"Using Technology for Evaluation and Assessment" by George E. Steele, 2015

The McTighe and Wiggins' model that Steele uses has three distinct stages: stage one is about desired results and encompasses what students should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of a course; stage two is about identifying how we know when students have achieved the desired results; and stage three is focused on planning the semester's activity in ways that address the transfer of learning, meaning making, and acquisition. This whole system is an advising-as-teaching approach, so that is my connection with it.

McTighe and Wiggins have what they refer to as the "taxonomy of terms." They seek to move from simple to more complex functioning through a series of steps: we begin with the simplest, Interpretation, then move to a step up from this with Application, after which follows a Demonstration of Perspective, then a Display of Empathy, and then a final step toward Self-Knowledge. So, in relation to what my THE 130 Script Analysis students learn in a semester, we use a textbook, Cal Pritner and Scott Walters, *Introduction to Play Analysis* (2nd edition), that follows this same sort of build. Students begin to learn the more simple analytical tools involved in script analysis. We first examine questions such as:

- What is the play's story?
- Where and how did you learn the story?
- Where and when is the play set?
- What references may require research?
- Who are the characters?
- What is the play's overall mood?

After establishing these basic investigative tools of script analysis, we build to a final stage of synthesizing many more dramatic elements such that students comprehend the journey we have traveled toward a guaranteed level of self-knowledge in relation to the plays we study.

The article next refers to a student use of online self-assessment tools. What might help with my THE 130 course that I have never tried before is a section-by-section self-assessment recognition check-in. I could set up an electronic way to check in at the completion of each new section on how students may or may not have absorbed our terms, Pritner and Walters' section questions, and general levels of interpretive skills.

McTighe and Wiggins also encourage teachers to think first like assessors before they design course activities such that these plans are all a means to an end. In other words, if we start with a desired end in sight in terms of students' cognition, mastery of concepts, and behavior in classroom discussion, this allows us to build course assignments toward that desired end.

Steele discusses three categories of technology: service, engagement, and learning. Each of these categories addresses different student needs. Within the service category, we might use student information systems, such as Blackboard. Under the

engagement category, students can plug into social media, more static websites, and other electronic communication tools such as blogs or online group discussions. When it comes to the learning category, resources such as e-Portfolios, interactive video conferencing, and learning management systems (LMS) are useful. These technologies provide means to digitally evaluate content mastery skills, project production, submitted plans, and reflection on a topic.

The portion of Steele's article that I definitely appreciate is the one that provides an example rubric. Granted, this example is meant to cover both skills learned in the classroom and measure standards in each of these skill sets as well as move beyond these more classroom-oriented concepts to ones that specify advising practices and evaluation tools for student advising that advance them to more elevated levels of self-knowledge and career enlightenment. For my own purposes, what is most helpful specifically in relation to my THE 130 Script Analysis course are the first three assessment categories: 'Content & Development,' 'Format, Organization & Structure,' and 'Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling.'

When I began teaching at MSU a decade ago, I assumed that students entering college would already have advanced to the "Exceeding" level of understanding with what felt to me like remedial writing and analysis skills, but what I have learned over the last decade is that not all students come from such educational privilege, so perhaps handing them a rubric such as this one where the specific levels of beginning, approaching, meeting, and exceeding would essentially translate to the corresponding grades D, C, B, and A with very clear details about what students need to shoot for when they turn in their assignments. When I read over these rubric categories and levels, I find myself thinking, "Gosh, these are all such basic skills about how to make a persuasive argument." And yet, students who come to MSU do not often usually begin here with what I feel are obvious ways to respond to written, visual, or auditory educational materials. I need to remember that not many MSU students grew up with my same educational privilege: my father continues to be a professor of English at a quite wealthy private small college on the east coast well into his seventies. The writing challenges he faces at this point have more to do with international students for whom English is not their first language.

At any rate, I feel that handing out a sheet such as this sample rubric in order to identify for students who have not experienced education privileges prior to attending MSU may help alleviate the questions I get after assignments are graded when my students, particularly the Honors College ones, complain about the grades they have received. They have asked me for rubrics, and I am not really a rubric person, but for students who need more obvious navigation tools through academic work, this sort of rudimentary rubric at least spells out for them what I expect and, in hindsight, have largely taken for granted as knowledge gained prior to college. I am still mildly horrified when we graduate C students who seem to lack basic writing skills after four or five years of college-level study, but I realize that my own English professor grilling on papers and other assignments as I grew up is not something that these MSU students enjoyed. First-generation students in particular

are people who did not grow up in households with parents and siblings who spoke with correct grammar and dinnertime conversations that discussed analytical ways of thinking, whereas my own two parents, both PhDs, set the discussion bar a lot higher.