/Captain Nathan Hale Middle School librarian was increased from a part time position to a full time position. Teachers are now compensated to staff the library on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school from 2:50 pm - 4:30 pm. The Coventry High School/Captain Nathan Hale Middle School Library Media Center is now staffed full time with a certified librarian and a secretary Monday-Friday from 7:20 am – 2:50 pm.

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12. Ensure that the school is in compliance with the chemical hygiene plan (CHP) and with all Connecticut Department of Health codes.

Classification: *Completed*

During the 06-07 academic year, the high school hired a science safety consultant/authorized OSHA instructor who was charged with several objectives. These objectives focused on working toward bringing the science department into compliance relative to Connecticut State OSHA's Laboratory Standard and Connecticut Department of Health codes.

Activities included:

1. Meeting with the principal, science department head and facilities director to review the scope of expectations and develop a plan for lab safety compliance.
2. Consultant completed a total high school science laboratory inspection with the facilities director and science department chair. Recommendations were made to bring the building into compliance for the OSHA Laboratory Standard. These recommendations were fully implemented.
3. The science safety consultant provided in-service training on the OSHA Laboratory Standard, including Chemical Hygiene Plan, for all of the science department members.
4. The existing Chemical Hygiene Plan was reviewed and updated in October of 2007.

The Coventry High School administration certifies that Coventry High School is in compliance with all Connecticut Department of Health Codes and has effectively implemented a Chemical Hygiene Plan.

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We believe that our special progress report provides sufficient evidence that we have satisfied all of the twelve highlighted recommendations.

Follow-Up Committee Chair

Date

Principal

Date

Attachments:

Instructional Practices Survey Results
Rubric for examining student work
School-Wide Rubrics

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES SURVEY

Results!

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neutral 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

The number of responses indicated in parentheses below.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. | The instructional practices that I apply in teaching my classes are aligned with Coventry High School's mission and expectations for student learning. | 1 (0) | 2 (0) | 3 (2) | 4 (22) | 5 (17) |
| 2. | I am making progress toward aligning my instructional practices with Coventry High School's mission and expectations for student learning. | 1 (0) | 2 (0) | 3 (5) | 4 (17) | 5 (20) |
| 3. | My students clearly see how work in my class will allow them to demonstrate that they have met Coventry High School's mission and expectations for student learning. | 1 (0) | 2 (3) | 3 (11) | 4 (22) | 5 (5) |
| 4. | I seek student feedback about my instructional strategies. | 1 (0) | 2 (1) | 3 (8) | 4 (19) | 5 (14) |
| 5. | I seek parent feedback about my instructional strategies. | 1 (3) | 2 (8) | 3 (23) | 4 (5) | 5 (3) |
| 6. | I seek faculty feedback about my instructional strategies. | 1(0) | 2 (3) | 3 (7) | 4 (21) | 5 (11) |
| 7. | I would like more opportunities to collaborate with my colleagues about instructional strategies. | 1 (0) | 2 (3) | 3 (6) | 4 (10) | 5 (23) |
| 8. | The instructional strategies in my courses facilitate connections across disciplines, engage students as active learners, engage students as self-directed learners, and promote student self-assessment and self- reflection. | 1 (0) | 2 (0) | 3 (5) | 4 (19) | 5 (18) |
| 9. | I see how my instructional strategies can play a significant role in the culture of the school. | 1 (0) | 2 (0) | 3 (5) | 4 (15) | 5 (22) |
| 10. | The school-wide rubrics are helpful in connecting my instructional practices to Coventry High School's mission and expectations for student learning. | 1 (1) | 2 (3) | 3 (9) | 4 (21) | 5 (8) |
| 11. | The curriculum in my courses engages students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking and provides students with opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge and skills. | 1 (0) | 2 (0) | 3 (2) | 4 (14) | 5 (26) |
| 12. | I find that the Balanced Curriculum initiative is assisting the CHS faculty in aligning our instructional practices with the school's mission and expectations for student learning. | 1 (1) | 2 (6) | 3 (6) | 4 (16) | 5 (13) |

RUBRIC FOR Examining Student Work

(Draft)

Department or subject area submitting student work:

_____ Date: _____

School-Wide Rubric(s) used to assess work: _____

	Clearly Defined?	Yes	Close	Not Yet or N/A
Curriculum	Clearly part of the curriculum and is included on the balanced curriculum website			
Curriculum	Depth of understanding is emphasized over breadth of coverage			
Curriculum	Engages students in inquiry, problem-solving, and/or higher order thinking			
Curriculum	Opportunity for the authentic (real world) application of knowledge and skills			
Instruction	Allows for personalization			
Instruction	Engages students as active and self-directed learners			
Instruction	Promotes student self-assessment and self-reflection			
Instruction	Makes connections across disciplines			
Assessment	Student work clearly assessed using the expectations for student learning			
Assessment	Feedback to students about progress in meeting expectations for student learning			
Assessment	Feedback to students about progress in meeting specific course objectives			

Suggestions from the review team:

ACADEMIC EXPECTATION RUBRICS

Academic Expectation #1: Demonstrate effective communication in reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing.

