# Utica College
## All-Purpose Rubric for Writing
*(2009)*

| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Focus** | • Text is not centered on any particular identifiable idea, has no recognizable purpose, and makes no particular point.<br>• Text is ambiguous; text is internally inconsistent/confusing.<br>• Text does not respond to the assignment or answer the question at hand. | • Though the text may raise a number of ideas, it settles in the end on a single idea.<br>• Purpose of text is clear.<br>• Points of ambiguity are eventually resolved.<br>• Text responds to assignment or answers the question at hand. | • Text serves to explain a single identifiable idea, fulfilling an identifiable purpose and making a recognizable point.<br>• Text is unambiguous throughout.<br>• Text responds to the assignment in full detail.<br>• Text is readable independent of the assignment. | • Text meets all criteria for level 3 and exceeds the assignment in appropriate and meaningful ways. |
| **Development** | • Ideas are not explained.<br>• Text does not offer examples or definitions.<br>• Text does not show that the writer has understood the course material. | • Ideas are explained and/or defined adequately (so the reader can follow the text).<br>• Examples are relevant to the main idea.<br>• Text shows that the writer has understood the course material. | • Ideas are thoroughly explained and defined.<br>• Examples are apt, original and well-integrated.<br>• Text shows that the writer has understood course material and thought beyond it. | • Text meets all criteria for level 3 and is set in the context of the discipline, showing evidence of knowledge of the discipline outside of the assignment's specific requirements. |
| **Structural Integrity** | • Beginning, middle or end is missing/obscure.<br>• Order of ideas interrupts the flow of thought, distracts from content.<br>• Divisions within text are inadequate (too many or too few divisions) and /or distracting. | • Text has clear beginning, middle and end.<br>• Ideas occur in an order that makes sense for the task.<br>• Parts of text hold together. | • Text has a clear beginning, middle and end; parts are well-integrated.<br>• Parts of text are presented in a discernible order that serves a clear purpose.<br>• Text divisions are clear and aid in understanding. | • Text meets all criteria for level 3 and conforms to discipline standards for presentation. |

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| **Language** | • Diction or vocabulary inappropriate to academic discourse <br>• Words are misused/misdefined. <br>• Appropriate vocabulary missing. <br>• Language does not reflect an understanding of course material. | • Diction and vocabulary appropriate to academic discourse. <br>• Text mirrors language used in textbook and other course materials. <br>• Use of vocabulary reflects understanding of course material. | • Diction and vocabulary demonstrate that the writer takes a serious, thoughtful attitude toward the subject and wants the reader to do the same. <br>• Vocabulary indicates thorough understanding of course material. <br>• Novel or original use of vocabulary is pertinent to the subject matter. | • Text meets all criteria for level 3 and includes novel or original use of vocabulary appropriate to the field. |
| **Mechanics** | • Errors in punctuation, spelling, syntax are numerous and varied. <br>• Errors interfere with reading. <br>• Text is formatted inconsistently and does not conform to any style guide or manual. | • Errors are present but do not interfere with reading. <br>• Errors show a pattern. <br>• Format and style are consistent throughout text. | • Text is free of syntactic, punctuation, spelling and other mechanical errors. <br>• Text is prepared in accordance with a style guide/manual. | • Text meets all criteria for level 3, uses mechanics creatively to advance the purpose of the text and, if relevant, is prepared in accordance with the style standard to publications in the field of study (including citation style.) |

**Key Terms:**

"Text" - any kind of writing that might be evaluated.

"Well-integrated" - the part fits in place in the whole, both in the structure of ideas and in the way the language reads.

"Text divisions." In a conventional essay, would refer to paragraphs; in a lab report or a business memo, "text divisions" could refer to labeled subsections; in other kinds of texts, "text divisions" might refer to sentences, phrases, items in a list, etc.