

Heather Schilling  
EDTEC 685  
Applied Informatics Project  
July 16, 2006

## Standards-Driven Teaching: Designing an rGrade Course

### Needs/Goals

Much like K-12 public schools, higher education programs preparing teachers must also meet specific standards in order to meet accreditation. Instead of No Child Left Behind, policy established by NCATE, or National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education, requires programs training teachers to demonstrate adequate student achievement in 10 specific areas or INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) principles. These include broad categories such as the second standard that states “the teacher understands how children learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development” or the seventh standard that states “the teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.” These are then developed into more specific standards that fall into three categories: knowledge, dispositions, and performances.

Because my career as an education professor at Manchester College involves teaching pre-service teachers and because the Manchester College Education department is accredited through NCATE, I must not only prepare my students to teach in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but I must also create courses that have standards-based assignments. While we have always passed the NCATE visits, the people in charge of collecting, analyzing, and presenting the data have always had an extremely difficult challenge. Until the advent of computer-based programs like rGrade, we had to demonstrate by hand that our students had mastered the ten INTASC principles. This has included creating matrices and calculating the percentage of students achieving various levels of the standards. During our past visit, we hired the former director of teacher education who spent hours disaggregating the data. This antiquated system must change before the next NCATE visit in 2011, especially with the paperless requirement the NCATE team will ask of us.

While our education department has not adopted rGrade, we have adopted a similar program called Taskstream. However, at this point, we have not fully implemented the program and I do not have coordinator status. As a result, I was unable to create my course for this project using the system I will be using in the fall. Instead, I have created my course using Ball State’s rGrade; this gives me a good understanding of how to create lessons and units based on specific standards-based rubrics. By using a program such as rGrade for this final project, I will achieve one of my biggest teaching goals: implement a standards-based, computer-generated assessment program that will allow me to track the individual and group achievements of my students. Another goal I have for this project is to familiarize myself with rGrade in such a way that I will be able to articulate the benefits of using a computer-generated assessment program like rGrade or Taskstream to my colleagues who seem to be skeptical of such programs.

## Alignment and Support for NETS and other related curricular or professional standards (INTASC)

This project feeds excellently into alignment with NETS as well as INTASC principles because these are the standards that drive our education program. While our program has always been based on these specific INTASC standards, I have just recently begun to incorporate the NETS standards as well, for I believe all teachers should be ready to teach in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that requires them to have 21<sup>st</sup> century skills developed and ready to implement in their own classrooms.

For example, one of the Assignment Groups is “Projects,” and within this group is the assignment “Professional Web Page.” This particular assignment asks students enrolled in this course to develop a professional web page that serves as a showcase for their work during their tenure at Manchester College. The immediate purpose is to serve as a portfolio they can provide to prospective employers. Obviously, because of the nature of the project, students meet several NETS standards. First of all, students meet the first standard, “teachers demonstrate introductory knowledge, skills, and understanding of concepts related to technology,” when they create this web page. Completing the project requires them to demonstrate basic knowledge of how to use the computer as well as the Microsoft Frontpage software. The professional portfolio also meets the fifth NETS standard as they are developing ways to “use technology to communicate and collaborate with peers, parents, and the larger community in order to nurture student learning.” The ultimate goal of this particular assignment is to help students develop crucial skills that will enable them to develop classroom web pages in order to communicate with the greater community.

The best assignment to meet required INTASC standards is the lesson plan found under the “Projects” Assignment Group. Throughout the semester, students are asked to write ten sequential lesson plans each modified for a different exceptionality. The lesson plans are graded individually, but when placed together, they create a unit for the pre-service teacher who will be entering his/her student teaching placement in the spring. This one assignment alone meets eight different INTASC standards because the student is asked to design a lesson plan that gives special regard to differences in learners.

Overall, this project in general meets several standards for me as the instructor. I am linking every assignment to INTASC principles and NETS standards when appropriate. At this point, I am just beginning to add NETS standards to my lessons, but ultimately, I would like to integrate even more assignments that utilize a variety of technology. Making deliberate decisions about which standards are being met requires me to reflect not only on the purpose of the assignment, but on the specific steps and requirements within each assignment. Instead of simply making an assignment because it sounds “cool” or is meaningful to me as a professor, I must make sure, like K-12 classroom teachers, that what I ask of my students meets a standard.

## Barriers and Opportunities for Implementation

One of the major barriers at this point for me to fully implement this project is the incompatibility between the rGrade program used by Ball State and the Taskstream program my department has adopted. I will have to redo all of my rubrics and assignments; however, I certainly do not see this as a huge barrier. Instead, I will have worked through the problems

encountered in this assignment and understand what I need to ask for and examine when I transfer the course to the Taskstream program.

Another barrier I found to the implementation of this project is that it lacks some of the benefits of Blackboard, and yet, it provides an important element of teaching that Blackboard lacks. The course appears in linear fashion, much more linear than Blackboard, and therefore appears to students as simply a “grade book,” not a course through which the professor and students can interact.