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Position	Takes and develops a clear, thoughtful position. Keen awareness of audience.	Takes and develops a position; some awareness of audience.	Takes a position but may not be clearly developed; little if any awareness of audience.	Takes no clear position or is difficult to understand; little or no awareness of audience.	No evidence of a position or awareness of audience.
Support	Position is richly supported with accurate and relevant information.	Position contains adequate support with accurate and relevant information.	Position contains limited support with some inaccurate or irrelevant information.	Position is poorly developed and inconsistent; information may be inaccurate or irrelevant.	No supporting evidence.
Organization	Progression of ideas is logically connected to a main idea and is sustained throughout.	Progression of ideas is connected to a main idea and is sustained throughout.	Progression of ideas is somewhat connected to the main idea with digressions or abrupt shifts.	Progression of ideas is lacking a connection to the main idea, thus interfering with meaning.	No meaningful progression of ideas.
Fluency	Demonstrates strong control of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and transitions.	Demonstrates adequate control of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and transitions.	Demonstrates some control of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and transitions.	Demonstrates little control of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and transitions.	Demonstrates no control of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and transitions.

Academic Expectation #2: Demonstrate an improvement in skill levels and content knowledge by completing a significant task.

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Skill Level	The significant task was completed and there was considerable improvement in skill level.	The significant task was completed and there were acceptable improvements in skill level.	The significant task was completed with little improvement in skill level.	The significant task was not completed and/or there is little to no improvement in skill level.	No attempt was made to complete the significant task and there was no improvement in skill level.
Content Knowledge	The significant task was completed and there was a considerable gain in content knowledge.	The significant task was completed and there were acceptable gains in content knowledge.	The significant task was completed with little gain in content knowledge.	The significant task was not completed and/or there was little to no gain in content knowledge.	No attempt was made to complete the significant task and there was no gain in content knowledge.

***To identify Significant Tasks visit www.balancedcurriculum.com.**

Academic Expectation #3: Demonstrate proficiency in problem solving

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Identify the Problem	Student demonstrates a through understand-ing of the problem	Student demonstrates an adequate understanding of the problem	Student demonstrates some understanding of the problem	Student demonstrates a limited understanding of the problem	Student demonstrates no understanding of the problem
Create a Plan	Student employs prior knowledge and selects appropriate concepts and relevant information to design an insightful plan	Student employs prior knowledge and selects concepts and information to design a sufficient plan	Student employs some prior knowledge and selects some concepts and information to design a plan	Student employs limited prior knowledge and selects inappropriate and/or insufficient concepts and information to design an ineffective plan	Student does not design a plan
Implement the Plan	Student uses superior organization, reasoning abilities and procedural skills to thoroughly and accurately complete the plan	Student uses adequate organization, reasoning abilities and procedural skills to effectively complete the plan with minimal errors	Student uses some organization, reasoning abilities and procedural skills to complete the plan with some errors	Student uses limited organization, reasoning abilities and procedural skills to attempt the plan with significant errors	Student does not implement the plan
Express the Solution	Student's interpretation and communication of the solution is superior	Student's interpretation and communication of the solution is effective	Student's interpretation and communication of the solution is incomplete or flawed	Student's interpretation and communication of the solution is limited	Student does not provide a solution
Reflection	Student judges the reasonableness and reliability of the plan and the solution, and provides insightful suggestions of alternative approaches	Student judges the reasonableness and/or reliability of the plan and the solution, and provides suggestions of alternative approaches	Student judges the reasonableness of the plan and the solution, and provides some suggestions of alternative approaches	Student judges the reasonableness of the plan and the solution or provides limited suggestions of alternative approaches	Student provides no reflection

#4: Demonstrate the ability to acquire and evaluate sources and interpret events, issues and ideas in order to develop and support conclusions

