

## **Oral Communication**

*Updated 2008*

**Description:** Undergraduates have strategies for effective oral presentation.

**Requirement:** Undergraduates complete one officially-designated Oral Communication (“O” or “OC”) course.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Undergraduates can:

1. select appropriate content for an oral presentation activity;
2. present information in a clear and organized manner appropriate for the intended audience and purpose;
3. demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal delivery;
4. *if applicable:* use handouts or visual aids to promote clarity and interest.

### **Course Hallmarks**

The faculty on the Oral Communication Focus Board use these Hallmarks when evaluating proposals for the "O" designation.

1. Each student will conduct or participate in a minimum of three oral communication assignments or a comparable amount of oral communication activity during the class. In addition, at least 40% of the final grade for a 3-credit course will be a function of the student's oral communication activities (30% for a 4-credit course; 60% for a 2-credit course; 100% for a 1-credit course).
2. Each student will receive explicit training, in the context of the class, in oral communication concerns relevant to the assignment or activity.
3. Each student will receive specific feedback, critiquing, and grading of the oral communication assignments or activities from the instructor.
4. If instructor feedback primarily involves individual or paired students, enrollment will be limited to 20 students. If instructor feedback primarily involves groups of students, enrollment will be limited to 30 students.
5. The course will be numbered at the 300- or 400-level.

[Rubric on next page]

## Oral Communication Focus (OC) Rubric for Oral Presentations

Category	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Accomplished	4 Exemplary
<b>Content Selection</b>	Does not select relevant content	Selects insufficient content or selects content of limited relevance	Selects sufficient and mostly relevant content	Selects substantial and highly relevant content
<b>Organization</b>	Provides little or no focus or order to the material, lacks audience awareness.	Provides some focus or order to the material but the structure is somewhat unclear, somewhat appropriate for the audience.	Focuses and orders the material to convey a generally unified point or effect, generally appropriate for the audience.	Focuses and orders the material to convey a unified point or effect, highly appropriate for the audience.
<b>Delivery (verbal &amp; nonverbal)</b>	Inappropriate or ineffective enunciation; pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, or pace seriously hinder the speaker’s audibility or obstruct communication with the audience. Reading of or reference to notes, recitation. Inappropriate display or lack of energy level or empty vocalizations adversely affect the delivery. Poor posture, distracting or inappropriate body movements or gestures, or lack of eye contact interferes with the delivery.	Enunciation is hampered by occasionally lazy articulation; some inappropriateness of pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, or pace may be noticeable but such instances do not seriously hinder the speaker’s audibility. Delivery generally appears spontaneous but some moments of apparent recitation, reading of notes, or reference to notes occasionally interrupt. Inappropriate body movements, facial expressions, or gestures are occasionally noticeable.	Clear enunciation; appropriate pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, and pace are generally maintained, but occasionally the speaker’s voice is lacking somewhat in the appropriate enthusiasm or energy level. Delivery appears spontaneous throughout. A few empty vocalizations are noticeable but are not distracting. Speaker appears interested; facial expressions are consistently compatible with spoken content; body movements and gestures are usually natural, appropriate, and relaxed. Any nervous movements do not interfere with the presentation. Any lack of eye contact is only momentary.	Clear enunciation; appropriate pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, and pace throughout. Speaker sounds genuinely interested in the topic. Delivery appears spontaneous throughout. Notes may assist but do not interrupt or control delivery. Physical presentation is appropriate and purposeful in enhancing the speaker’s comments; body movements and gestures are natural, appropriate, and relaxed; eye contact is consistently maintained.
<b>Handouts &amp; Visual Aids (if applicable)</b>	No use of handouts or visual aids –or– Aids are inappropriate, distracting, incomprehensible, or extraneous.  Speaker faces the screen, blocks audience’s view of the aid, and/or does not refer to the handout.	Only minimal use of handouts or visual aids –or– Handouts and/or visual aids are not quite appropriate, or are somewhat distracting, not completely comprehensible, or somewhat extraneous. Speaker occasionally faces the screen, blocks the audience’s view of the aid, and/or does not refer to handout in a very appropriate or effective manner.	Handouts and/or visual aids are appropriate, not distracting, generally comprehensible or not extraneous.  Speaker generally faces the audience, does not block the audience’s view of the aid, and/or refers appropriately to the handout.	Handouts and/or visual aids are highly appropriate, not distracting, completely comprehensible, and highly relevant. They add significantly to the presentation.  Speaker consistently faces the audience, does not block the audience’s view of the aid, and/or the references to handouts contribute to the effectiveness.

The Content Selection rubric was adapted from the San Diego State University Cabrillo Tidepool Study Collaboration Rubric (p. 60 of Allen’s yellow handout). The Organization and Delivery rubrics were adapted from the University of South Carolina’s General Education Assessment Criteria – Oral Communication (p. 36 of Allen’s yellow handout)