However, the major benefit to this project far outweighs any of the barriers I can foresee. Through this project I have had to create my course EDUC 352, Adolescent Exceptional Learners, in an assessment program rGrade. As previously mentioned, I had to think carefully about what I want my students to do for each assignment, creating a rubric that will measure those objectives. I also had to carefully consider the various INTASC and NETS standards that would be appropriate for seniors ready to enter student teaching.

In the end, I would consider this project one of the most beneficial and meaningful I have completed in three years of coursework at Ball State. It is something I will certainly use this fall when I teach EDUC 352 and more importantly, it has started me thinking about assessment and how I can use the data I receive from the rubrics to influence my instruction.

Finally, the biggest benefit of creating an rGrade course is the fact that I feel better prepared to address the assessment needs of our own education department at Manchester College. We must bring our department quickly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and that means using an online assessment tool such as rGrade or in our case Taskstream. The challenge will be convincing my colleagues that we should embrace this technology, and while acknowledging its limitations, understand that it will help us understand the data so much easier than we ever have before.

\*\* Attached you will find an annotated sketch of the assignments I have created on rGrade as well as the screen captures from the actual program. Only people who are participants in the class may view the actual rubrics and assignments.

## Educ 352- Adolescent Exceptional Learners - in rGrade

The following assignments fall under several different Assignment Groups including Essays, Projects, and Presentations. Each assignment is explained briefly and contains a screen capture of both the rubric and linked INTASC/NETS standards.

### ESSAYS

Exhibit 1: The first exhibit is the Liberal Arts paper our students are required to write. In Educ 352, the secondary majors reflect on the impact a liberal arts education has on them as future teachers. Students are instructed to write specifically about experiences at Manchester College that has shaped who they are as teachers. This assignment is a portfolio requirement.

### Exhibit 1: Liberal Arts Essay

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**RGRADE\_LiberalArts**

Description Write an essay in which you reflect on the influence of a liberal arts education on your teaching.

Author Heather Schilling

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	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<b>Topic/Subject</b> Paper stays focused on the liberal arts education and its impact on teaching.	Topic/subject is unclear or confusing.	Topic/subject may be vague.	Topic/subject is generally clear though it may not be explicitly stated.	Topic/subject is clear, though it may/may not be explicitly stated.
<b>Organization</b> The organization of the paper is logical and flows.	Organizational structure does not establish connection between/among ideas/events. The overall structure is incomplete or confusing.	Organizational structure establish some relationship between/among some of the ideas/events. The structure is minimally complete.	Organizational structure establish some relationship between/among some of the ideas/events. The structure is minimally complete.	Organizational structure establishes relationship between/among ideas/events.
<b>Content</b> Supporting examples illustrate the impact of a liberal arts education.	An attempt has been made to add support information, but it was unrelated or confusing.	Support information has major weaknesses in relatedness to and/or support of the topic/subject.	Support information has minor weaknesses in relatedness to and/or support of the topic/subject.	Support information is related to and supportive of the topic/subject.
<b>Elaboration</b> Author discusses examples with detail.	Elaboration is sparse; almost no details.	Elaboration consists of general and/or undeveloped details, which may be presented in a list-like fashion.	Elaboration consists of some specific details.	Elaboration consists of specific, developed details.
<b>Fluency</b> Writer's writing flows with collegiate skill.	Sentence fluency is lacking.	Demonstrates minimal sentence fluency.	Demonstrates reasonable sentence fluency.	Demonstrates skillful sentence fluency (varies length, good flow rhythm, and varied structure)

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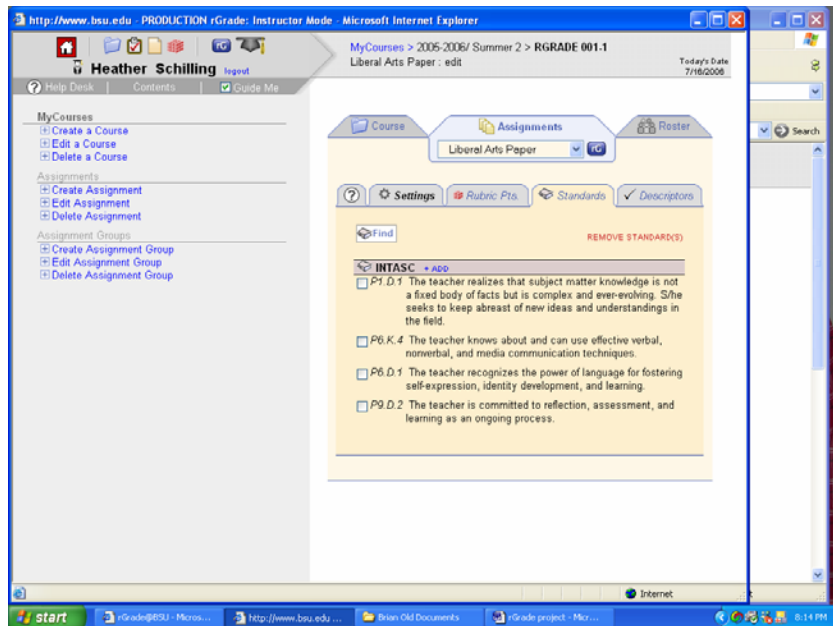