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Information, Problem or Question	Student(s) posed a thoughtful, creative question that engaged them in challenging or provocative research. The question breaks new ground or contributes to knowledge in a focused, specific area	Student(s) posed a focused question involving them in challenging research.	Student(s) constructed a question that lends itself to readily available answers.	Student(s) relied on teacher-generated questions or developed a question requiring little creative thought.	Student(s) did not attempt assignment, or did not develop a question
Acquiring Information/ Selecting and Evaluating	Student(s) gathered information from a variety of quality electronic and print sources, including appropriate licensed databases. Sources are relevant, balanced and include critical readings relating to the thesis or problem. Primary sources were included (if appropriate).	Student(s) gathered information from a variety of relevant sources--print and electronic.	Student(s) gathered information from a limited range of sources and displayed minimal effort in selecting quality resources.	Student(s) gathered information that lacked relevance, quality, depth and balance.	Student(s) did not attempt to gather any information.
Analysis (A detailed examination of the elements or structure)	Student(s) carefully analyzed the information collected and drew appropriate conclusions supported by evidence. Voice of the student writer is consistently evident.	Student(s) adequately analyzed the information collected and drew conclusions supported by evidence. Voice of the student writer is evident.	Student(s) conclusions could be supported by stronger evidence. Level of analysis could have been deeper. Voice of the student writer is somewhat evident.	Student(s) conclusions simply involved restating information. Conclusions were not supported by evidence. Voice of the student writer is not evident.	Student(s) did not conclude the assignment
Synthesis (Process or result of building up separate elements, esp. ideas into a connected whole.)	Student(s) developed appropriate structure for communicating the product; incorporating a variety of quality sources. Information is logically and creatively organized with smooth transitions.	Student(s) logically organized the product and made good connections among adequate sources and ideas.	Student(s) work lacked organization and connections were vague or missing.	Student(s) work is not logically or effectively structured.	Evidence of any synthesis is missing.
Documentation	Student(s) documented all sources, including visuals, sounds, and animations. Sources are properly cited, both in-text/in-product and on Works-Cited/Works-Consulted pages/slides. Documentation is error-free.	Student(s) documented sources according to appropriate format with minimal errors. Sources are cited, both in-text/in-product and on Works-Cited/Works-Consulted pages/slides.	Student(s) did not use assigned format in documenting sources.	Documentation was generally flawed or incomplete.	Student(s) did not document any sources.
Product/ Process/ Conclusion	Student(s) effectively and creatively used appropriate communication tools to support and justify their conclusions and demonstrated thorough, effective research techniques. Product displays originality.	Student(s) effectively communicated the results of research within the product using sufficient support.	Student(s) attempted to communicate the results of research but did not have sufficient support for conclusions.	Student(s) showed little evidence of thoughtful research. Product does not effectively communicate research findings	There is a complete lack of evidence of any research or conclusions.

#5: Demonstrate the ability to collect and interpret data to reach a valid conclusion regarding a stated hypothesis/research goal

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Problem Definition	The research problem is clearly stated. There is a clear identification of variables and the research goal(s).	The research problem is stated adequately. There is an adequate identification of the variables and the research goal(s).	The research problem is poorly stated. A poor identification of the variables and the research goal(s).	The research problem is very limited or missing altogether. No identification of the variables and the research goal(s).	No parts completed for this section.
Format	The format clearly addresses the stated problem.	The format generally addresses the stated problem.	Format is unclear. Major modifications or clarifications are needed.	The format does not address the stated problem or is very incomplete or missing entirely.	No parts completed for this section.
Analysis	Data is well organized and appropriately presented. There is good use of charts, graphs, or tables.	Data is organized and presented in an appropriate manner. Minor errors or omissions may be present.	Data is poorly organized and/or presented in an inappropriate manner. Major omissions or errors may be present.	Data is not organized and presented in an inappropriate manner. Major omissions and errors are present.	No parts completed for this section.
Calculations	All calculations written out completely with equations, work shown and appropriate units and labels.	Calculations written out with appropriate equations, work shown, units and labels. Minor errors or omissions may be present	Some calculations shown but there are major omissions or errors.	Very few calculations presented accurately	No parts completed for this section.
Conclusions	Conclusions are related to the defined problem and are fully supported by data.	Conclusions are generally related to the defined problem and are supported by data. Minor errors in interpretation of results may be present	Conclusions are related to the defined problem and are minimally supported by data.	Conclusions are not related to the defined problem and are not supported by data.	No parts completed for this section.
Validity	Validity of the conclusions is thoroughly discussed and suggestions for improvement are made. Specific comments are made.	Validity of conclusions and specific comments on improvements have minor omissions.	There is limited discussion of validity of conclusions and general comments on improvements.	There is no discussion of validity of conclusions and general comments on improvements are limited or there is a limited discussion of validity and no general comments on improvements.	No parts completed for this section.

