



## ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

This rubric was adapted by an interdisciplinary team representing Columbia Gorge Community College through a process that examined and modified the AACU Oral Communication Value Rubric to meet the needs of CGCC's Institutional Core Learning Outcomes assessment. 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. The CGCC team agrees with the utility of the AACU Value rubric, which "is to position 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".

**Core Learning Outcome #1** - *Through their respective disciplines, CGCC students who earn a degree can: Communicate effectively using appropriate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. (Communication)*

*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 speakers 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.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criteria	4	3	2	1	<b>Not Demonstrated</b> <b>0</b> (Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (level one) level performance.) Not demonstrated can be assigned to individual students	<b>Not Applicable</b> (Evaluators are encouraged to assign “not applicable” if student work was not required to address a category. If assignment is used for assessment of all students, all students should be scored as N/A in this category and an explanation is required in space provide on web form.)
<b>General purpose</b>	Purpose is <b>compelling, precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.</b> Purpose and evidence are <b>aligned well.</b>	Purpose is <b>clear and consistent;</b> purpose and evidence are <b>appropriately aligned.</b>	Purpose is <b>understandable</b> but is <b>neither reinforced nor memorable;</b> purpose and evidence are <b>generally aligned.</b>	Purpose can be <b>deduced,</b> but is <b>not explicitly stated</b> in the presentation. <b>Alignment</b> of purpose and evidence is <b>not always clear.</b>	Purpose is <b>absent;</b> the <b>presentation does not seem to know</b> what it is about. Unifying principles <b>do not exist.</b>	Demonstration of purpose is <b>not required</b> for assignment.
<b>Organization</b>	Organizational development is <b>clearly and consistently</b> observable; <b>skillfully</b> makes content and expression of ideas in the presentation <b>cohesive.</b>	Organizational development and expression of ideas are <b>clearly and consistently</b> observable within the presentation; content is <b>expressed reasonably well</b> as a result.	Organizational development and expression of ideas are <b>observable</b> within the presentation	Organizational development and expression of ideas are <b>occasionally observable.</b>	Organizational development and/or expression of ideas are <b>not observable</b> within the presentation; <b>lack of coherence and unity</b> exist.	Demonstration of organizational development and/or expression of ideas are <b>not required</b> for assignment.
<b>Language</b>	Language choices are <b>imaginative, memorable, and compelling;</b> choices <b>enhance presentation effectiveness.</b> Language is appropriate to audience and <b>aids the clear expression</b> of ideas.	Language choices are <b>thoughtful and generally support</b> the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is appropriate to audience and is <b>useful to the expression</b> of ideas.	Language choices are <b>mundane and commonplace</b> and <b>partially support the</b> effectiveness of the presentation and the expression of ideas.	Language choices are sometimes <b>unclear</b> and <b>minimally support</b> the effectiveness of the presentation. Language appropriateness is <b>inconsistent.</b> Expression of ideas is <b>hindered.</b>	Language choices are <b>unclear and fail to support</b> the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is <b>not appropriate</b> to audience; ideas are <b>not expressed clearly.</b>	Demonstration of language choices and language appropriate to audience are <b>not required</b> for assignment.
<b>Delivery (oral/visual)</b>	Delivery techniques make the presentation <b>compelling;</b> speaker appears <b>polished and confident;</b> speaker <b>energy</b> and <b>emphases foster interpretation</b> of ideas expressed. Dependency upon notes, if applicable, is <b>not evident or intrusive.</b> Non-verbal cues <b>aid significantly.</b>	Delivery techniques make the presentation <b>interesting,</b> and speaker appears <b>comfortable;</b> speaker tends toward <b>conversational tone,</b> and dependency upon notes is <b>minimally</b> noticeable. Nonverbal cues are <b>appropriate and useful.</b>	Delivery techniques make the presentation <b>understandable;</b> speaker appears <b>tentative;</b> speaker tends to be a bit <b>casual,</b> as evidenced in word choices; non-verbal cues do <b>not particularly elevate</b> audience’s level of understanding or interpretation.	Delivery techniques <b>sometimes detract</b> from audience comprehension; speaker appears <b>uncomfortable;</b> speaker seems <b>unenthusiastic, monotonic, or hesitations</b> suggest <b>unpreparedness.</b> Verbal cues include <b>unnecessary gestures</b> and <b>purposeless</b> body language.	Delivery techniques are either <b>distracting</b> from understandability of the presentation or <b>fail to be effective;</b> the speaker is clearly <b>uncomfortable</b> or <b>unprepared.</b>	Demonstration of effective delivery techniques <b>not required</b> for assignment

<p><b>Evidence-based support</b></p>	<p>Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and <b>significantly enhance</b> development; materials establish presenter's <b>credibility/authority</b>.</p>	<p>Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and <b>generally supports</b> development; presenter's credibility/authority is clear but <b>evidence-based support could be stronger</b>.</p>	<p>Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis but only <b>partially fosters</b> development and presentation of ideas. Presenter's credibility/authority could benefit from <b>more careful exploration of evidence</b>.</p>	<p><b>Insufficient</b> supporting materials provide <b>minimal</b> information or analysis; presenter's credibility/authority on the topic is <b>not particularly clear</b>.</p>	<p>Supporting materials are virtually <b>non-existent</b>, or the supporting materials are <b>not credible</b>.</p>	<p>Support materials are <b>not required</b> for assignment.</p>
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Adapted from AACU LEAP and SFA Oral Communication Rubrics