

## **General Education Communication Assessment Communication 100 Report**

### **Goal:**

The goal for this General Education Communication Assessment is to help students communicate effectively using verbal language.

### **Course Learning Objectives:**

As part of their requirements to meet the oral competency component of the General Education Assessment, students were evaluated in six key areas, including the following:

- Organization
- Subject Knowledge
- Nonverbal Communication
- Mechanics When Appropriate
- Speaker Engagement
- Elocution

### **Instruments/Measures for Evaluation:**

Students delivered Extemporaneous, Informative Speeches that were four to six minutes in length. The topics for these speeches were chosen by the students and approved by their lab instructors prior to their delivery. Students had approximately two weeks to one month to research and prepare their speeches after selecting a topic. Upon delivering their speeches, students were evaluated using the rubric attached to this report as Appendix A. Each of the six competencies were evaluated on a four-point scale, where a four reflected a student achieving the highest competency and a one reflected a student failing to meet the competency.

### **Procedure:**

Of the 500 students who take CMCN 100 in the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 semester, 100 students, or 20% of the total enrollment, were evaluated each semester. Two lab instructors were chosen at random to have both of their labs evaluated. Prior to evaluation, these lab instructors were taught how to properly implement the rubric that was created to assess the students' achievement in meeting these objectives. Student speeches were recorded and lab instructors evaluated these speeches along with the Instructor of Record, who acted in the capacity as a second a scorer for reliability.

### **Criterion for Success:**

In order for the outcome to be met and deemed successful, 70% of the 100 students evaluated each semester, or at least 70 students in Fall 2017 and 70 students in Spring 2018, had to score a satisfactory score, which was defined as achieving 17 out of 24 possible points, or a 70%.

## **Findings:**

In Fall 2017, 72 of the 100 (72%) students assessed earned a score of 70% or higher. In Spring 2019, 84 of the 100 (84%) students assessed earned a score of 70% or higher. For the Fall 2017 semester, the outcome was met; however, the students tended to have more difficulty remembering subject knowledge and occasionally struggled with speaker engagement, two of the course learning outcomes assessed in the evaluation rubric. After making some adjustments to the teaching schedule following the Fall 2017 assessment, the outcome for the Spring 2018 semester improved by 12% with students showing a great deal more confidence in their knowledge of subject material as well as their engagement of the audience.

## **Summary of Findings:**

Prior to and through the Fall 2017 semester, the class was taught using the textbook as its guide for laying out the order in which information was taught. Because of this, public speaking, which was the focus of this assessment, was not taught to students until Chapter Six, which occurred approximately half-way through the semester. In teaching the course like this, students did not have more than a couple of weeks to pick a topic, collect research for that topic, and deliver their speeches. While they were able to do this and still meet their objectives for the course, it appeared that they were struggling more than was necessary. Additionally, they did not have as many opportunities to practice giving speeches, which ultimately impacted their ability to engage their audiences due to a lack of confidence. After seeing this, it became apparent that a change needed to be implemented in how the course was taught. Therefore, in the Spring 2018 semester, Chapters Six through 12, which contains the exploration of public communication, was moved up to the third week of classes. In addition to this change in the order in which the course was taught, students were also given additional opportunities to give impromptu speeches that would help them get a better handle on audience engagement and enhance their overall confidence with public speaking. In making these small changes, student scores improved a great deal, particularly in the areas of subject knowledge and speaker engagement. Giving the students more time to familiarize themselves with their topics, research, and prepare their speeches ultimately resulted in their deeper knowledge on the subjects they were speaking about and the practice speeches correlated to increased speaker confidence and better engagement with the audience.

## **Action Plan for Improvement:**

Given the success of rearranging the order in which material was taught to students throughout the semester, the overall plan is to continue with this course of action in future semesters. Now that these two areas of assessment have been addressed, the plan for the future includes working with students on organization in their speeches and helping them to connect the material to the audience using stronger arguments while developing stronger speaker credibility. One possible way to do this would be to implement peer-reviewed outline writing workshops in lab classes that would allow students to have their work reviewed by the same peers that serve as their audience for these speeches. In doing this, it would help students better understand the role of relationship building between the speaker and audience member while developing their writing skills and creating better organized arguments that will lead to higher achievement in assessment and greater success in their speeches.

**Appendix A:**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Organization</b>	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information	Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around	Student presents material in logical sequence which audience can follow	Student presents material in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow and easily learn from	
<b>Subject Knowledge</b>	Student does not have grasp of material; student cannot answer questions about subject	Student is uncomfortable with materials and is able to answer only rudimentary questions	Student is at ease with expected answers to all questions, but fails to elaborate	Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration	
<b>Non-verbal communication</b>	Student uses inappropriate or superfluous non-verbal communication	Student's non-verbal communication supports the main points of the presentation	Student's non-verbal communication relates to the main points the presentation in a clear and professional way	Students non-verbal communication reinforces and enhances the presentation in a clear and professional way	
<b>Mechanics when appropriate</b>	presentation has four or more spelling and/or grammatical and/or textual errors	Presentation has three or more spelling and/or grammatical and/or textual errors	Presentation has no more than two spelling and/or grammatical and/or textual errors	Presentation has no spelling and/or grammatical and/or textual errors	
<b>Speaker engagement</b>	Student appears to not be engaged	Student's engagement is inconsistent	Student maintains engagement most of the time	Student maintains full, thoughtful engagement throughout	
<b>Elocution</b>	Student mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, or speaks too quietly for students in the back of class to hear	Student's voice is too low, or student incorrectly pronounces terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing or understanding presentation	Student's voice is clear. Student pronounces most words correctly. Most audience members can hear presentation	Student uses a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members can hear presentation.	

				<b>Total Points:</b>	
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