

Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award Rubric

Description:

The purpose of this rubric is to assess the teaching practices of the nominees for the **Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award**. It is designed to ensure a transparent, equitable assessment process, providing a holistic evaluation of nominees' materials. These include, but are not limited to, the nominating letter, nominees' responses to award questions, course syllabi, course evaluations, and classroom observations.

This rubric assesses nominees in the areas of curriculum and instruction, learning environment, commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion, and adherence to Our Common Ground for Lifelong Learning. Each criterion is assessed on four levels of achievement, described generally below and in greater detail within the rubric.

Rubric Levels:

Level 0: Represents pedagogy that is not observed or is at an emergent stage.

Level 1: Reflects practices that are appropriate and expected for essential pedagogy.

Level 2: Expands on Level 1 to include more creative or innovative practices that draw on multiple sources and are responsive to engaging all students.

Level 3: Expands on Levels 2 and 3 to include transformative pedagogy that is relevant, dynamic, and motivates students to take ownership of their learning while recognizing and supporting different ways of learning.

Instructions for Evaluating Mixed Evidence Across Levels:

When evidence spans multiple levels for a given criterion, reviewers will evaluate the nominee based on the highest level demonstrated with solid evidence, assuming the nominee demonstrates the foundational elements of the lower levels.

Data Sources:

This rubric will be used to assess all the nominees' materials holistically. Evidence from the nominees' written responses to teaching questions, the course evaluations, and course syllabi will all be added into the appropriate section of the rubric.

Jump To:

- Curriculum & Instruction
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 - [Instruction](#)
- Learning Environment
 - [Course Structure](#)
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- Commitment to Advancing Diversity & Inclusion
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CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

CURRICULUM: *Designs innovative teaching methods and/or develops curriculum that challenges and inspires students.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	<p>Focuses on delivering curriculum effectively to meet the course learning objectives. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes key learning objectives at the beginning of class and/or highlights important take-aways at the end of class. • Develops well thought out plans for lessons with logical sequencing. • Uses real-world examples, scenarios, sources, or case studies to enhance understanding. • Uses multiple, varied forms of assessment aligned to learning objectives to track student learning. 	<p>Develops curriculum to make learning more relevant and meaningful for students. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs lessons to create opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking, problem-solving, and/or creativity. • Integrates new, research-based practices into curriculum. • Incorporates interdisciplinary approaches to explore connections across subjects or fields. • Develops innovative assessment systems to allow students to better demonstrate their learning (e.g. portfolios, student-led conferences, gamified assessments, two-stage exams with individual and collaborative components, projects, learning logs, one-pagers). 	<p>Transforms curriculum creating unique and innovative learning experiences for students that expand the space of the classroom and/or create new opportunities for learning. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects learning to relevant places or spaces engaging students in in-person or virtual field trips. • Develops opportunities for students to connect to experts in the field (e.g., inviting guest lecturers, creating virtual panels, community partners). • Develops a new course or restructures an existing course to meet emerging needs. • Incorporates project-based or service-learning opportunities that requires students to design and implement solutions for real-world problems. • Facilitates opportunities for students to co-create curriculum. • Establishes and builds community partnerships (small or large) to enhance learning experiences. • Creates a public-facing component of student work (e.g., presentations, exhibitions, publications, infographics).
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

INSTRUCTION: *Engages students in active, meaningful learning activities.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	<p>Designs opportunities for students to participate in class. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds student attention throughout class using clear instructions, structured transitions, and effective presentation (e.g. easy to read slides). • Poses questions for students to answer, encouraging broad participation. • Creates opportunities for students to pose questions and seek clarity (e.g., pauses during class, requests for questions, walks among students during work time). • Gives students opportunities for individual practice in class (e.g. working on a practice problem, attempting a task, answering a clicker question). • Facilitates whole group discussions. 	<p>Creates opportunities for students to actively engage in learning activities. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates small groups for collaborative work on a task. • Uses think-pair-shares to elicit and expand student thinking. • Uses hands-on activities, experiments, or virtual simulations to make learning engaging, interactive, and relevant. • Engages students in tasks that require applying concepts to new contexts (e.g., case studies, design challenges). • Creates lessons that foster an element of student excitement, energy, or joy (e.g., through gamified activities, creative prompts, humor, or challenges). 	<p>Facilitates student agency in the learning process by allowing them to shape their learning experiences. Evidence may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives students choice in the learning process (e.g. options for topics to study, different types of final products to create, choice of questions to respond to). • Facilitates student-led activities in which students engage in leading, teaching, facilitating, or organizing. • Uses peer-teaching or jigsaw activities to support student-to-student learning and deeper discussions. • Incorporates inquiry-based learning where students explore topics through investigation and present their findings.
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

COURSE STRUCTURE: *Establishes course policies and structures that are supportive of and conducive to student learning.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	Structures courses to facilitate student learning. Evidence may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes major learning objectives of course on syllabus. • Provides support to students who request extra help (e.g., office hours, answers questions before/after class). • Sets clear deadlines for assignments. 	Structures courses to meet student needs, facilitating effective learning with clear expectations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes course design and makes expectations explicit on syllabus. • Develops and communicates clear, supportive policies on flexibility with deadlines/revisions that foster equity and student accountability for learning. 	Structures courses to be supportive and responsive to student needs with intentional and transparent design choices and clear expectations. Evidence may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares explicit rationale behind course design choices and instructional approaches. • Engages students in co-constructing expectations/policies for coursework.
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

