Mapping RSD-informed marking criteria to USP Graduate Outcomes in undergraduate courses

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Introduction

- Implementation of the Research Skills Development (RSD) framework commenced under the Strategic Total Academic Review (STAR) process in 2012.

- STAR Working Group 5 had highlighted overlap of the RSD framework with the 7 USP Graduate Outcomes to SMT in 2011.

- Now 5 years into implementation, there are **78 known undergraduate level courses** using RSD informed marking criteria.

- In 2017, the criteria for USP Graduate Outcomes have also been revised to ensure clarity and consistency in language, developmental progression across the undergraduate levels and feasibility of being assessed.

  - **Therefore an opportune time to look at explicit mapping of RSD informed criteria to USP graduate outcomes.**

Research Question

Can RSD informed marking rubrics also assess the revised criteria of USP Graduate Outcomes?
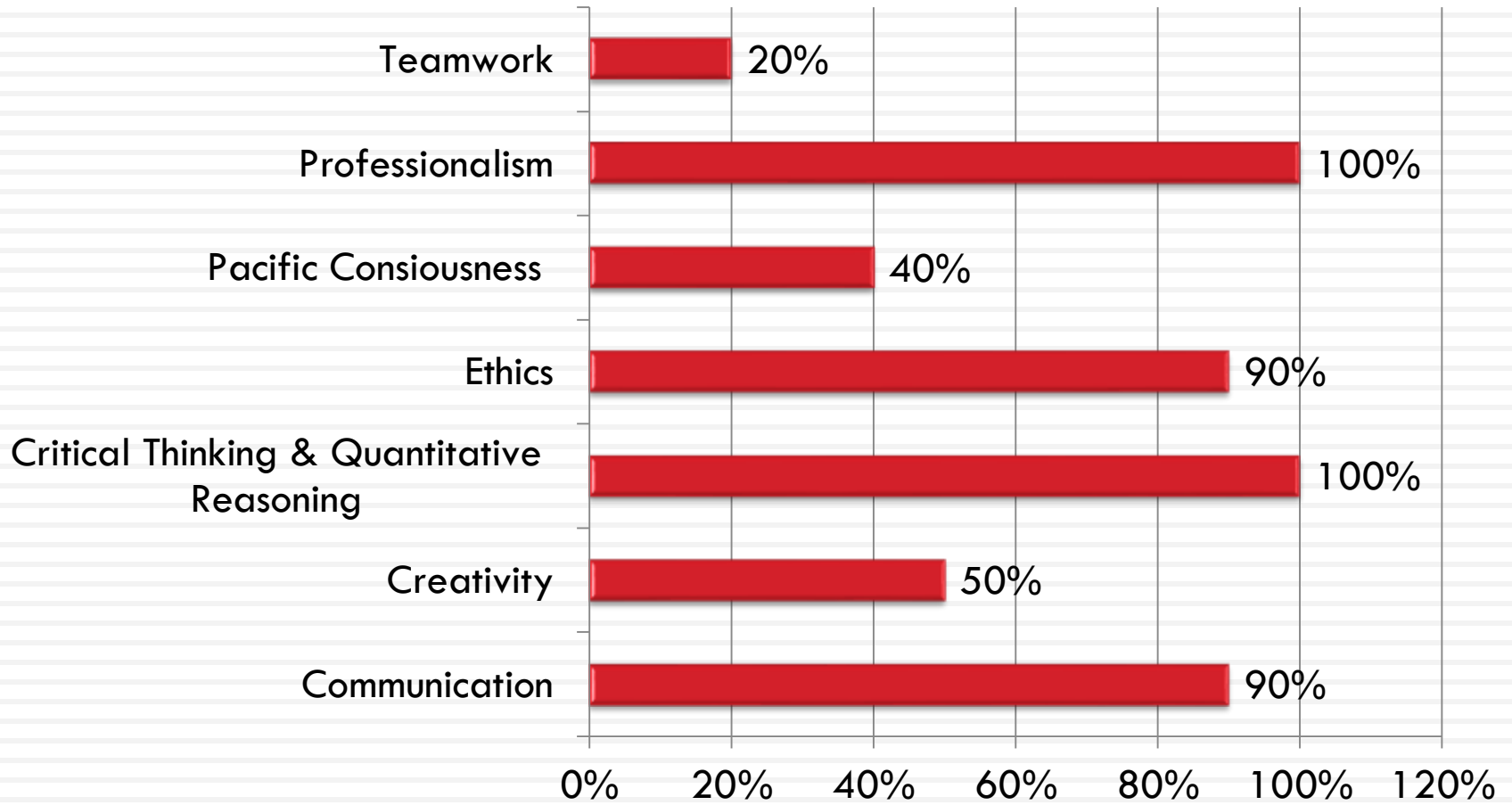
Methods

