Oral Communication

Student Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in clear and concise <u>live communication</u>.

The Value of Oral Communication

Oral communication consists of both <u>extemporaneous</u> and <u>prepared communication</u>, and is intended to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. Oral communication is fundamental to individual, professional, and social growth. It enables the free expression and exchange of ideas, allowing individuals, organizations, and communities to understand and learn from one another through expression. Oral communication is vital, because it is an empowering skill that allows individuals to become "upstanders," rather than bystanders—people who are confident and neither silent nor afraid to speak at critical individual, professional, and social junctures.

Supporting Skills

1. Students will demonstrate a clearly and consistently observable <u>organizational pattern</u> (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) within the context of a presentation.
2. Students will make language choices in the context of a presentation that are thoughtful, appropriate to the audience, and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation.
3. Students will use delivery techniques (posture, gestures, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) that make the presentation interesting and make the speaker appear comfortable.
4. Students will articulate and support a clear thesis.

Course Content Criteria

1. Courses in this category give students multiple opportunities to develop oral communication skills.
2. Courses in the category contain at least two <u>speaking events</u> per student, at least one of which is a limited preparation event and at least one of which is a prepared speaking event.
3. Courses in this category provide students <u>direct instruction or guidance</u> on best practices in oral communication and provide students <u>meaningful feedback</u> on their oral communication skills.
4. Courses in this category include, as a required resource, an approved reference guide to public speaking, to be determined.
5. Courses in this category include an assessment assignment that requires students to demonstrate each of the skills in the Oral Communication Assessment Rubric (below). This assessment assignment should be an individual, live presentation on a topic appropriate to the content of the course.

Glossary

1. **Direct instruction or guidance**: Providing formal instruction on best practices in delivering live, oral communication in a specific context, or presenting students with prepared materials (e.g., readings, video tutorials) that deliver such formal instruction.
2. **Extemporaneous communication**: The ability to spontaneously frame ideas, provide answers, speak clearly, and articulate thoughts verbally, in the moment, without preparation.
3. **Live communication**: Communication that occurs when a speaker delivers a message (prepared or extemporaneous) in real-time, in the presence of an audience. The message can be delivered in-person or via a video-conferencing platform.
4. **Meaningful feedback**: Detailed commentary and critique on all relevant aspects of a student's speaking event. Such commentary should reflect upon the student's ability, based on his or her speaking event, to demonstrate the skills highlighted in this rubric.
5. **Organizational pattern**: The logical structure within a message. This structure supports the thesis, and is typically indicated by terms of enumeration and logical progression.
6. **Prepared communication**: A live oral communication event in which a student has at least 24 hours of preparation time to respond to a prompt, expecting at least four minutes of live presentation before an audience of at least four people. This speech should indicate a clear introduction, thesis, body, and conclusion.
7. **Speaking events**: Live situations in which a person speaks directly to at least four other people, either through a mediated format (such as a Zoom meeting) or in a face-to-face context (such as during a class presentation or sales pitch).

Experience Criteria

Students may apply to fulfill the OC requirement through a co-curricular activity. These criteria apply to experiences that meet the OC curricular requirement and describe the characteristics of the experience, the steps a student must follow to petition the experience for approval, and the number and types of assignments students must submit to satisfy the requirement.

1. Students must obtain pre-approval for any activity used to satisfy this component. Approval must be obtained prior to the start of the activity.
2. Students must submit independent, third-party, verification of participation in the approved activity, by a supervisor or other authoritative individual, who is not a blood relation.
3. Activities in fulfillment of this requirement must comprise multiple, audience-driven instances of individual, oral communication.
4. Activities in fulfillment of this requirement must include mechanisms for third-party feedback about the quality of the performance.

5. Activities in fulfillment of this requirement must comprise 15 hours of activity that includes speaking events that provide students with at least 12 minutes of audience-driven speaking.
6. Mediated oral communication events (through video recording, Skype, Zoom, etc.) should ideally only count for up to half of the required speaking time.
7. Students fulfilling oral communication through an activity must submit a written reflection with the petition outlining what the activity is, how they anticipate the activity will fulfill the requirement, and what they expect to gain and learn from the experience.
8. Students fulfilling Oral Communication through an activity must submit either a recording of the student engaged in a speaking event or a written reflection of approximately 1000 words that responds to the following prompt:

Please describe in detail the activity you used to complete the Oral Communication requirement. In your reflection, answer the following questions. How did you meet the requirement of completing one prepared and one spontaneous presentation? Who was the audience for your presentations? What resources did you use to understand how best to present to your audience? What supporting materials did you use during your presentations? Who provided feedback on your presentations? How did your ability to communicate information through a presentation improve?

Oral Communication Assessment Rubric

Supporting Skills	Exemplary 5	Accomplished 4	Developing 3	Beginning 2	Absent 1
Demonstrate a clearly and consistently observable organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions).	Skillfully demonstrates a clearly and consistently observable organizational pattern that makes the content of the presentation cohesive.	Demonstrates a clearly and consistently observable organizational pattern.	Demonstrates an intermittently observable organizational pattern.	Demonstrates minimal evidence of an observable organizational pattern.	Does not demonstrate an organizational pattern.
Make thoughtful and appropriate language choices.	Makes language choices that are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, that are appropriate to the audience, and that enhance the effectiveness of the presentation.	Makes language choices that are thoughtful, appropriate to the audience, and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation.	Makes language choices that are mundane and commonplace, that are sometimes appropriate to the audience, and that partially support the effectiveness of the presentation.	Makes language choices that are unclear, not appropriate to the audience, and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation.	Makes language choices that are not appropriate to the audience and do not support the effectiveness of the presentation.
Use effective delivery techniques (posture, gestures, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness).	Uses delivery techniques that make the presentation compelling and make the speaker appear polished, professional, and confident.	Uses delivery techniques that make the presentation interesting and that make the speaker appear comfortable.	Uses delivery techniques that make the presentation understandable and make the speaker appear tentative.	Uses delivery techniques that detract from the understandability of the presentation and make the speaker appear uncomfortable.	Uses delivery techniques that detract from the understandability of the presentation, and make it appear that the speaker is not self-aware. The speaker's appearance and mannerisms detract from the message.
Use of clear, well-supported thesis.	Main thesis is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.)	Main thesis is clear and consistent with the supporting material.	Main thesis is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	Main thesis can be deduced. but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.	Main thesis is absent/lost in presentation.