

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTION

Oral Communication

Definition of Competency:

Effective oral communication is the ability to construct and deliver messages that provide information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience using appropriate presentation skills such as eye contact, volume and articulation of voice, and nonverbal behaviors or gestures.

Standards for Competency:

Classroom oral communication presentations will be evaluated in the areas of introduction of the oral presentation, the body of the presentation, the conclusion, and delivery of the presentation. Each of these traits is evaluated using a 4-pt scale: highly competent (4pts), competent (3pts), emerging (2pts), and unsatisfactory (1pt). In addition, an average across all traits will be used to determine overall performance. The oral communication rating rubric is attached.

Description of Methodology Used to Gather Evidence of Competency:

Two samples of students from several sections of COMM 201, a required public speaking course, participated in this assessment during the 2005-2006 academic year. All students of selected sections were evaluated. In the first sample, 72 students were evaluated on their first presentation in the class. In the second sample, 113 students were evaluated on their final presentation. In other words, the first sample had very little instruction on oral communication and the second sample had almost completed the oral communication course. Each student was evaluated by a Communication Studies faculty member using a rubric. This rubric, designed by a Communication Studies faculty member, the Director of Assessment and Evaluation, and the Associate Provost, contains behavioral anchors, which aid in interpretation and facilitates reliability. Students tended to give good effort because their performances on these presentations also counted toward class grades.

Descriptive statistics for each of the four traits represented by the rubric and the average across traits were calculated. To give readers full context, results of the comparisons of the pre-Comm201 sample and the post-Comm201 sample are presented in two ways (1) the overall mean and the means of each trait using independent t-tests and (2) the percentage of students evaluated as competent or highly competent overall and for each trait.

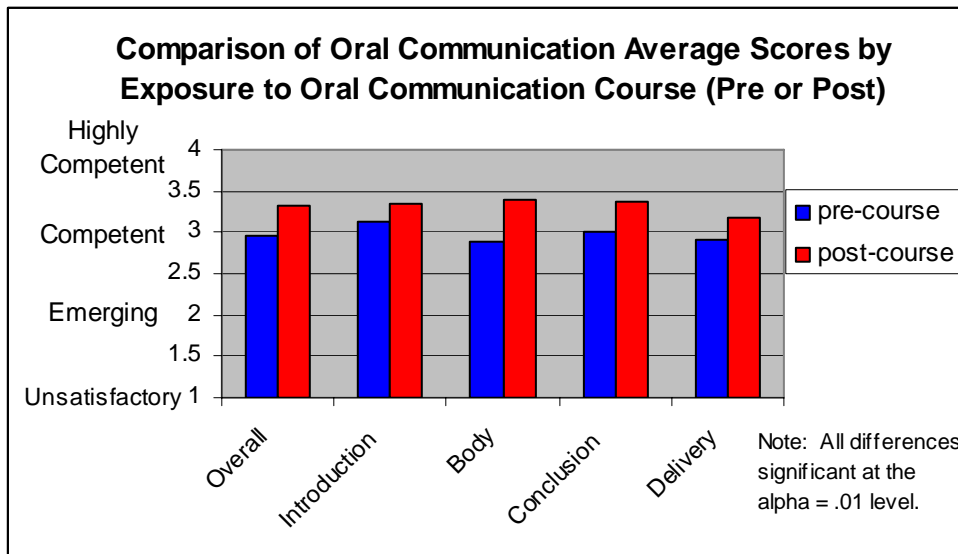
Comparison of Oral Communication Average Scores by Exposure to Oral Communication Course
(Pre or Post)

	Pre-Course (n = 73)	Post-Course (n = 113)	Mean Difference
Overall	2.97	3.32	0.35**
Introduction	3.12	3.34	0.22*
Body	2.88	3.4	0.52**
Conclusion	3	3.38	0.38**
Delivery	2.92	3.18	0.26*

