

SCU UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING GOAL: ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

Based on the AAC&U Written Communication VALUE Rubric, value@aacu.org, assessmentoffice@scu.edu or see site below¹.

The VALUE rubrics were 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. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all 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 presentation 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.

- **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 discipline, purpose, topic and audience; is clear; minimizes perceived bias or unfair prejudice; and may reflect cultural/linguistic characteristics of the presenter.
- **Delivery techniques²:** Posture, gestures, body language, 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.).
- **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 can be expressed orally or through visual aids (powerpoint slides) and 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.
- **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.

¹ AAC&U - <http://www.aacu.org/value/metarubrics.cfm>

² We appreciate cultural and linguistic differences that exist and recommend taking these into consideration for both the delivery and language categories, as these should not impact scoring.

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| Organization | Organizational pattern and purpose (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) are clearly and consistently observable and make the content of the presentation easy to follow. | Organizational pattern and purpose (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) are consistently observable and effectively contribute to the presentation. | Organizational pattern and purpose (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) are intermittently observable and minimally contribute to the presentation. | Organizational pattern and purpose (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) are not observable and does not contribute to the presentation |
| Language | Language choices clearly support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language variety is consistently appropriate to purpose and audience. | Language choices mostly support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language variety is mostly appropriate to purpose and audience. | Language choices partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language variety is sometimes appropriate to purpose and audience. | Language choices minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language variety in is not appropriate to purpose and audience. |
| Delivery | Speaker makes persistent use of frequent, dynamic, and effective delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) to promote engagement with the audience. Presentation is polished and speaker appears confident. Body language and pacing consistently contribute to successful audience engagement. | Speaker makes mostly consistent use of effective delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) to promote engagement with the audience. Body language and pacing mostly contribute to audience engagement. | Speaker makes some use of effective delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) to promote engagement with the audience. Body language and pacing somewhat contribute to audience engagement. | Speaker makes minimal use of effective delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) to promote engagement with the audience. Speaker's pacing limits audience engagement. |
| Supporting material | Vivid and varied supporting materials reinforce credibility of the presenter/presentation. Presenter uses a variety of appropriate, credible supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) to illustrate or clarify the main points or analyses. | Supporting materials contribute to credibility of the presenter/presentation, but could be more vivid or varied. Presenter uses mostly appropriate, supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) to illustrate or clarify the main points or analyses. | Supporting materials somewhat contribute to the credibility of the presenter/presentation. Presenter demonstrates some use of appropriate, credible supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) to illustrate or clarify the main points or analyses. | The absence of appropriate supporting materials lead to questions about the credibility of the presenter/presentation. Presenter uses little to no appropriate, credible supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) to illustrate or clarify the main points or analyses. |
| Central Message | Central message is precisely stated, focused, reinforced, and memorable. | Central message is mostly clear and focused, and reasonably well-reinforced and memorable. | Central message, while identifiable, has limited clarity, focus, support, and reinforcement. Overall, central message is not particularly memorable. | Central message is difficult to identify or explain and lacks clarity, focus, and reinforcement. |