Exhibit 2: The second assignment shown is the Professional Article Evaluation students must do in Educ 352 three times throughout the semester. Students select an article from a list of professional journals that deals with one of the exceptionalities the course examines. This assignment allows them to reflect on different exceptional students they may some day have in their classrooms, and it meets several important INTASC standards, particularly in the 9<sup>th</sup> principle.

## Exhibit 2: Professional Article Evaluation

http://www.bs.u.edu - Printer Friendly Rubric - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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**RGRADE\_Professional Article Evaluation**

Description: Students will choose a professional article dealing with one of the exceptionalities outlined in the

Author: Heather Schilling

Sharing Status: Shared w/ editing

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<b>Organization</b>	Sequence of information is difficult to follow.	Reader has difficulty following work because student jumps around.	Student presents information in logical sequence which reader can follow.	Information in logical, interesting sequence which reader can follow.
<b>Content</b>	Student does not have grasp of content of article reviewed. Student cannot answer questions about subject.	Student is uncomfortable with content of article reviewed and is able to demonstrate basic concepts.	Student is at ease with content of article reviewed, but fails to elaborate.	Student demonstrates full knowledge of content of article reviewed (more than required).
<b>Grammar and Spelling</b>	Work has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors.	Work has three misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Work has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	Work has no misspellings or grammatical errors.
<b>Reference</b>	Work displays no references.	Work does not have the appropriate number of required references.	Reference section was completed incorrectly.	Work displays the correct number of references, written correctly.

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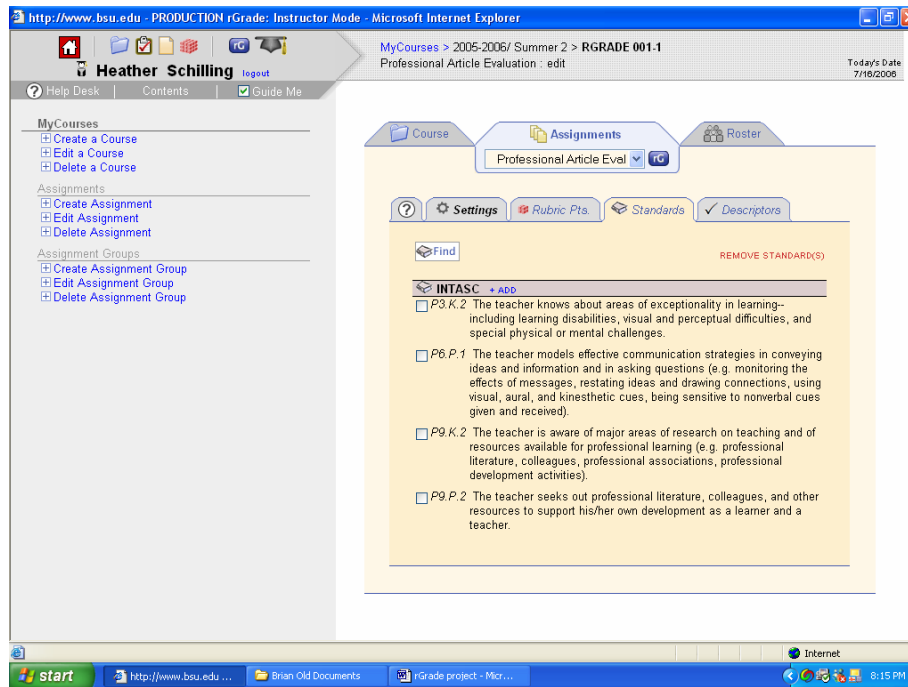
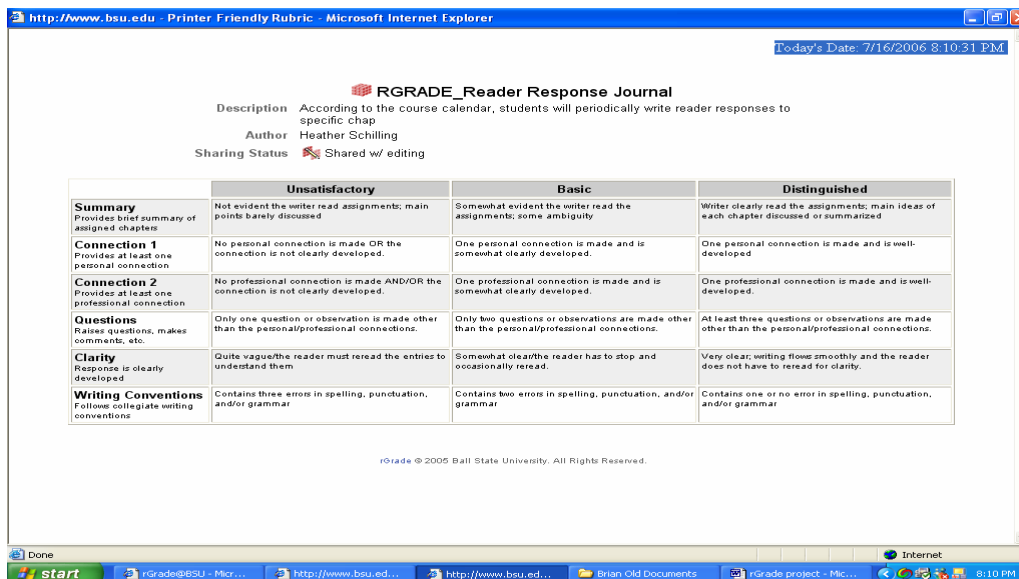
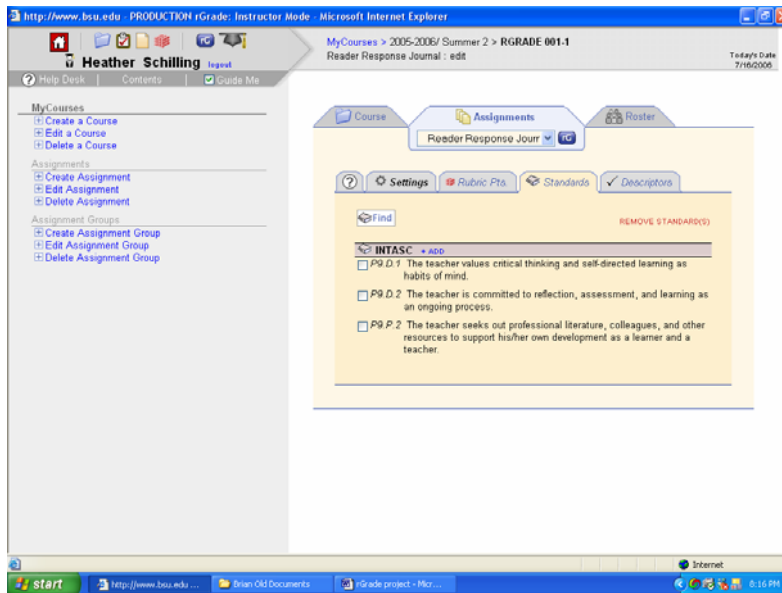


