

Student Learning Outcome: Analyze or construct arguments considering their premises, assumptions, contexts, conclusions, and anticipating counterarguments

Criteria	Insufficient (1)	Developing (2)	Competent (3)	Exemplary (4)	Rating
Identify an Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not isolate the argument(s) from extraneous elements in the text Unable to describe issues, evidence and/or reasoning processes in arguments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the argument(s), but includes extraneous elements such as expressions of opinion and descriptions of events Identifies and describes some of the following: premises, assumptions, contexts, evidence, and conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the argument(s) Identifies and describes most of the following: premises, assumptions, contexts, evidence, and conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the argument(s) and clearly distinguishes it from any extraneous expressions of opinion and descriptions of events Clearly identifies and describes premises, assumptions, contexts, evidence, and conclusions 	
Construct an Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not clearly develop a premise, conclusion or point of view No supporting reasoning or evidence is presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a premise, conclusion or point of view Does not organize the evidence or reasons in a logically adequate way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops an argument in which the conclusion is supported by its premises using evidence and logical reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a persuasive argument in which the conclusion is supported by its premises, using evidence and logical reasoning 	
Analyze an Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not deconstruct an argument into component parts Fails to identify constraints and counterarguments No use of evidence or reason in support of a claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially deconstructs an argument into component parts Identifies some constraints or counterarguments Identifies evidence and reasons in support of a claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deconstructs an argument into component parts Identifies constraints and counterarguments Incorporates evidence and reason in support of a claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deconstructs an argument into component parts and assesses the relevance and scope of those parts Utilizes constraints and counterarguments, as appropriate Prioritizes evidence and reasons in support of a claim 	
Evaluate an Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to assess whether the argument's premises are unacceptable, irrelevant, or insufficient for its conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to consistently determine validity or strength of an argument Incomplete assessment of the credibility of the premises, including the quality of evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses whether the argument's conclusion is sufficiently supported by its premises Assesses the credibility of the premises, including the quality of evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and judges between competing mutually valid arguments Offers an original relevant interpretation based on assessment of argument's premises, assumptions, context, conclusions, and counterarguments 	
Average Rating					



Benchmark: 70% of students will achieve a rubric score of Competent (3) or higher.

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Essential Element – Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is essential to the success of every RIT student, and as such, every general education course must be aligned to least one of the four associated Critical Thinking student learning outcomes. In this context, critical thinking is understood as the ability to gather and evaluate information in order to develop an opinion, solve a problem, and reach reliable conclusions or effective solutions.

Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be used across multiple disciplines and course structures (lectures, laboratories, capstone seminars) as the ability to analyze or construct arguments is seen as an essential component of critical thinking across all disciplines. The rubric is intended to assess student artifacts in a variety of assignments including, but not limited to, essays, case studies, and debates, given that the student has the opportunity to complete an analysis of text, data, or issues. The ability of a student to analyze or construct an argument, while considering the weight of the facts, context, assumptions, and conclusions is the focus of this outcome and rubric.

Assignment Design /Evaluation of Student Learning

When applying this rubric to student work, faculty can evaluate students' ability to either analyze **or** construct and argument, **or** both. When calculating the overall rubric rating, include only the average of all appropriate criteria.

Glossary of Key Terms

- Argument:** the development of a clear, reasonable, and logical claim based on evidence
- Premise:** an idea or theory on which a statement or action is based
- Assumptions:** ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are taken for granted or accepted as true without proof (AACU Value Rubric)
- Contexts:** the historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events (AACU Value Rubric)