

# Incorporating VALUE Rubrics into Assignment Design in a Professional Nursing Course

Diane R. Smith  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Alice Pulvermacher  
University of Wisconsin System


Matthew Mayeshiba  
University of Wisconsin System



- Non-term, direct assessment, competency-based program
- Inter-institutional partnership led by UW-Extension on behalf of UW System and in collaboration with several UW campuses including UW-Milwaukee
- Nursing (RN to BSN) program allows professional nurses from throughout the state of Wisconsin to pursue a baccalaureate degree in a format uniquely tailored to their time commitments and learning pace

## Critical Thinking and the Professional Nurse

- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) maintains separate but related definitions of critical thinking and clinical judgment
- These definitions are, in turn, related to the definition of critical thinking defined in the AAC&U VALUE rubrics
- AACN acknowledges the importance of a liberal education as defined by AAC&U

 American Association of Colleges of Nursing

**Critical Thinking**

All or part of the process of questioning, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, inference, inductive and deductive reasoning, intuition, application and creativity. Critical thinking underlies independent and interdependent decision making.

**Clinical Judgment**

The outcomes of critical thinking in nursing practice. Clinical judgments begin with an end in mind. Judgments are about evidence, meaning, and outcomes achieved.

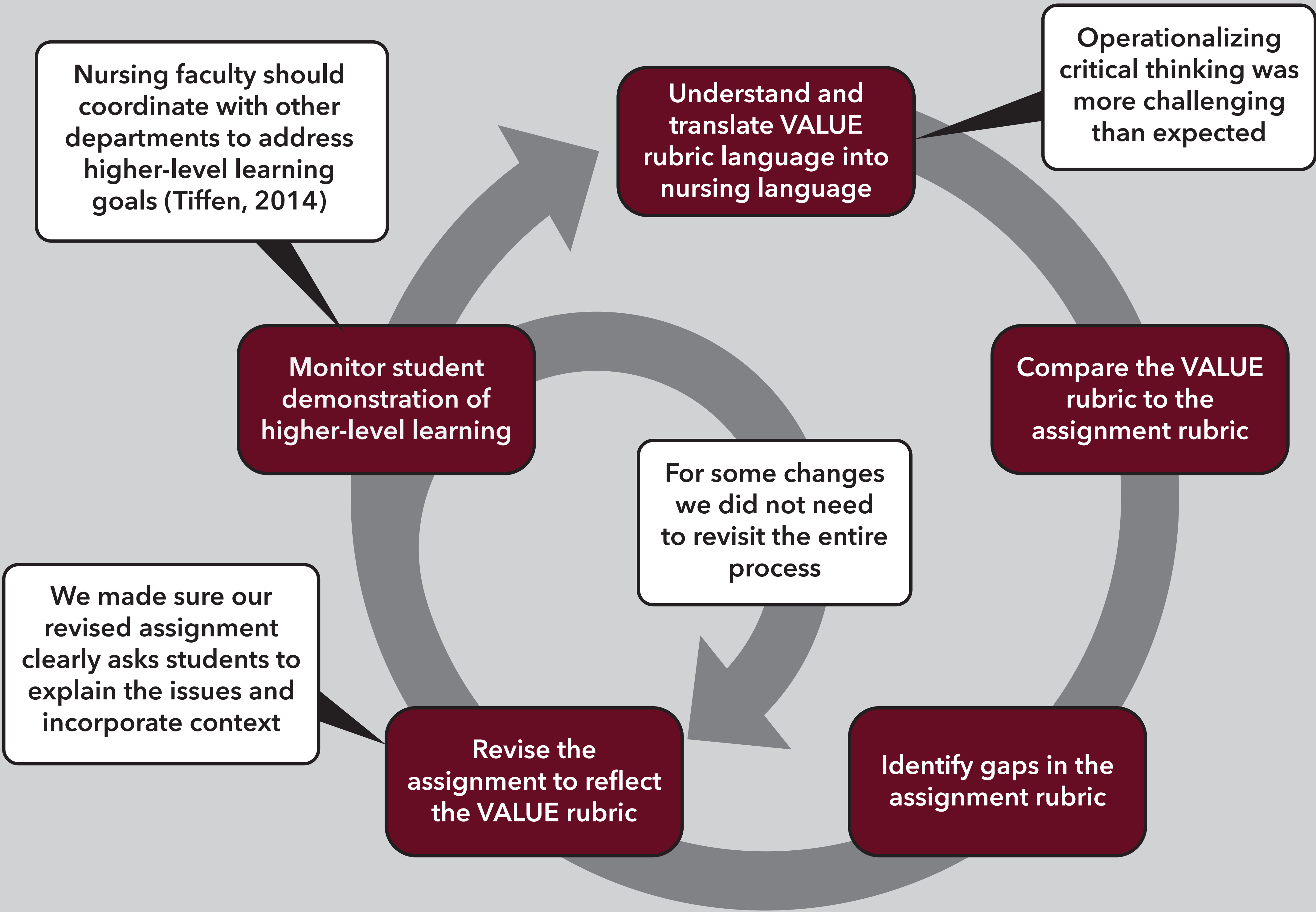
**Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

The dimensions of critical thinking are: explanation, evidence, context and assumptions, student's position, and conclusions and outcomes.