Exhibit 3: The third assignment found in the "Essays" Assignment Group is the Reader Response Journal students are expected to complete. In this assignment, students summarize the readings, make a professional connection, make a personal connection, and make additional comments or raise questions. Because research shows we remember what we read when we connect with the reading, this is an excellent assignment for undergraduates (or anyone for that matter).

### Exhibit 3: Reader Response Journal





## PROJECTS

Throughout the course, students must complete a variety of assignments that fall under the "Projects" Assignment Group. These include creating a professional web page as well as creating a unit.

Exhibit 4: The Professional Web Page assignment requires students to create a web presence in which they can showcase their work.

### Exhibit 4: Professional Web Page

**RGRADE\_Professional Web Page**

Description: Create a professional web page that allows prospective employers to view important work that demonstr

Author: Heather Schilling

Sharing Status: Shared w/ editing

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<b>Layout/Design</b>	The pages are unattractive. Text is difficult to read. The backgrounds are distracting.	The pages appear "busy" or "boring". Text may be difficult to read. The backgrounds are somewhat distracting.	The pages are eye-catching and attractive. Text is easy to read. The backgrounds are subtle and appropriate.	The pages are well organized with tables. Text spacing and alignment make reading easy. The backgrounds enhance the page.
<b>Graphics</b>	There are no photos, icons or clip art or they are inappropriate or of low quality.	Photos are blurry or fuzzy; icons and clip art do not "fit" with the topic. Too many pictures make the download time slow.	Photos, icons, and clip art are appropriate, of high quality, and download fairly quickly.	Photos, icons, and clip art are used creatively and may follow a theme.
<b>Information</b>	Information is poorly written, inaccurate, or incomplete.	Information could be better written and too much information is given in each section.	Information is well written and interesting to read and is presented in short sections.	Information is creatively written and cleverly presented.
<b>Navigation/Links</b>	The user may become lost or links may be missing or not working.	The user may become confused when navigating between pages. Some links may not work.	Links are consistent and easy to find so that the user can easily navigate back and forth through pages.	Links are created with images and icons to enhance the text links.
<b>Spelling/Grammar</b>	There are four or more grammatical and/or spelling errors.	There are three spelling and/or grammatical errors.	There are two spelling and/or grammatical errors.	There is one or no spelling and/or grammatical error.