- Qualitative Content Analysis - conceptualize the process of assigning categories to text passages as a qualitative-interpretive act, following content-analytical rules.

- A descriptive design was adopted and the criteria for each of the seven USP GOs were used as the coding categories.

- RSD-informed rubrics were then mapped for the appropriate level i.e. benchmark, milestone and capstone in the GO rubric.

- We looked for **explicit description** of the GO criteria and sub-criteria in the rubrics.

- Out of 48 RSD informed rubrics 10 rubrics were selected for the study:
  - A stratified sampling technique was used to randomly select two RSD informed rubrics from each faculty
  - The four compulsory undergraduate courses (UU100, UU114, UU200, and UU204) were also included in the sample.
  - The sample consisted of a great diversity of assessment types.

Results

Percentage of selected RSD-informed marking rubrics assessing each GO

Category	Percentage
Teamwork	20%
Professionalism	100%
Pacific Consiousness	40%
Ethics	90%
Critical Thinking & Quantitative Reasoning	100%
Creativity	50%
Communication	90%

Assessment of sub-criteria

GO (*N*)	Sub-criteria not covered	n rubrics
Communication (9)	1. Context and Audience	1
	3. Clarity of Expression and Coherence	1
	4. Presentation and Appropriate use of ICT	2
Creativity (5)	1. Formulation of new approaches or methods of inquiry.	1
Critical thinking & quantitative reasoning (10)	4. Quantitative reasoning	5
Pacific Consciousness (4)	1. Respect of cultural heritage and diversity of Pacific societies	1
	3. Integration of traditional and contemporary practices to sustain Pacific societies.	2

Pacific Consciousness: ED255 - Essay

Graduates will recognise the cultural heritage and diversity of Pacific Societies for sustainable development in a contemporary environment.

- **Respect for Cultural Heritage and diversity of Pacific societies.**

"Well-grounded in Pacific/ home country context". **Embark and Clarify**

- **Relationship between one's culture and one's position in the world.**

"Reasoned personal standpoints in summarizing information." **Analyse and Synthesize**

[Differentiate the Progressivist and Reconstructionist Philosophical perspectives. Describe your personal philosophical perspective of Curriculum Development stating your reasons]

- **Integration of traditional and contemporary practices to sustain Pacific Societies.**

"High level data analysis and critical reflection identifying strengths and weaknesses. "

"Comprehensive recommendations. Presents new knowledge/ ideas.".

Evaluate and Reflect

[Describe two Curriculum Development Models and explain their impacts on Curriculum Development in your country.]

Creativity

Graduates will extend boundaries of current knowledge in a particular discipline or profession.

Course 'UU200 Ethics and Governance': **Cartoon Analysis**

Assignment questions were:

1. To analyse the given cartoon using the theory of anthropocentricism and biocentrism.

2. How can the cartoon be related to global governance?

Criterion 1: Formulation of new approaches or methods of inquiry.

This criteria is reflected in how the cartoon is read and interpreted

Criterion 2: Innovative application of knowledge and skills in an entrepreneurial context where appropriate.

- *Analysis of cartoon using anthropocentrism and biocentrism* 'Provides original, insightful information on all three theoretical perspectives' **FACET Analyse and Synthesize**

- 'Link to global governance original, insightful' **FACET Evaluate & Reflect**

Critical Thinking and Quantitative Reasoning

Graduates will be able to evaluate multiple perspectives and arrive at a reasonable independent judgement based on evidence.

