

## Utica College Critical Thinking Rubric

**Note:** This rubric makes frequent reference to an "assignment." An assignment is any problem, case, or question through which a student has to work. An assignment could require creating and justifying a plan of treatment based on a medical case study, or writing a paper in response to an essay question, or proposing and defending an accounting method for dealing with a specific situation in business. In each case the student is going to be required to understand the essence of the problem in the context of the discipline (clarity of understanding,) reason through to a well-supported recommendation or conclusion (quality of reasoning) and exhibit an appropriately questioning attitude to evidence and the conclusions that can be drawn from it (critical attitude.)

In determining whether a specific level of attainment for any element has been achieved, it is suggested that all items (bullets) for the previous level(s) have been demonstrated, and all with the potential exception of one item (bullet) for the level in question also be demonstrated. For example, if the assessor is reviewing the element 'Clarity of Understanding' and attempting to determine whether Level 3 has been achieved, all items noted in Level 1 and Level 2 have been demonstrated in the assignment, and at least two of the three items for 'Proficient' must also be demonstrated.

Element	Level 1 - Inadequate	Level 2 - Adequate	Level 3 - Proficient	Level 4 - Mastery
<b>Clarity of Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fails to understand the key issues presented by the assignment.</li> <li>• Did not formulate a coherent and relevant response to the assignment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the key issues enough to satisfactorily complete the assignment</li> <li>• Has only a superficial understanding of any additional issues.</li> <li>• Does not place the issue in the context of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies and understands the key problems/issues.</li> <li>• Also understands more nuanced or subtle issues involved in the assignment.</li> <li>• Places the issue in the context of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets the conditions for level 3 and,</li> <li>• Reveals a developed understanding of the essence of the assignment and/or</li> <li>• Understands the key problems/ issues within a larger context of relevant materials and places the discipline within the context of other disciplines.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality of Reasoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failed to identify important implicit assertions &amp; assumptions contained within the assignment.</li> <li>• Did not identify alternative strategies to approach the assignment.</li> <li>• Did not provide justifications for any final recommendation or conclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not always follow where evidence and reason lead, but still manages to obtain defensible conclusions or solutions.</li> <li>• Does not understand or perceive more nuanced implications of the assignment.</li> <li>• Presents superficial or insubstantial evidence to support assertions or conclusions.</li> <li>• Has a limited or parochial view of the scope of the issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately identifies implicit assertions &amp; assumptions</li> <li>• Provides reasonable interpretations and evaluations of the perspective embedded within the assignment</li> <li>• Presents plausible alternative perspective as needed to resolve the key problems/ issues</li> <li>• Follows where evidence and reason lead in order to obtain defensible conclusions or solutions.</li> <li>• Moves beyond a limited or parochial view of the scope of the issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets the conditions for level 3 and,</li> <li>• Completes the assignment without discernable omissions or fallacious reasoning and/or</li> <li>• Where relevant, demonstrates an awareness of the limitations of the reasoning used, the application of the reasoning to other issues, or potential unintended consequences.</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Attitude</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits strong bias or fails to adopt a fair, open-minded, non-dogmatic attitude</li> <li>• Failed to anticipate key objections, implications, anomalies and problems.</li> <li>• Did not seek evidence to support beliefs or assertions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally gives due consideration to other perspectives or positions, but fails to consider some relevant perspectives or positions.</li> <li>• Is inclined to hold beliefs or assertions without seeking much evidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives due consideration to other perspectives or positions</li> <li>• Avoids bias and adopts a fair, open-minded, non-dogmatic attitude.</li> <li>• Looks for evidence to support beliefs or assertions.</li> <li>• Adopts well supported positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets the conditions for level 3 and,</li> <li>• Avoids bias and adopts a fair, open-minded, and non-dogmatic attitude and actively seeks out weaknesses in his/her own position and/or</li> <li>• Is willing to confront contradictory evidence and work through its implications.</li> </ul>