CLASSROOM CULTURE: *Cultivates a classroom culture centered on trust, collaboration, and openness.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	<p>Creates a classroom environment that is safe, respectful, and conducive to learning. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes clear expectations for respectful behavior through written guidelines or verbal reinforcement. Builds rapport with students through individual interactions (e.g., conversations before/after class). Models respectful communication (e.g., syllabus language, in-class feedback). Establishes expectations around academic integrity. 	<p>Fosters a supportive, inclusive classroom environment that encourages student belonging. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements activities that build trust and a sense of psychological safety in the classroom (e.g., ice breakers, opening circles, community groups in large classes). Uses small-scale, low-stakes activities that lower barriers to engage (e.g., beginning class with a simpler version of a task, giving opportunities to confer with a partner/small group before sharing with the class, guided practice with feedback, anonymous clicker responses). Establishes clear routines for in-class activities so students know what to expect during a given routine. 	<p>Cultivates a dynamic and thriving learning community in which students actively contribute to the positive learning environment. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-develops class norms with students. Encourages reflection and dialogue about classroom learning environment (e.g., mid-semester feedback polls, discussions or exit tickets to get feedback about the effectiveness of a new activity, one-on-one check-ins). Incorporates restorative practices to address conflicts or disruptions.
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS: *Integrates students' diverse experiences and perspectives into the learning experience fostering inclusivity and relevance.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	<p>Assumes academic knowledge and skills are in the lived experiences and frames of reference of students. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates what students know to establish new learning (i.e., prior knowledge). • Uses culturally neutral or inclusive language, avoiding stereotypes or biases. • Provides context for unfamiliar cultural references, concepts, or practices to enhance understanding. • Assists students in making connections between the course materials and their lives/experiences. • Integrates diverse perspectives into instruction. 	<p>Integrates aspects of criticality into pedagogy and designs instruction and course materials with a critical perspective. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes and brings attention to issues of bias and equity in the field of study, readings, or national/global connections to the topics of study. • Explores and examines issues of power in the content and field of study. • Explores and examines the implications of vertical/asymmetrical power relationships in classrooms and educational institutions and their impact on such things as schooling, learning, motivation, and aspiration. • Recognizes and appreciates difference as cultural capital and strength and enhances student cultural capital in the classroom. 	<p>Fosters aspects of transformation and change in one's pedagogy or course materials. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students critique and address issues of bias and equity in the field of study, readings or national/global connections to the topics of study. • Students critique and address vertical/asymmetrical power relationships in their classroom and educational institution. • The instructor affirms and expresses the knowledge, skills, and diverse cultural experiences students may bring into the classroom.
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

ACCESSIBILITY: *Adapts instruction and materials to be accessible to students from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities, creating equitable learning opportunities.*

Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Potentially present, but not yet observed.	<p>Designs instruction and course materials with essential accessibility features. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates accessible resources that meet the needs of diverse students (e.g. readable fonts, basic compatibility with assistive technologies, visuals, captions for videos and alternative text for images). • Clarifies unfamiliar language or symbols to enhance understanding. • Provides visual aids such as diagrams, examples, and models to support processing and visualization. • Implements appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. • Facilitates strategic planning by offering checklists for tasks, clear instructions, explicit due dates, and opportunities to pose questions about assignments. 	<p>Designs instruction that actively anticipates diverse needs and integrates accessibility as a core component of the learning experience. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers multiple forms of engagement allowing students to choose between modalities (e.g., video, text, audio). • Provides tools and resources to help students clarify unfamiliar language or symbols independently (e.g., vocabulary lists, reference sheets). • Utilizes interactive materials and strategies (e.g. graphic organizers, simulations) to enhance processing and visualization. • Includes choice in assessments, offering students various ways to demonstrate their understanding. • Supports organizational skills by providing scaffolds such as calendars, templates, or planning tools. 	<p>Designs instruction that anticipates diverse needs and empowers students to take ownership of their learning, integrating accessibility as a core component of the learning experience. Evidence may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports and encourages self-directed resource selection, providing a variety of materials and a framework for students to identify and evaluate additional reputable resources. • Promotes meaningful use of language or symbols, encouraging students to apply these in their learning. • Empowers reflection and personalization, guiding students to choose and adapt tools, strategies, and materials to meet their unique needs for processing, visualization, and manipulation. • Incorporates reflective and self-assessment opportunities, allowing students to monitor their own work and progress. • Encourages personal planning and goal setting.
	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

OUR COMMON GROUND FOR LIFELONG LEARNING	
<i>Creates a learning community that values respect, integrity, innovation, openness, justice, and responsibility.</i>	<p>Our Common Ground for learning criteria are woven into the rubric in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect – Assessed in Classroom Culture • Integrity – Assessed in Classroom Culture • Innovation – Assessed in Curriculum & Instruction • Openness – Assessed in Classroom Culture & Culturally Responsive Pedagogy • Justice – Assessed in Culturally Responsive Pedagogy • Responsibility – Assessed in Course Structure

SUMMARY

Nominee Name:	
Committee Reviewer Name:	
	Rubric Level
Curriculum	
Instruction	
Course Structure	
Classroom Culture	
Cultural Responsiveness	
Accessibility	