APPENDIX C.

“PARTS OF THE VALUE RUBRIC” FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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 16 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campus, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of criteria such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

## Critical Thinking

### Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

### Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of thinking that can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. Assignments of presentation mode might be especially useful in some fields. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., for how were evaluated regardless of whether they were included in the product) is important, assignments focused on student reflection should be especially illuminating.

### Glossary

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

- **Ambiguity**: Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.
- **Assumptions**: Ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are “taken for granted or accepted as true without proof.” (Quoted from www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/assumptions)
- **Context**: The historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events.
- **Literal meaning**: Interpretation of information exactly as stated. For example, "she was green with envy" would be interpreted to mean that her skin was green.
- **Metaphor**: Information that is (intended to be) interpreted in a non-literal way. For example, "she was green with envy" is intended to convey an intensity of emotion, not a skin color.

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Continued on the next page.
### Appendix C

**Learning Outcome**

[Image: Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric]

*For more information, please contact value@aacu.org*

### Critical Thinking Values Rubric

**Dimensions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels (4,3,2,1,0)</th>
<th>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</th>
<th>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.</td>
<td>Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.</td>
<td>Conclusion is consistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</th>
<th>Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.</th>
<th>Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as know fact, with little questioning.</th>
<th>Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence of context and assumptions</td>
<td>Throughout (systematically and methodically) analyses own and others’ assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.</td>
<td>Identifies own and others’ assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.</td>
<td>Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others’ assumptions than one’s own (or vice versa).</td>
<td>Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions) Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student’s position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)

| Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others’ points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis). Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated clearly and described sufficiently. Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated clearly and described adequately. Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated clearly but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unresolved, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown. |

### Performance Descriptors

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