Oral Communication
Assessment Rubric

Definition

Oral Communication courses focus on verbal and nonverbal expression to create and share meaning. Students develop transferable communicative strategies that can be applied to a variety of contexts, including academics, professional life and citizenship.

Framing Language

A course approved in the Oral Communication competency can appear in any discipline, as verbal and/or nonverbal expression to create and share meaning is an essential part of learning content in all fields. Oral Communication in the foundational context means to interact through appropriate and ethical messages designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, and/or to promote change in attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. This definition is based on several factors:

1. Successful and competent oral communication should be purposeful and contextually appropriate.

2. Effective verbal and/or nonverbal expression and message reception are critical elements of a strong university education and extremely important to mature citizenship and career development.

3. Oral communication competence requires both the study of the communication process and the demonstration of effective behaviors.

In the process of creating oral communication, students increase knowledge, foster understanding, and/or promote change. It is essential that students understand that oral communication goes beyond formal presentations, and therefore learning in oral communication courses should include interpersonal, small and/or large group interactions, and should promote the value of ethical, responsive communication. Assignments for oral communication should allow students to practice and demonstrate transferable communicative strategies. These interactions can occur in a variety of scenarios and media, and student work in oral communication courses should reflect this.

Glossary

Audience – the person or people with whom one wants to communicate

Communicator – one engaged in a communicative act

Context – elements of a situation that directly and/or indirectly influence decisions about communication

Ethical – characteristic of truthful, fair, honest communication

Intent – the explicit or implicit goal, aim, or plan of a given oral communication message

Message – information conveyed through verbal and/or nonverbal expression that include words, signs, or symbols

Outcome – the result of a situation, action, or decision, which can be a tangible product or an intangible product, such as an idea or emotion

Principles of oral communication – verbal and/or nonverbal elements or concepts to consider and take into account when communicating orally, e.g., audience, context, intent, and outcome

Rubric Key

Dimension – A dimension expresses a fundamental aspect of a given Student Learning Outcome.

Level – The levels of learning describe progressive achievement, moving from Developing (Level 1) to Sophisticated (Level 4). Basic Competence in this MAC competency is achieved at Level 2. Students should be given opportunities to develop further levels of achievement in their upper-level, program-specific courses, after their initial introductory-level exposure to its fundamentals in a MAC-designated course.

SLO – A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) expresses the core learning goals of a curriculum. This rubric presents the SLOs for this MAC competency. Any course designated to deliver this competency is expected to state these SLOs verbatim in the course syllabus and to foreground them in its design and delivery.

SLO #1: Demonstrate appropriate and ethical oral communication messages for given contexts and communicators to increase knowledge, foster understanding, and/or promote change.				
Dimensions	**Sophisticated competence** (Level 4)	**Emerging competence** (Level 3)	**MAC (Basic) competence** (Level 2)	**Developing competence** (Level 1)
Message Composition and Organization	Builds credibility by combining appropriate supporting material and examples that demonstrate cohesive/justifiable logic in the message. Shows advanced ability at creating an understandable, skillful and clear messaging structure that increases knowledge, fosters understanding, and or/ promotes change.	Chooses and evaluates supporting material and examples to build credibility and demonstrate that cohesive/justifiable logic is recurring in the message. Shows proficiency at creating an understandable, skillful and clear messaging structure that increases knowledge, fosters understanding, and or/ promotes change.	Identifies and discusses supporting material and examples to build credibility and demonstrate cohesive/justifiable logic in the message. Shows basic ability to create an understandable, skillful and clear messaging structure that increases knowledge, fosters understanding, and or/ promotes change.	May list supporting material or examples. These attempt to build credibility and demonstrate cohesive/justifiable logic in the message. Shows minimal ability to create an understandable, skillful and clear messaging structure that increases knowledge, fosters understanding, and or/ promotes change.
Message Delivery	Consistently and thoroughly demonstrates compelling verbal and/or nonverbal strategies to engage the audience.	Demonstrates verbal and/or nonverbal strategies to engage the audience, mostly in a compelling and consistent way.	Demonstrates verbal and/or nonverbal strategies to engage the audience, in a somewhat compelling or consistent way.	Demonstrates verbal and/or nonverbal strategies to engage the audience, in a minimally compelling or consistent way.
Audience Interaction	Applies purposeful ethics and respect to audience responses by demonstrating consistent and effective reception, analysis, and comprehension skills.	Applies purposeful ethics and respect to audience responses by demonstrating regular reception, analysis, and comprehension skills.	Applies purposeful ethics and respect to audience responses by demonstrating slight reception, analysis, and comprehension skills.	Superficially applies purposeful ethics and respect to audience responses by demonstrating minimal reception, analysis, or comprehension skills.

	Sophisticated competence (Level 4)	Emerging competence (Level 3)	MAC (Basic) competence (Level 2)	Developing competence (Level 1)
SLO #2: Analyze and evaluate messages according to context, audience, intent, and other principles of oral communication, to contribute to the ongoing development of knowledge and relationships.				
Dimensions	**Sophisticated competence** (Level 4)	**Emerging competence** (Level 3)	**MAC (Basic) competence** (Level 2)	**Developing competence** (Level 1)
Analysis and Evaluation of messages	Thoroughly examines and assesses a communicator's choices and central message with critical references to context, audience, intent, outcome and other principles of oral communication.	Explains and shows emerging ability to assess many of a communicator's choices and central message with basic references to context, audience, intent, outcome and other principles of oral communication.	Summarizes and attempts to assess some of a communicator's choices and central message with inconsistent references to context, audience, intent, outcome and other principles of oral communication.	Identifies and names some of a communicator's choices and/ or central message. May minimally reference context, audience, intent, outcomes and other principles of oral communication.

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