



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 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".

Institutional 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.).
- **Evidenced-based Support:** 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 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.
- **Listening:** The act of attention, hearing, understanding, and remembering. Listening is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages.

Criteria	4	3	2	1	Not Demonstrated 0 (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	Not Applicable (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 the space provided on the web form.)
Central Message	Message is compelling, precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported. Message and evidence are aligned well.	Message is clear and consistent; message and evidence are appropriately aligned.	Message is understandable but is neither reinforced nor memorable; message and evidence are generally aligned.	Message can be deduced, but is not stated explicitly in the presentation. Alignment of message and evidence is unclear.	Message is absent; the presentation does not seem to know what it is about. Unifying principles do not exist.	Demonstration of message is not required for assignment.
Organization	Organizational development is clearly and consistently observable; skillfully makes the content and expression of ideas in the presentation cohesive.	Solid level of organizational development is evident in most aspects of the presentation; content and cohesiveness are expressed reasonably well as a result.	Organizational development, cohesiveness and expression of ideas are observable but limited within the presentation	Organizational development, cohesiveness and expression of ideas are rarely observable.	Organizational development, cohesiveness and/or expression of ideas are not observable within the presentation; lack of coherence and unity exist.	Demonstration of organizational development, cohesiveness and/or expression of ideas are not required for assignment.
Language	Language choices are creative, 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 commonplace and only 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.	Demonstration of language choices and language appropriate to audience are not required for assignment.
Delivery Techniques (oral/visual)	Delivery techniques make the presentation compelling; speaker’s presentation is polished and confident. Dependency upon notes, if applicable, is not evident or intrusive. Non-verbal cues or body language aid significantly.	Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting; speaker is comfortable in the delivery of the content. Dependency upon notes is minimally noticeable. Nonverbal cues or body language are appropriate and useful.	Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable; speaker is tentative. Dependency upon notes is evident and sometimes distracting. Non-verbal cues or body language do not elevate level of understanding or interpretation.	Delivery techniques detract from presentation; speaker is uncomfortable. Presentation is unenthusiastic (monotonic, or hesitant), suggesting unpreparedness. Dependency on notes is intrusive. Nonverbal cues include unnecessary gestures and distracting body language.	Delivery techniques distract from understandability of the presentation or fail to be effective; the speaker is clearly uncomfortable or unprepared.	Demonstration of effective delivery techniques not required for assignment

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Evidence-based support	Supporting materials fully support and connect to information or analysis and significantly enhance the presentation; evidence establishes presenter's credibility/authority.	Supporting materials generally support and connect to information or analysis; presenter's credibility/authority is clear but evidence-based support could be stronger.	Supporting materials somewhat support and connect to information or analysis but only partially foster 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 unclear .	Supporting materials are non-existent , or the supporting materials are not credible .	Support materials are not required for assignment.
Listening	Pays attention and contributes to class lecture, presentation, and/or discussion. Demonstrates a strong understanding of key terms and concepts by asking relevant questions. Able to provide a detailed and thorough summary.	Pays attention to lecture, presentation, and/or discussion and participates. Willingness to incorporate key terms and concepts when asking clarifying questions. Able to provide an adequate summary.	Pays attention to lecture, presentation, and/or discussion but has limited understanding or knowledge of subject. Asks some clarifying questions when material is not clear. Able to summarize but missing a few key details and/or concepts.	Makes some effort to pay attention to lecture, presentation, and/or discussion, but is hindered by a lack of understanding or knowledge of subject. Does not ask clarifying questions when material is not clear. Able to summarize, but missing many key details and/or concepts.	Pays no attention to lecture, presentation, and/or discussion, and does not actively participate. Is unable to repeat information and there is no evidence of note taking. Unable to summarize information presented.	Listening not required for assignment.