#6: Demonstrate effective use of technology

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Use of Technology	Student integrated multiple types of technology	Student integrated appropriate types of technology	Student selected and applied the appropriate technology	Student did not apply the appropriate technology	Student did not attempt to integrate technology.
Relevant and Accurate Information	Student evaluated, extracted, synthesized and organized information and data	Student evaluated, extracted and organized information and data.	Student extracted and organized information and data.	Student did not apply relevant or accurate information	Student did not attempt to evaluate, extract, synthesize or organize information.
Originality and Creativity	Student creatively communicated concepts using available technologies, employed excellent design, and craftsmanship.	Student conveyed concepts using available technologies and employed acceptable design	Student used a creative approach to the project, but did not demonstrate originality.	Student did not display any creative concepts using technology.	Student did not attempt to display originality or creativity in any way.
Resources and Formats	Student integrated multiple resources in data collection, implementation, analysis and effectively expressed ideas in an understandable and appropriate format. Student properly cited and credited work.	Student integrated appropriate resources in data collection, implementation, analysis and effectively expressed ideas in an understandable and appropriate format. Student properly cited and credited work.	Student selected resources in data collection, implementation, analysis and effectively expressed ideas in an understandable and appropriate format. Student properly cited and credited work.	Student did not integrate resources in data collection, implementation, analysis and effectively expressed ideas in an understandable and appropriate format. Student did not properly cite and credit work.	Student did not attempt to integrate resources in any format. Student did not attempt to cite or credit any sources.

Academic Expectation #7: Demonstrate effective expression through an area of fine arts and practical arts.

Category	4 = Exceeds Expectations	3 = Meets Expectations	2 = Approaching Expectations	1 = Below Expectations	0 = No Attempt
Group Dynamics	Demonstrates accurate and consistent awareness of specific group behaviors and their positive and negative impact on group dynamics and outcome. Is able to accurately identify and assess one's own group behaviors, as well as those of other group participants within the context of the group goal. Performs necessary group behaviors consistently and effectively. Always is prepared for the group task.	Is usually aware of specific group behaviors and their positive and negative impact on group dynamics and outcome. Is usually able to identify and assess one's own group behaviors, as well as those of other group members within the context of the group goal. Adequately performs necessary group behaviors. Is usually prepared for the group task.	Has some awareness of group behaviors and impact. Sporadically self assesses and peer assesses. Inadequately performs group behaviors. Is somewhat prepared for the group.	Lacks understanding of group behaviors as they are enacted in the group and inaccurately assesses self and other behaviors. Incompletely performs any specified group behavior. Is usually poorly or under prepared for the group task.	Does not perform any specified group behavior. Is poorly and unprepared for any group task.
Accuracy of Skills	Consistently applies accurate technical facility, executing mastery of assigned task.	Applies proficient technique, progressing toward mastery of assigned task.	Generally applies correct technique to assigned task with varied outcome.	Inconsistent use of correct technique and only a few aspects of desired outcome.	Improper application of technique to assigned task.
Stylistic Interpretation	Student effectively used appropriate technique(s) and concept(s) to produce desired outcome relevant to genre being studied.	Student integrated some appropriate technique(s) and concept(s) to produce desired outcome relevant to genre being studied.	Student incorporated some appropriate technique(s) and concept(s) but did not entirely produce desired outcome relevant to genre being studied.	Student incorporated some appropriate technique(s) or concept(s) but did not achieve desired outcome relevant to genre being studied.	The desired outcome was not produced due to the lack of appropriate techniques and concepts utilized for the genre being studied.
Reflection / Analysis	Demonstrates mastery of reflection over task, including accurate use of terminology in verbal or oral critique. Analysis shows complete understanding of desired outcome and improvement.	Significant reflection and analysis demonstrated, including use of terminology in verbal or oral critique. Could use some improvement in analysis, including vocabulary and more in-depth reflection of task.	Moderate attempt at reflection and analysis. Attempt to include terminology in analysis but may be used incorrectly or in a limited capacity. Analysis lacks cohesion.	Little attempt at reflection and analysis, demonstrating little to no new knowledge gained. Student is unable to use new terminology effectively or accurately.	No attempt at reflection or analysis is made, either verbally or written. Knowledge of terminology is also not demonstrated.