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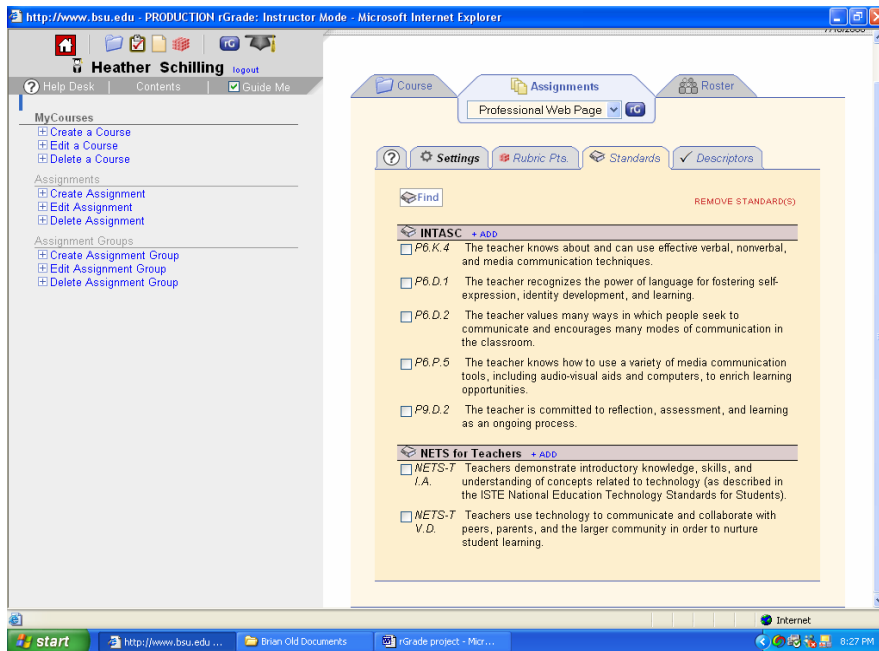


