



ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

This rubric was adapted from the AACU's VALUE rubric, developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. This adaptation is designed to aid Columbia Gorge Community College's (CGCC) specific assessment plan of its institutional core learning outcomes. The rubric articulates fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubric is intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. As the AACU recommended, the core expectations articulated in all of its VALUE rubrics was translated into the language of CGCC's campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The rubric positions learning at undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

The type of oral communication most likely to be included in a collection of student work is an oral presentation and therefore is the focus for the application of this rubric.

Definition

Oral communication is a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

Framing Language

Oral communication takes many forms. This rubric is specifically designed to evaluate oral presentations of a single speaker at a time and is best applied to live or video-recorded presentations. For panel presentations or group presentations, it is recommended that each speaker be evaluated separately. This rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed, supported by one or more forms of supporting materials and includes a purposeful organization. An oral answer to a single question not designed to be structured into a presentation does not readily apply to this rubric.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- **Central message:** The main point/thesis/"bottom line"/"take-away" of a presentation. A clear central message is easy to identify; a compelling central message is also vivid and memorable.
- **Delivery techniques:** Posture, gestures, eye contact, and use of the voice. Delivery techniques enhance the effectiveness of the presentation when the speaker stands and moves with authority, looks more often at the audience than at his/her speaking materials/notes, uses the voice expressively, and uses few vocal fillers ("um," "uh," "like," "you know," etc.).
- **Language:** Vocabulary, terminology, and sentence structure. Language that supports the effectiveness of a presentation is appropriate to the topic and audience, grammatical, clear, and free from bias. Language that enhances the effectiveness of a presentation is also vivid, imaginative, and expressive.
- **Organization:** The grouping and sequencing of ideas and supporting material in a presentation. An organizational pattern that supports the effectiveness of a presentation typically includes an introduction, one or more identifiable sections in the body of the speech, and a conclusion. An organizational pattern that enhances the effectiveness of the presentation reflects a purposeful choice among possible alternatives, such as a chronological pattern, a problem-solution pattern, an analysis-of-parts pattern, etc., that makes the content of the presentation easier to follow and more likely to accomplish its purpose.

- Supporting material: Explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities, and other kinds of information or analysis that supports the principal ideas of the presentation. Supporting material is generally credible when it is relevant and derived from reliable and appropriate sources. Supporting material is highly credible when it is also vivid and varied across the types listed above (e.g., a mix of examples, statistics, and references to authorities). Supporting material may also serve the purpose of establishing the speaker's credibility. For example, in presenting a creative work such as a dramatic reading of Shakespeare, supporting evidence may not advance the ideas of Shakespeare, but rather serve to establish the speaker as a credible Shakespearean actor.

	Mastery 4	Accomplished 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1	Not Demonstrated 0	Not Applicable
General purpose	Purpose is compelling, precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported. Purpose and evidence are aligned well.	Purpose is clear and consistent; purpose and evidence are appropriately aligned.	Purpose is understandable but is neither reinforced nor memorable; purpose and evidence are generally aligned.	Purpose can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation. Alignment of purpose and evidence is not always clear.	Purpose is absent; the presentation does not seem to know what it is about. Unifying principles do not exist.	
Organization	Organizational development is clearly and consistently observable; skillfully makes content and expression of ideas in the presentation cohesive.	Organizational development and expression of ideas are clearly and consistently observable within the presentation; content is expressed reasonably well as a result.	Organizational development and expression of ideas are observable within the presentation	Organizational development and expression of ideas are occasionally observable.	Organizational development and/or expression of ideas are not observable within the presentation; lack of coherence and unity exist.	
Language	Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling; choices enhance presentation effectiveness. Language is appropriate to audience and aids the clear expression of ideas.	Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is appropriate to audience and is useful to the expression of ideas.	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation and the expression of ideas.	Language choices are sometimes unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language appropriateness is inconsistent. Expression of ideas is hindered.	Language choices are unclear and fail to support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is not appropriate to audience; ideas are not expressed clearly.	
Delivery (oral/visual)	Delivery techniques make the presentation compelling; speaker	Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting, and	Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable;	Delivery techniques sometimes detract from audience	Delivery techniques are either distracting from	

	appears polished and confident ; speaker energy and emphases foster interpretation of ideas expressed. Dependency upon notes, if applicable, is not evident or intrusive . Non-verbal cues aid significantly .	speaker appears comfortable ; speaker tends toward conversational tone , and dependency upon notes is minimally noticeable. Nonverbal cues are appropriate and useful .	speaker appears tentative ; speaker tends to be a bit casual , as evidenced in word choices; non-verbal cues do not particularly elevate audience's level of understanding or interpretation.	comprehension; speaker appears uncomfortable ; speaker seems unenthusiastic, monotonic , or hesitancies suggest unpreparedness . Verbal cues include unnecessary gestures and purposeless body language.	understandability of the presentation or fail to be effective ; the speaker is clearly uncomfortable or unprepared .	
Evidence-based support	Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and significantly enhance development; materials establish presenter's credibility/authority .	Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and generally supports development; presenter's credibility/authority is clear but evidence-based support could be stronger .	Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis but only partially fosters development and presentation of ideas. Presenter's credibility/authority could benefit from more careful exploration of evidence .	Insufficient supporting materials provide minimal information or analysis; presenter's credibility/authority on the topic is not particularly clear .	Supporting materials are virtually non-existent , or the supporting materials are not credible .	

Adapted from AACU LEAP and SFA Oral Communication Rubrics