

Assessment Summary for the ACC Speech Program, 2002-2003

I. Program/Discipline Mission Statement

The ACC Speech discipline facilitates student learning through well-defined theoretical and performance-based instructional activities in a learning-centered environment. Through continued assessment, we prepare students for academic transfer and careers in communication.

II. Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Phrase clear purpose statements for a well-chosen topic that is appropriate for the audience and occasion.
2. Develop specific, well-focused thesis statements for appropriately chosen topics.
3. Use an organizational plan that is appropriate for the topic, purpose, audience and occasion.
4. Develop appropriate supporting material for the audience and occasion.
5. Establish credibility by demonstrating knowledge of the topic and incorporating material from appropriate sources, using proper verbal citations.
6. Use transitions effectively to promote a smooth flow of information.
7. Prepare and use visual aids that promote clarity and interest.
8. Use language that is appropriate for the audience, purpose and occasion.
9. Use pronunciation, grammar and articulation appropriate to the audience.
10. Use vocal variety to engage the audience and sustain interest.
11. Use nonverbal behaviors to support the verbal message.
12. Demonstrate acceptable ethical standards in research and presentation of materials.

III. Outcomes Assessed During the 2002-2003 Academic Year

By the end of the semester, students will be able to write and deliver an informative speech that demonstrates proficiency in competencies #1 and #2.

IV. Assessment Methods

A part-time speech faculty member with professional experience in quantitative research analysis evaluated one hundred randomly selected informative speech performances. The evaluator used a basic quantitative instrument that determined the presence or absence of competencies identified in Part II. The evaluator used the quantitative tool to evaluate student performances, assess competencies, and generate both quantitative and qualitative reports.

V. Benchmark

Our benchmark is that 70% of students will achieve a proficiency of three or higher on the assessment criteria for competencies #1 and #2.

VI. Assessment Data & Use of Results

Quantitative Analysis

Wrote Clear Purpose/Thesis Statements:

56/100 or **56%** achieved a score of **5 points**
19/100 or **19%** achieved a score of **4 points**
18/100 or **18%** achieved a score of **3 points**
2/100 or **2%** achieved a score of **2 points**
0/100 or **0%** achieved a score of **1 point**
5/100 or **5%** achieved a score of **0 points**

Delivered Clear Purpose/Thesis Statements:

67/100 or **67%** achieved a score of **5 points**
22/100 or **22%** achieved a score of **4 points**
8/100 or **8%** achieved a score of **3 points**
2/100 or **2%** achieved a score of **2 points**
0/100 or **0%** achieved a score of **1 point**
1/100 or **1%** achieved a score of **0 points**

Areas for Improvement/Quantitative

22%- Delivery
21%- Structure/Organization
16%- Introduction
12%- Research/Evidence
12%- Visual Aids
6%- Conclusion
5%- Content
2%- Language
2%- Audience Analysis

Common Strengths/Quantitative

31%- Structure/Organization

23%- Delivery

20%- Introduction

13%- Research/Evidence

8%- Visual Aids

3%- Content

3%- Language

1%- Conclusion

Qualitative Analysis

Areas for Improvement/Qualitative

- Delivery issues are a common area of concern according to the evaluation. Typical delivery problems include the use of vocalized pauses, poor eye contact and an inability to use note cards effectively.
- Structural or organizational issues are another needs area that instructors identified. Many pointed out that speakers are still not citing their sources within the speech. Others commented that speakers' outlines need more development. Other concerns include a lack of focus in the speech, coherency problems and the absence of signposts and transitions.
- Although most speakers demonstrated an ability to develop and deliver clear purpose and thesis statements, many speakers are still struggling with the formal aspects of the introduction. These include the use of an effective attention-getter, failure to establish the significance/relevance of the topic and lack of a clear preview.
- Some speakers still struggle to demonstrate adequate research for the speech assignment and support their ideas with sufficient evidence.
- Speakers are sometimes not using visual aids to enhance their speeches or the visual aids they do use are "too small," or "busy."
- Conclusions generally need to be more memorable.

Common Strengths/ Qualitative

- Overall, speakers showed an ability to develop and deliver clear purpose and thesis statements.
- Many instructors pointed out that speakers both spoke and demonstrated effectively at the same time.
- The thesis was "carried" well throughout the speech.
- Many speakers demonstrated an ability to create and maintain a logical flow throughout the speech.
- Strong attention-getters and previews were cited as the most common strength of the introduction.
- Many speakers demonstrated strong research skills in developing their speeches.

Recommendations

- There is enough evidence in the evaluations to suggest that the use of visual aids should become a focal point for the course curriculum. Many students fail to use them when necessary while others lack basic competency when using them. Since most professional presentations employ the effective use of visual aids, e.g. PowerPoint, it is likely that students will need to develop this skill as part of their professional life. Although the technology should not be the primary emphasis, students need to attain basic levels of technical competency while continuing to develop the fundamental skills of speaking.
- Perhaps more emphasis could be put on the formal outline to ensure the coherent structure of the speech. Many instructors commented on the lack of development or “choppiness” of the speech. Proficiency in outlining will help to diminish many structural problems.
- As always, students need to understand and practice the extemporaneous style of delivering a speech.

These results will be shared with faculty members in the department, the Dean of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, the Assessment Committee, and other interested parties.

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