Exhibit 5: Lesson Plan





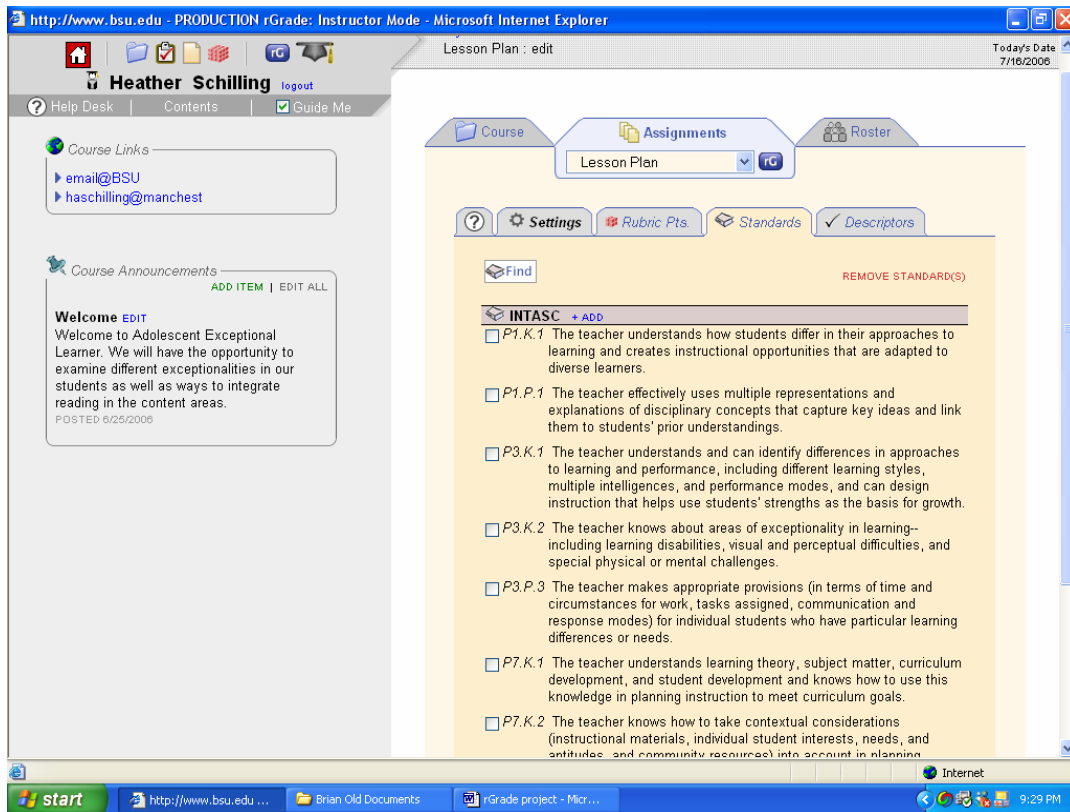
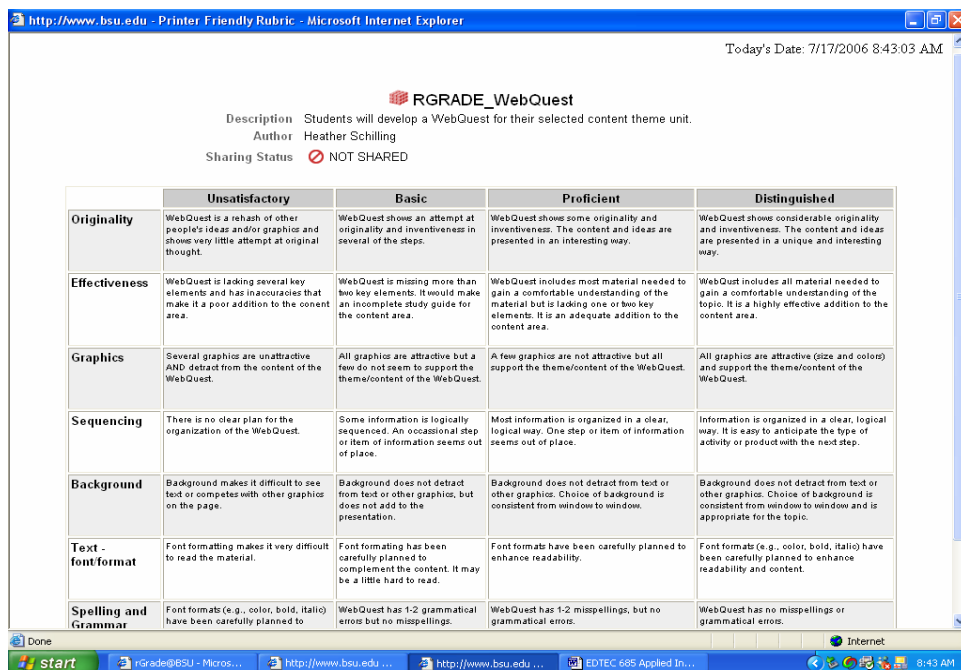
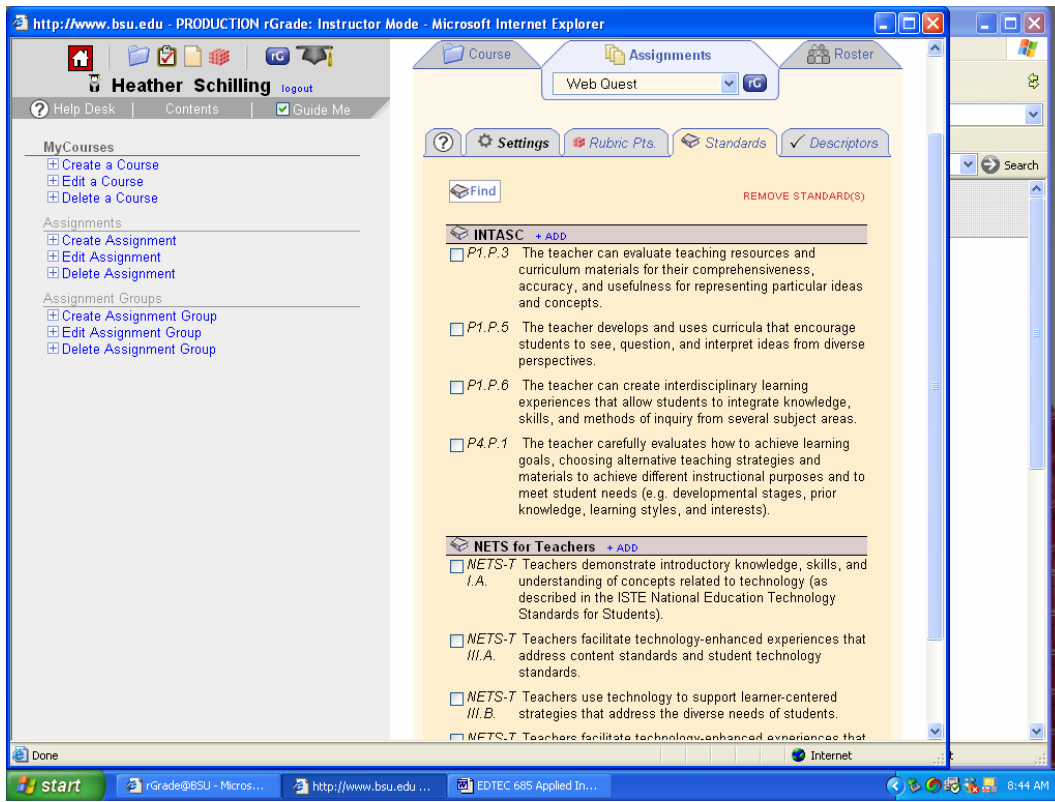


Exhibit 6: Students enrolled in EDUC 352 must create a unit for their student teaching placement. One of the activities they must complete is to create a WebQuest for their students. Once they have created the WebQuest, they must have a junior high or high school student evaluate the project and then they write a reflection on the evaluation.

