

# The imagined 'global thinker' and the rubric

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## **Abstract:**

The imagined 'global thinker' in many cultures is inherently value-laden. Broadening and expanding one's global thinking by emphasis on curricular reform and pedagogy and particularly in higher education suggests two very interesting developments. First, there is increasing interest in joint degrees, the establishment of the New Humanities, and the notion that a student's heightened sense of self-worth, competition for jobs, and employability is at stake. Secondly, there is the notion that there may be a cultural lens overlaying the way we approach teaching, learning, and research, suggesting that 'global' may be confined to a particular worldview. In an attempt to track and map the 'global thinker', regardless of definition, there are many challenges to overcome, many of which include the ambiguity of lateral thinking, the perceived erosion of learning content over delivery, and the realisation of its 'imaginative' potential and applicability.

While the curriculum generally specifies what students are expected to learn and requirements for graduation through accreditation and quality control standards set by the disciplines, universities are increasingly under pressure to professionalise their degrees to conform to what students and industry demand. At the same time, higher education institutions are increasingly monitoring offerings, not by the quality of content but by the quantity of enrollees. Their emphasis increasingly is on financial viability and immediate employability of graduates. All of these developments undermine an historic regimen that promotes the development of the 'global thinker'.

This discussion identifies and analyses the tensions between the core activities of universities, namely teaching and research, and the development of the imagined 'global thinker'. It also considers the feasibility of tracking a student's academic progress through the use of an online rubric that is custom-tailored to visually demonstrate one's mastery of creativity and innovation, deep thinking, assessment for learning, and critical and problem solving skills.

**Key words:** higher education, global thinker, rubric, comparative and international education