Course 'UU114 English for Academic Purposes': **Research report**

Criterion 1: Information literacy Most RSD facets cover this.

'Coverage of terms of references' (Embark & Clarify), 'Methodolgy and data collection' (Find & Generate), 'Conclusions' (Evaluate & Reflect), 'Format' 'Presentation of Results' (Organise and Manage), 'Discussion of Results' (Analyse & Synthesize), 'Recommendations' (Communicate & Apply)

Criterion 2: Management of multiple perspectives

'Discussion of Results' (Analyse & Synthesize), 'Recommendations' (Communicate & Apply)

Criterion 3: Judgement based on evidence 'Conclusions' (Evaluate & Reflect)

Criterion 4: Quantitative reasoning 'Wide range of appropriate data' (Find & Generate), '….data effectively integrated into text' (Organise and Manage), 'Accurate interpretation of data' Analyse & Synthesize

Ethics

Graduates will demonstrate a commitment to high ethical standards in scholarly, professional and socio-cultural practices.

Course 'CH203 Physical Chemistry': **Laboratory report**

Ethics criteria: Recognition of ethical principals and practices

'Use of credible reference and sources' (Evaluate & Reflect)

'Calculation of errors (in data)' (Evaluate & Reflect)

'Proper log book for….. results and… calculations' (Organise & Manage)

Teamwork

Graduates will work together in a respectful and collaborative manner to complete tasks within teams to achieve an outcome.

Course 'UU204 Pacific Worlds': **Letter to the Navigator & Vaka crew**

Criterion: Effective performance in teams

'One response to a Vaka mate to be posted on Moodle Forum with reference to Unit 1 themes for full marks' Communicate & Apply

Communication: AF101- Business Report

Graduates will be able to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively in structured formats using other language and modes of communication that are appropriate for context, audience and specific disciplinary conventions.

- **Context and Audience**

"Cites appropriate concepts from relevant references, fully integrated into the text with a sound mix of direct and indirect quotations. Quotations support arguments. Citations are totally accurate. Bibliography complete and accurate following APA style." **Find and Generate**

- **Structure**

"Clear & appropriate subheadings with well-structured paragraphs ..." **Analyse and synthesise**

Communication: AF101- Business Report

- **Clarity of Expression and Coherence**

"Sentences contain no errors and are diverse and sophisticated. Style is concise and professional. **Analyse and Synthesise**

The report has clearly been edited…". "The points being made are clear and convincing for the reader throughout." **Communicate and Apply Ethically**

- **Presentation and Appropriate use of ICT**

"….appropriate filename and clearly indicated on hardcopy. There is no similarity percentage detected". **Communicate and Apply ethically**

Professionalism: PH206 – Laboratory Report

Graduates will demonstrate the ability to carry out tasks to acceptable standards within their professions and occupations.

- **Professional Practice**

"The data recorded were sufficient and accurate within the accuracy of instrument and consistent in no. of significant figures." **Find and Generate**

Data verification is well done. Specified and justified providing realistic sources and range of errors. **Evaluate and Reflect**

Limitations & Implications

- Due to time constraints we did not have access to the assignment questions for all courses.

- We had only two assessors; having a third assessor would have insured greater accuracy of assessment in situations where we disagreed on a classification.

- Due to time constraints we could not purposefully identify and analyse courses that would be assessing GO's that weren't covered well within the sample.

Conclusions

- The selected RSD informed rubrics can be used to assess the revised USP GOs.

- Some GO's (Communication, Critical Thinking, Ethics & Professionalism) were covered very well across the selected RSD informed rubrics.

- Although Critical Thinking was covered by all the 10 RSD informed rubrics, half of these did not cover quantitative reasoning.

- Teamwork (20%) and Pacific Consciousness (40%) were not covered well.

- The four rubrics that assessed Pacific Consciousness, only one assessed all three criteria.

- The mapping can be used for definition of marking criteria to explicitly assess graduate outcomes in courses where there is a gap.

References

□ The University of the South Pacific RSD webpage
www.research.usp.ac.fj/rsd 'RSD Resources'