### Exhibit 6: WebQuest





## PRESENTATIONS

During the course of the semester, students give one presentation to their peers. This presentation is an introduction to one of the exceptionalities such as gifted and talented, vision impairment, learning disabled, etc.

Exhibit 7: The Group Presentation assignment requires students to collaborate with peers in order to research and present information to their classmates regarding one of the exceptionalities outlined throughout the course. Presentations must last 45 minutes and be hands-on as much as possible. Peers in the audience must be engaged in the presentation.

# Exhibit 7: Group Presentation

http://www.bsu.edu - Printer Friendly Rubric - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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## RGRADE\_Group Presentations

**Description** In groups, students will create a 40 minute presentation in which they fully examine one of the exce

**Author** Heather Schilling

**Sharing Status** Shared w/ editing

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<b>Content</b>	Presentations contains few of the necessary components as outlined in the directions.	Presentation contains some of the necessary components as outlined in the directions.	Presentation is thorough and contains most of the components as outlined in the directions.	Presnetation is thorough and contains all of the necessary components as outlined in the directions.
<b>Planning</b>	Presentation needs more planning and contains little opportunity for learners to interact.	Presentations needs more planning and contains visual, auditory, and/or hands-on segments for learners.	Presentation is well-planned and contains visual, auditory, and hands-on segments for most learners.	Presentation is well-planned and contains visual, auditory, and hands-on segments for all learners.
<b>Information</b>	Information is mostly accurate with a few group members demonstrating little understanding of the information.	Information is accurate, but some group members do not understand all of the information.	Information is accurate and understood by mostgroup members.	Information is accurate and clearly understood by all group members.
<b>Length</b>	Presentation is 30-34 minutes in length.	Presentation is 35-39 minutes in length.	Presentation is 40-44 minutes in length.	Presentation is 45-50 minutes in length.
<b>Handout</b>	Handout is provided but contains 7 or more grammatical/spelling errors and contains inaccurate or incomplete information.	Handout contains accurate information, but has 4-6 grammatical and/or spelling errors. Resources and references are cited.	Handout contains useful, accurate information. there are 2-3 spelling and /or grammatical errors. Appropriate resources and references are included and cited.	Handout contains useful, accurate information. There are no grammatical and/or spelling errors. Accurately cited and appropriate resources and references are included.

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MyCourses > 2005-2006/ Summer 2 > RGRADE 001.1

Group Presentation : edit

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Welcome to Adolescent Exceptional Learner. We will have the opportunity to examine different exceptionalities in our students as well as ways to integrate reading in the content areas.

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Course Assignments Roster

Group Presentation

Settings Rubric Pts Standards Descriptors

Find REMOVE STANDARD(S)

**INTASC** + ADD

- P1.P.1 The teacher effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and link them to students' prior understandings.
- P3.K.2 The teacher knows about areas of exceptionality in learning—including learning disabilities, visual and perceptual difficulties, and special physical or mental challenges.
- P5.K.2 The teacher understands how social groups function and influence people, and how people influence groups.
- P6.K.4 The teacher knows about and can use effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.
- P7.D.3 The teacher values planning as a collegial activity.
- P7.P.1 As an individual and a member of a team, the teacher selects and creates learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals, relevant to learners, and based upon principles of effective instruction (e.g. that activate students' prior knowledge, anticipate preconceptions, encourage exploration and problem-solving, and build new skills on those previously acquired)

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# Standards Report

rGrade provides instructors with a summary of which assignments are meeting each specific standard as seen in the screen captures of my Educ 352 course below:

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**RGRADE 001-1 (s)**  
Course Standards Report

Standards	INTENT Course Standards	COVERAGE Assignment Standards	PERFORMANCE Rubric-Row Standards
Sort By: <input type="text" value="Intent"/>			
INTASC: P1.K.1 The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.		Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P1.D.1 The teacher realizes that subject matter knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex and ever-evolving. S/he seeks to keep abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.		Liberal Arts Paper	
INTASC: P1.P.1 The teacher effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and link them to students' prior understandings.		Group Presentation Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P3.K.1 The teacher understands and can identify differences in approaches to learning and performance, including different learning styles, multiple intelligences, and performance modes, and can design instruction that helps use students' strengths as the basis for growth.		Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P3.K.2 The teacher knows about areas of exceptionality in learning- including learning disabilities, visual and perceptual difficulties, and special physical or mental challenges.		Professional Article Evaluation Group Presentation Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P3.P.3 The teacher makes appropriate provisions (in terms of time and circumstances for work, tasks assigned, communication and response modes) for individual students who have particular learning differences or needs.		Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P5.K.2 The teacher understands how social groups function and influence people,		Group Presentation	