## Assignment Revision Cycle



## Discussion

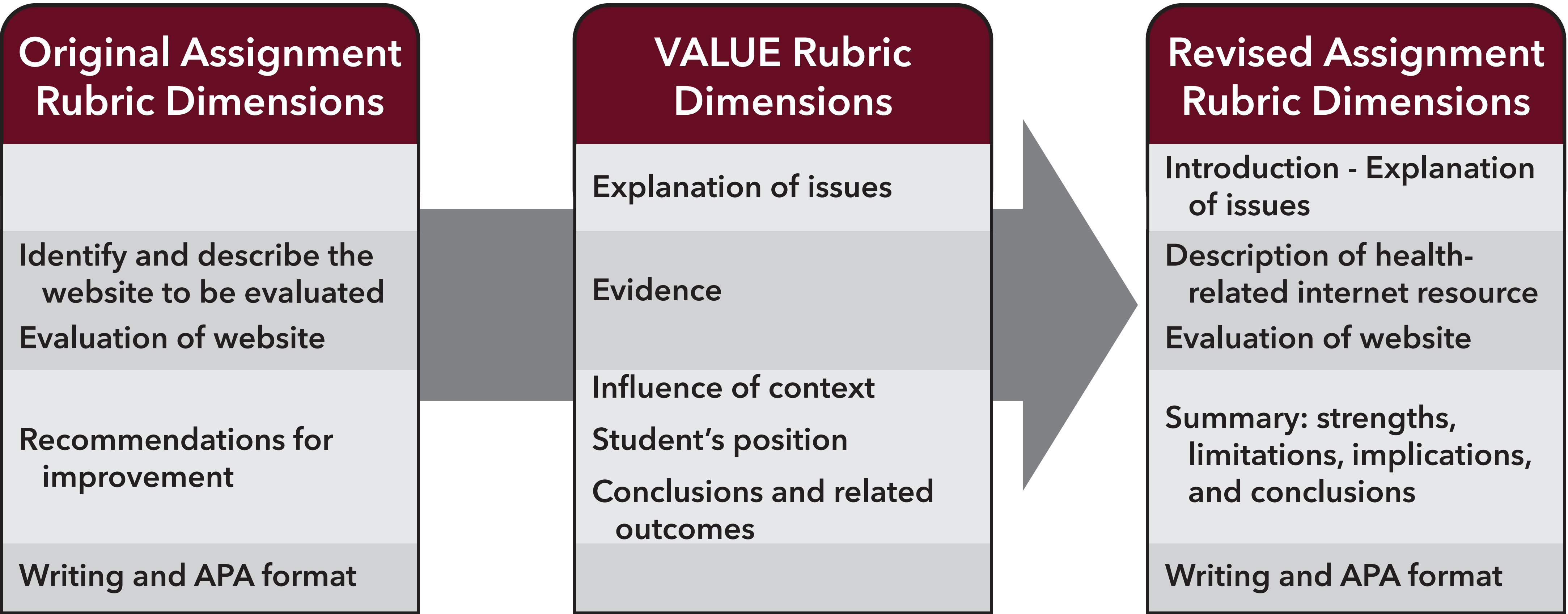
- Using the critical thinking VALUE rubric...
- Emphasizes the importance of developing critical thinking and clinical decision-making skills among UW Flexible Option nursing students
  - Enables the creation of more focused and explicit assignment prompts, providing students with a better opportunity to demonstrate higher-level learning outcomes
  - Provides a concrete definition of critical thinking that gives faculty a focal point for continuous refinement and improvement

## Conclusion

While the nursing discipline has emphasized critical thinking as an essential nursing skill for more than 50 years (Benner, 2008), the VALUE rubric provides a practical scaffolding upon which to define and build those skills.

## Evolution of the Assignment Rubric

*In this assignment, students evaluate a health-related website. During the revision process, the assignment rubric added dimensions and became more precisely defined based on the VALUE rubric.*



## Resources

- University of Wisconsin (UW) Flexible Option <http://flex.wiscnsin.edu>
- Lumina Grant for the Study of the UW Flexible Option <http://ce.uwex.edu/cbe-case-study>
- National Research Center for Distance Education and Technological Advancements (DETA Center) <http://uwm.edu/deta>
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing - Essentials for Baccalaureate Education <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education-resources/essential-series>
- AAC&U Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) Rubric Development Project <https://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics>

## References

- Benner, P., Hughes, R. G., & Sutphen, M. (2008). Clinical Reasoning, Decisionmaking, and Action: Thinking Critically and Clinically. In R. Hughes (Author), *Patient safety and quality: An evidence-based handbook for nurses*. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.
- Tiffen, J., Corbridge, S. J., & Slimmer, L. (2014). Enhancing clinical decision making: development of a contiguous definition and conceptual framework. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 30(5), 399-405.