

# Criterion Referencing in GEFP: Practice, Review, and Vision

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Criterion-referenced assessment means to measure students' performance against a prescribed set of criteria and standards, which are made known to students well in advance and are the sole considerations in grading. The grades so awarded are not subject to grade-distribution adjustment.

How is criterion-referencing implemented in GEFP? Has it served to reveal achievements in teaching and learning, and inform future improvement? What have been the difficulties encountered and how can they be addressed? What does a first round of interviews with teachers and students tell us?

## Mission

To develop grade descriptors and grading rubrics that will:

1. align with the ILOs of the GEF courses
2. enhance students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses so as to promote active learning; and teachers' insights on the effectiveness of teaching and learning
3. provide evidence to review the ILOs

## Alignment

UGE's goals and objectives

ILOs of GEFP

ILOs of UGEx

## Design and Implementation

ILOs

Overall grade descriptors

Grading rubrics

Grading

## Recommendations

- a) For courses with multiple sections, teachers of the same course should adopt *the same set of mark ranges*. Otherwise, students taking the same course and getting the same grades in all components might end up getting different final grades.
- b) The grade descriptors are not sufficient to reflect student performance in the course. The complete grading rubric of individual assessment components should be released to students to understand what goals to achieve and where they do well or poorly.

## Findings from interviews with GEFP teachers & students

One-on-one interviews were conducted with 7 teachers and 8 students (except for a focus group of 3 students).

### Alignment

All teachers could describe the nature and use of ILOs, grade descriptors and grading rubrics when considered independently, but did not clearly explain how the three work together to provide the criteria of assessment.

### Use of Rubrics

All teachers found the rubrics helpful to identify differences in student performance. Yet they also adopted strategies to add personal touches to the set of common criteria and standards. They adapted the rubrics by combining, removing, or freely interpreting certain items.

### Enhancement of learning

Six students became more aware of their performance. Two thought they could learn more about their strengths and weaknesses by reading the rubrics. Active learners seemed to have learned more from the rubrics.