**Rubrics Workshop Outline and Guide**
*This 2 page handout was provided to participants of the workshop to aid in designing a rubric for a final paper assignment. The workshop was 2 hours in length and also included a look into many rubric samples taken from other courses and from Stevens and Levi (Introduction to Rubrics). Much of the content was drawn from the writings of WIT Coordinator Andrea Williams.*

**Workshop:**
Objective: *To create a rubric that is easy to use and effective for giving feedback to students in a timely and clear manner.*

Outline:
1. Discuss the assignment
2. General Introduction to Rubrics
3. Determine the parameters/categories/scales to use
4. Create the rubric

## Rubrics: An Effective and Efficient Grading Tool for You and Your TAs

"a rubric is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment"
(Stevens and Levi, 3)

**The Basic Parts of a Rubric**
1. A task description (the assignment), e.g., "Write a 2-page editorial."
2. A scale of some sort indicating levels of achievement.
3. Dimensions of the assignment (a break-down of the skills/knowledge involved in the assignment such as "analysis, factual content, grammar," etc).
4. Descriptions of what constitutes each level of performance (specific feedback) laid out in a grid.

**Benefits of Rubrics**
- Make grading more consistent and fair (especially when TAs are grading)
- Save time and enable more timely feedback to students
- Give students more detailed feedback
- Clarify instructor expectations to students (if you share rubric with students ahead of time)
- Diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses and help us refine our teaching methods
- Full rubrics provide explicit guidance for teaching and for students' peer review and self-checking

**Steps for Constructing a Rubric**
If possible, work from examples of past student performances, grading checklists, descriptions of criteria, comments on assignments or tests—and anything else that has helped you in the past to articulate criteria for student performance.
1. **Reflect.** Choose a test or assignment that tests what you want to evaluate. Consider your objectives for the assignment (what you want students to learn and do), why you created the assignment, what

happened the last time you gave it, and what your expectations are.

2. **List.** Identify the criteria or "traits" that will count in the evaluation such as "thesis," "use of concepts," "factual accuracy," etc.

3. **Group and Label.** For each trait, construct a two- to five-point scale using descriptive statements.* For example, if the trait is "thesis," then the scale for "thesis" will have several levels, each with a description of the performance for that level. For example, a thesis that scores a 5 does X, Y, Z. A thesis scores a 4 does X and Y, etc.

4. **Apply.** Try out the scale by applying the dimensions and descriptions form Stage 3 to a sample of student work; review with colleagues or TAs and revise.

*TIP: Avoid overly negative vocabulary in your scale words, e.g., "failed to . . .," which can discourage students and instead use words that guide students towards exemplary performance, e.g., "exemplary, competent, beginning;" "excellent, good, developing;" "strong, satisfactory, needs work"