

## Mason Core Rubric for Evaluating Student Work in Social and Behavioral Sciences Courses

This rubric was developed by a team of faculty experts to evaluate student work for the Mason Core learning outcomes in Social and Behavioral Sciences. For more information about the learning outcomes and approved courses, <https://masoncore.gmu.edu/social-and-behavioral-sciences/>

**How to use this rubric:** This rubric is designed to evaluate student performance on three learning outcomes, with four increasingly sophisticated performance descriptors for each outcome. This rubric can be used with many types of written work. Most student work will not show evidence of all outcomes; in this case, an additional category for “no evidence” should be made available.

**Glossary:**

**Context/Contextual Factors**—Context refers to the immediate physical and *social* setting in which people live or in which something happens or develops. Context can influence how an individual perceives a phenomenon. Contextual factors influence human attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Contextual factors might include social, organizational, political, economic, historical, cultural, or environmental conditions.

**Social and Cultural Constructs**—A construct is an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society, and informs values, beliefs, behaviors, and practices. A construct is not inherently “natural” but is created by society and may be considered as natural by that society. Constructs are different across societies; what is the norm in one society may not be the norm elsewhere. Examples: gender, class distinctions, government.

Student Learning Outcomes	Level of Performance			
	Capstone	Advanced Milestone	Emerging Milestone	Benchmark
Contextual Factors	Analyze the connections between contextual factors and their combined influence on individuals, groups, or institutions	Draw connections between contextual factors and their influence on individuals, groups, or institutions	Explain contextual factors that influence individuals, groups, or institutions	Recognize/identify contextual factors that influence individuals, groups, or institutions
Social and Cultural constructs	Analyze changes/variations in social or cultural constructs and how those changes inform values, beliefs, behaviors, and practices using disciplinary theory, concepts, and/or evidence	Describe changes/variations in social or cultural constructs and how those changes inform values, beliefs, behaviors, and practices	Identify ways in which social or cultural constructs inform values, beliefs, behaviors, and practices	Identify cultural or social constructs within social sciences
Theories, Methods, Concepts	Apply social science theories, methods or concepts to provide a complex, sophisticated analysis of human issues	Apply relevant theories, methods, or concepts to explain human issues	Define and describe theories, methods or concepts in the social & behavioral sciences	Recognize/identify theories, methods or concepts in the social & behavioral sciences