

CREATIVE THINKING RUBRIC

Adapted from the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for use at Hunter College, CUNY

Definition

Creative thinking is both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

Framing Language

Creative thinking, as it is fostered within higher education, must be distinguished from less focused types of creativity such as, for example, the creativity exhibited by a small child's drawing, which stems not from an understanding of connections, but from an ignorance of boundaries. Creative thinking in higher education can only be expressed productively within a particular domain. The student must have a strong foundation in the strategies and skills of the domain in order to make connections and synthesize. While demonstrating solid knowledge of the domain's parameters, the creative thinker, at the highest levels of performance, pushes beyond those boundaries in new, unique, or atypical recombinations, uncovering or critically perceiving new syntheses and using or recognizing creative risk-taking to achieve a solution.

The Creative Thinking Rubric is intended to help faculty assess creative thinking in a broad range of transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary work samples or collections of work. The rubric is made up of a set of attributes that are common to creative thinking across disciplines. Examples of work samples or collections of work that could be assessed for creative thinking may include research papers, lab reports, musical compositions, a mathematical equation that solves a problem, a prototype design, a reflective piece about the final product of an assignment, or other academic works. The work samples or collections of work may be completed by an individual student or a group of students.

Glossary

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

- Exemplar: A model or pattern to be copied or imitated (quoted from www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/exemplar).
- Domain: Field of study or activity and a sphere of knowledge and influence.

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Evaluators should leave blank any rows associated with outcomes not applicable to the assignment being assessed.

Wording of ILO: As critical thinkers, Hunter graduates will evaluate different types and sources of claims using appropriate evidence, and as creative thinkers, they will use novel ideas to better understand and shape the world around them.

Outcome ↓ Level →	4	3	2	1
	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaches Expectations	Does not meet expectations
Taking Risks <i>May include personal risk (fear of embarrassment or rejection) or risk of failure, introducing new materials and forms, tackling controversial topics, advocating unpopular ideas or solutions.</i>	Incorporates new directions or approaches in ways that might go beyond the parameters of the assignment.	Introduces some new directions or approaches.	Completes the assignment without introducing any new directions or approaches.	Fails to adequately complete the assignment.
Solving Problems	Clearly presents multiple logical ways of solving the problem.	Having selected from among alternatives, develops a logical, consistent plan to solve the problem.	Only a single approach is considered and is used to solve the problem; other alternatives not discussed or considered.	Does not employ any clear approach to solving problem.
Embracing Complexity	Incorporates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a complex, exploratory way.	Incorporates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a limited way.	Acknowledges alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas, but does not incorporate them.	Does not acknowledge alternative, divergent, or contradictory perspectives.
Innovative Thinking <i>Novelty or uniqueness (of idea, claim, question, form, etc.)</i>	Creates and/or applies an idea, question, format, or product that is novel to the student.	Explores a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product, but does not fully explicate it.	Is able to describe a collection of available ideas.	Is not able to describe available ideas.
Connecting, Synthesizing, Transforming	Synthesizes or makes new connections among ideas or solutions.	Recognizes and understands existing connections among ideas or solutions.	Recognizes and understands some existing connections among ideas or solutions.	Does not connect or synthesize presented ideas.