

Appendix 1. Empire State College Basic Communication Rubric (Revised 7-18-13)

- **Produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms**
- **Research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details**

Learning Outcome	Does not meet 1	Approaches 2	Meets 3	Exceeds 4	N/A 0
Purpose	Writer fails to present a controlling purpose or thesis; consequently it is difficult to identify exactly what the thesis is.	Writer presents a wandering, vague, or unfocused controlling purpose of thesis.	Writer presents an identifiable and focused controlling purpose or thesis.	Writer presents an easily identifiable, focused, original, and thought provoking controlling purpose or thesis.	
Coherence/ Organization	The essay lacks a clear organizational structure, sequences ideas ineffectively, and fails to effectively transition between ideas.	The essay has a clear structure, but the introduction and/or conclusion do not fully capture the central idea. While ideas generally follow a logical sequence, some paragraphs lack focus, development, or transitions.	The paper moves coherently and logically from a satisfying introduction to a solid conclusion. Paragraphs fit within this structure and present examples and evidence to support the ideas presented.	The paper moves coherently, logically, and even creatively from an engaging introduction to a well-demonstrated conclusion. Paragraphs fit within this structure coherently and present pertinent examples and evidence to support central and subsidiary ideas.	
Grammar/ Syntax	Errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure frequently disrupt reading and obscure meaning.	Errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure sometimes disrupt reading and obscure meaning.	Occasional errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure do not significantly detract from reading or meaning.	The paper is nearly free from mechanical and syntactical errors. Sentence structure displays sophistication and variety.	
Tone and Word Choice	Tone and word choice are not appropriate for the subject or for the implied audience.	Tone and word choice are often inconsistent and/or inappropriate for the subject and its implied audience.	The essay exhibits some degree of control over the tone and word choice appropriate for the subject and its implied audience.	The essay exhibits a solid command of word variety and a tone appropriate for the subject and its implied audience.	

Appendix 1. Empire State College Basic Communication Rubric (Revised 7-18-13) (cont.)

Learning Outcome	Does not meet 1	Approaches 2	Meets 3	Exceeds 4	N/A 0
Research	Research focus is not clear. Sources do not relate clearly to a topic. Large portions of the text are lengthy quotations from sources, with insufficient documentation. No evidence of the student's own thoughts in the essay.	Research is focused broadly around a topic. Most sources relate to the topic. Some portions of sources are summarized or paraphrased, but significant portions of the text are lengthy quotations. Documentation is inconsistent, with only some material documented as needed. Some evidence of the student's own thoughts in the essay.	Research is focused around a clear purpose or thesis. Sources relate to and support the purpose or thesis idea. Source material consists of summaries and paraphrases as well as some quotations. Sources are documented as needed, using a standard documentation format. The student offers his/her own thoughts in the thesis assertion, and supports those thoughts with a combination of analysis and relevant source material.	Research is focused around a clear, specific, analytical purpose or thesis of some sophistication or complexity. Sources relate to and support the purpose or thesis idea. Student uses a variety of sources, including professional journals or other sources recognized in the field. Sources are documented as needed, using a standard documentation format. The student interweaves his/her analyses with sources in a sophisticated manner.	

Appendix 1. Empire State College Basic Communication Rubric (Revised 7-18-13) (cont.)

- **Demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts.**

Learning Outcome	Does not meet 1	Approaches 2	Meets 3	Exceeds 4	N/A 0
Ability to Revise	Student did not effectively revise content, structure, and/or language. Changes either do not improve these features or are focused almost solely on language and mechanics.	Student revised some content, structure, and/or language. Changes improve these features slightly, and/or are focused only on portions of the essay. Revisions focus mostly on language and mechanics, without showing an understanding of the need to re-think and revise content and/or idea structure.	Student revised content, structure, and/or language in a way that improves these features, e.g., sharpening focus, adding or deleting supporting information, shifting information to improve logical structure, adding or refining transitions, etc. Revisions encompass the whole essay.	Student revised content, structure, and/or language in a way that significantly improves these features, e.g., sharpening focus, adding or deleting supporting information, shifting information to improve logical structure, adding or refining transitions, etc. Revisions encompass the whole essay, and result in sophisticated content, structure, and language.	

Note: A rating of “5” was added to the *Ability to Revise* learning objective. A “5” was given to samples where the student submitted a very strong first draft, which signified that there was not a lot of room for improvement between the draft and the final copy.