

What and How to Grade

At the Academy, our focus is always on the quality of student work. Students demonstrate that they have met the outcomes for a given course by creating work that meets a specific set of criteria. This is called criteria-referenced grading.

Using criteria-referenced grading, you can grade anything that students produce during your course: art objects, presentations, discussions and/or participation. You can even grade professional behaviors if you have clearly articulated what behaviors you expect to see. The key is to grade students using criteria that you have taught and discussed with students well before you assign grades.

Use rubrics to implement criteria-based grading. Rubrics have at least two components: 1) A list of criteria for an assignment or task. 2) Descriptions of each criterion for different levels of achievement. Using the rubric you can compare the characteristics of a student's work to the criteria you have selected. Imagine you have assigned students to bake chocolate chip cookies. Using the rubric below, you would taste each student's 'work' and compare its features to the descriptions below. One student's cookie may be only 'acceptable' (C), even though it has enough chips because the texture, color, taste and richness need improvement. Another student's 'work' may be 'good' (B), but not 'delicious' (A) because there aren't chips in every bite. In each case, you can add comments to indicate how the student can improve next time.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Rubric

Assignment: Bake one dozen chocolate chip cookies using an original recipe.

	Delicious (A) Client would pay for the product and would hire you full time.	Good (B) Client would pay for the product and would offer you more freelance work.	Acceptable (C) Needs Improvement. Client would pay for the product, but would not hire you again.	Unacceptable (D) Client would not pay for the product.	(F) No work to evaluate.
Number of chips	Chocolate chip in every bite	Chips in about 75% of bites	Chocolate in 50% of bites	Too few or too many chips	
Texture	Chewy	Chewy in middle, crisp on edges	Texture either crispy/crunchy or 50% uncooked	Texture resembles a dog biscuit	
Color	Golden brown	Either light from undercooking or light from being 25% raw	Either dark brown from overcooking or light from undercooking	Burned	
Taste	Home-baked taste	Quality store-bought taste	Tasteless	Store-bought flavor, preservative aftertaste; stale, hard, chalky	
Richness	Rich, creamy, high-fat flavor	Medium fat contents	Low-fat contents	Nonfat contents	

Recipe & cookies received on: _____ Grade: _____

Comments: _____



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