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communication and response modes) for individual students who have particular learning differences or needs.			
INTASC: P5.K.2 The teacher understands how social groups function and influence people, and how people influence groups.		Group Presentation	
INTASC: P6.K.4 The teacher knows about and can use effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.		Liberal Arts Paper Professional Web Page Group Presentation	
INTASC: P6.D.1 The teacher recognizes the power of language for fostering self-expression, identity development, and learning.		Liberal Arts Paper Professional Web Page	
INTASC: P6.D.2 The teacher values many ways in which people seek to communicate and encourages many modes of communication in the classroom.		Professional Web Page	
INTASC: P6.P.1 The teacher models effective communication strategies in conveying ideas and information and in asking questions (e.g. monitoring the effects of messages, restating ideas and drawing connections, using visual, aural, and kinesthetic cues, being sensitive to nonverbal cues given and received).		Professional Article Evaluation	RGRADE_Professional Article Evaluation: Organization
INTASC: P6.P.2 The teacher supports and expands learner expression in speaking, writing, and other media.			RGRADE_LiberalArts: Topic/Subject
INTASC: P6.P.5 The teacher knows how to use a variety of media communication tools, including audio-visual aids and computers, to enrich learning opportunities.		Professional Web Page	
INTASC: P7.K.1 The teacher understands learning theory, subject matter, curriculum development, and student development and knows how to use this knowledge in planning instruction to meet curriculum goals.		Lesson Plan	
INTASC: P7.K.2 The teacher knows how to take contextual considerations (instructional materials, individual student interests, needs, and aptitudes, and community resources) into account in planning instruction that creates an effective bridge between curriculum goals and students' experiences.		Lesson Plan	

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<p>INTASC: P7.P.1 As an individual and a member of a team, the teacher selects and creates learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals, relevant to learners, and based upon principles of effective instruction (e.g. that activate students' prior knowledge, anticipate preconceptions, encourage exploration and problem-solving, and build new skills on those previously acquired).</p>		Group Presentation	
<p>INTASC: P7.P.2 The teacher plans for learning opportunities that recognize and address variation in learning styles and performance modes.</p>		Lesson Plan	
<p>INTASC: P8.P.4 The teacher evaluates the effect of class activities on both individuals and the class as a whole, collecting information through observation of classroom interactions, questioning, and analysis of student work.</p>		Lesson Plan	
<p>INTASC: P9.K.2 The teacher is aware of major areas of research on teaching and of resources available for professional learning (e.g. professional literature, colleagues, professional associations, professional development activities).</p>		Professional Article Evaluation	
<p>INTASC: P9.D.1 The teacher values critical thinking and self-directed learning as habits of mind.</p>		Reader Response Journal	
<p>INTASC: P9.D.2 The teacher is committed to reflection, assessment, and learning as an ongoing process.</p>		Liberal Arts Paper Reader Response Journal Professional Web Page	RGRADE_Professional Web Page: Layout/Design
<p>INTASC: P9.P.2 The teacher seeks out professional literature, colleagues, and other resources to support higher own development as a learner and a teacher.</p>		Professional Article Evaluation Reader Response Journal	
<p>NETS-T: NETS-T I.A. Teachers demonstrate introductory knowledge, skills, and understanding of concepts related to technology (as described in the ISTE National</p>		Professional Web Page	RGRADE_Professional Web Page: Layout/Design

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<p>communication and response modes) for individual students who have particular learning differences or needs.</p>			
<p>INTASC: P3.K.2 The teacher knows about areas of exceptionalities in learning- including learning disabilities, visual and perceptual difficulties, and special physical or mental challenges.</p>		Professional Article Evaluation Group Presentation Lesson Plan	
<p>INTASC: P3.K.1 The teacher understands and can identify differences in approaches to learning and performance, including different learning styles, multiple intelligences, and performance modes, and can design instruction that helps use students' strengths as the basis for growth.</p>		Lesson Plan	
<p>INTASC: P1.P.1 The teacher effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and link them to students' prior understandings.</p>		Group Presentation Lesson Plan	
<p>INTASC: P1.D.1 The teacher realizes that subject matter knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex and ever-evolving. S/he seeks to keep abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.</p>		Liberal Arts Paper	
<p>INTASC: P1.K.1 The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.</p>		Lesson Plan	
<p>NETS-T: NETS-T V.D. Teachers use technology to communicate and collaborate with peers, parents, and the larger community in order to nurture student learning.</p>		Professional Web Page	
<p>NETS-T: NETS-T I.B. Teachers demonstrate continual growth in technology knowledge and skills to stay abreast of current and emerging technologies.</p>			RGRADE_Professional Web Page: Layout/Design
<p>NETS-T: NETS-T I.A. Teachers demonstrate introductory knowledge, skills, and understanding of concepts related to technology (as described in the ISTE National Education Technology Standards for Students).</p>		Professional Web Page	RGRADE_Professional Web Page: Layout/Design

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