* $p < .01$

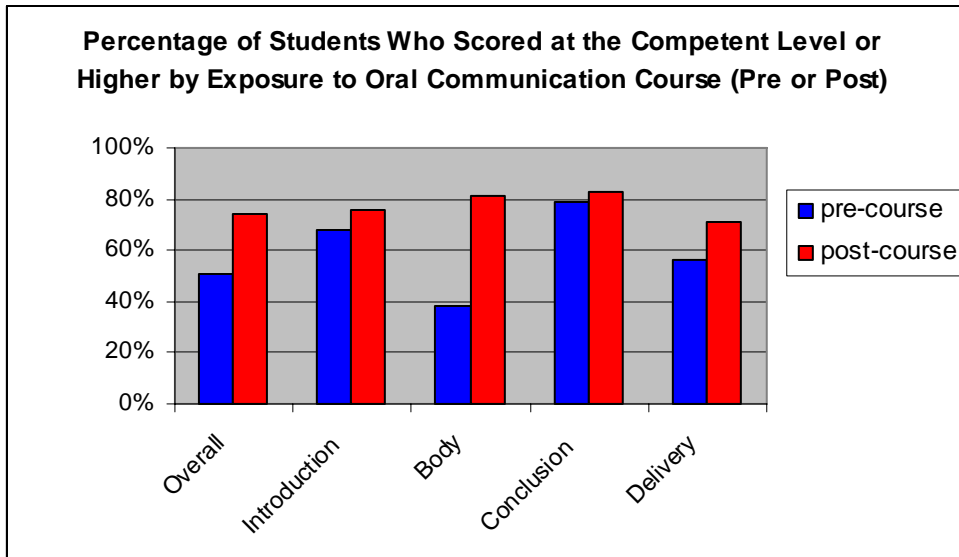
** $p < .0001$

Note: 4 = highly competent, 3 = competent, 2 = emerging, 1 = unsatisfactory



Percentage of Students Who Scored at the Competent Level or Higher by Exposure to Oral Communication Course (Pre or Post)

	Pre-Course (n = 73)	Post-Course (n = 113)	Difference
Overall	51%	74%	23%age points
Introduction	68%	76%	8%age points
Body	38%	81%	43%age points
Conclusion	79%	83%	4%age points
Delivery	56%	71%	15%age points



Summary: *(Provide analysis of results)*

The results of the assessment indicate that students who have had full exposure (post) to the introductory public speaking course perform significantly better than those just starting the class (pre) in oral communication overall and in its component traits: introduction, body, conclusion, and delivery. Almost three quarters (74%) of those fully exposed to the class are evaluated overall as competent or highly competent compared to approximately half (51%) who are just starting the course. Regarding the traits, the biggest difference between students who had gone through the public speaking class and those who had not was in the body of the paper. In other words the “post” students’ ability to organize the main points of the speech, give details, and make transitions between sections was substantially better (3.4 vs. 2.88 and 81% competent or better vs. 38%).

Attachment: Oral Communication Rubric

<p><u>Part I: Introduction to Oral Presentation</u></p> <p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Began presentation while looking at audience naturally. (4pts)_____ Made some eye contact with audience but seemed somewhat awkward or unnatural. (2.5 pts)_____ Did not look at audience at start of presentation. (1pt) <p>B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Used outstanding attention getter that piqued interest in the topic. (4pts)_____ Used adequate attention getter that gained some interest in topic. (3pts)_____ Used marginal attention getter that gained very little interest (2pts)._____ Used no attention getter (1pt). <p>C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Provided a clear thesis and direction of speech (4pts)._____ Had some ambiguity in thesis or direction of speech (2.5pts)._____ Had unclear direction or focus of speech (1pt).	<p><u>Part II: Body of Presentation</u></p> <p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Body was composed of distinct, logical sections or main points (4pts)._____ Some sections did not seem to flow in logical and/or effective sequence (2.5pts)._____ Sections were not logically presented, had rampant disorganization (1pt). <p>B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Each section was explained exceptionally well, with rich detail (4pts)._____ Each section was explained well, with adequate detail (3pts)._____ Each section had some detail, but important points were absent (2pts)._____ Each section was not adequately explained (1pt). <p>C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Made smooth transitions between each section using appropriate segues (4pts)._____ Occasionally made smooth transitions between sections (2.5 pts)._____ Made abrupt transitions or inappropriate segues between sections (1pt).
<p><u>Part III: Conclusion of Presentation</u></p> <p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Clearly summarized speech, emphasizing main points (4pts)._____ Summarized speech's main points, but may have lacked emphasis or some clarity (3pts)._____ Gave ambiguous summary of speech's main points (2pts)._____ Gave no summary of speech's main points (1pt). <p>B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Strongly reinforced the main idea of speech (4pts)._____ Moderately reinforced the main idea of speech (3pts)._____ Weakly reinforced the main idea of speech (2pts)._____ Main idea of speech was difficult to identify (1pt). <p>C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Ended speech with excellent closure (4pts)._____ Ended speech adequately (3pts)._____ Ended speech with unusual or inappropriate closing (2pts)._____ Ended speech abruptly (1pt).	<p><u>Part IV: Delivery of Presentation</u></p> <p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Made effective use of eye contact that engaged audience with little use of note cards (4pts)._____ Used consistent eye contact with some use of note cards (3pts)._____ Had inconsistent eye contact with dependence on use of note cards (2pts)._____ Had no eye contact with total dependence on use of note cards (1pt). <p>B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Had outstanding volume and articulation of voice that enhance speech (4pts)._____ Voice was always heard and understood (3pts)._____ Voice was sometimes difficult to hear or understand (2pts)._____ Voice was frequently difficult to hear or understand (1pt). <p>C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">_____ Nonverbal behaviors or gestures augmented the speech's message (4pts)._____ Nonverbal behaviors or gestures were consistent with message (3pts)._____ Nonverbal behaviors or gestures were sometimes distracting or inconsistent (2pts)._____ Nonverbal behaviors or gestures were absent or constantly distracting (1pt).