Assessment of Oral Communication Skills

Lewis University
College of Business

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Agenda

• Lewis University & College of Business Missions
• Student Learning Outcomes
  ◦ Baccalaureate Characteristics
• Assessment Methodology
  ◦ Oral Communication Assessment Rubric
  ◦ Students’ Presentation Observations
  ◦ Data Analysis
• Closing the Loop
  ◦ Actions driven by discovery
• Questions
Lewis University & COB

• **Private, Catholic, Lasallian**
  - College of Arts & Sciences
  - College of Business
  - College of Education
  - College of Nursing & Health Professions
  - School for Professional & Continuing Education

• **College of Business (COB)**
  - 7 Undergraduate Departments/Majors
  - 28 Full-time Faculty
  - 1,200 Students (700 Undergrad; 500 Graduate)

Lewis University Mission

Lewis University, guided by its Catholic and Lasallian heritage, provides to a diverse student population programs for a **liberal and professional education** grounded in the interaction of knowledge and fidelity in the search for truth.

Lewis promotes the **development of the complete person** through the pursuit of wisdom and justice. Fundamental to its mission is a spirit of association which fosters **community in all teaching, learning and service.**
College Of Business Mission

- To help students understand the function of business in the development and stability of local, national and international societies,
- To assist students in their mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary for careers in business, and
- To instill in business graduates capabilities for quality decision-making and leadership, with an ethical sensitivity and sense of justice and social responsibility.

Institutional Student Learning Objectives

Lewis’ faculty identified 7 Baccalaureate Characteristics (BC) in which every graduate must demonstrate proficiency.

Focus on # 1:
- **Read, write, speak, calculate, and use technology at a demonstrated level of proficiency.**
Baccalaureate Characteristics

1. Essential Skills: Read, write, speak, calculate, and use technology at a demonstrated level of proficiency.

2. Approaches to Knowledge: Understand the major approaches to knowledge.

3. Faith, Religion, & Spirituality: Understand the place of faith, religion, and spirituality in the search for truth and meaning.


5. Responsible Citizenship: Become an informed, involved, and responsible citizen of a diverse yet interconnected national and global community.


7. Lifelong Learning: Possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to enter or advance a career, or to begin graduate study.
Assessment Methodology

- Identification of specific student learning outcome to be assessed
- Development of oral communication assessment rubric
- Observations of student presentations
- Data analysis and reporting

Development of Oral Communication Assessment Rubric

- Study existing rubrics from external resources as well as the ones COB faculty currently use
- Accrediting body requirements
- AACU VALUE Rubrics
- 11 rubrics from COB faculty in use for more than 15 courses
- Comparison of rubrics to identify common and unique aspects
- Goals:
  - General enough to be re-used in a different assessment cycle with different courses
  - Flexible enough for individual faculty to customize for their own courses and expectations (technical vs. non-technical, individual vs. group presentations)
  - Clear wording to allow for consensus between several evaluators of the same presentation
aacu oral communication value rubric

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<thead>
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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Criterion 4</th>
<th>Criterion 5</th>
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<td>Use of Visual Aids</td>
<td>Relate to two topics</td>
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<td>Central Message</td>
<td>Content analysis</td>
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<td>Issues identified</td>
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<td>Evaluation of learning</td>
<td>Audience Participation</td>
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<td>Adherence to time limit</td>
<td>Audience Involvement</td>
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sample rubrics comparison

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Bob</th>
<th>George</th>
<th>Ian</th>
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Observation of Student Presentations

- Identify all COB courses with an end-of-semester presentation requirement
- Conduct the assessment during the last two weeks of Fall’11
- 14 classes visited by 5 different assessors
- 65 student presentations assessed
  - 37 COB, 28 non-COB students
- 20 group presentations evaluated by 2 assessors
Closing the Loop

- Curriculum related Actions
- Assessment related Actions

Actions driven by our discoveries-1

- Curricular changes made
  - Making the rubric available to the students before the presentations
  - Other changes likely, as follows.
Actions driven by our discoveries-2

- The rubric, as originally designed had shortcomings
  - Solo versus Group Presentation
  - Seek external validity by scoring presenters as a group? or
  - Seek individualized justice by scoring each student as an individual?
  - Other, minor editorial changes were made as well

- We will adjust our rubric to allow for feedback to multiple students (when a group presents) or to solo presenters

Actions driven by our discoveries-3

- We considered requiring additional communications courses as a prerequisite for more advanced courses
  - Only current prerequisite is College Writing
  - Other possibilities include: Introduction to Human Communication and Corporate Communications are available through the Communications Department.

- An alternative would be to develop our own modules related to presentation, perhaps a module might involve teaching the rubric
- No resolution to this yet
Actions driven by our discoveries-4

• Data collection was more time consuming for assessment of oral presentations than for other SLOs (2 group presentations / session)
  ▫ For next cycle either increase the number of assessors or allow two semesters for the assessment

Any questions?

• Time permitting, we can discuss one or more of our concerns.
  ▫ Performance Target
  ▫ External validity or justice
  ▫ Discrete course verses modules in courses
  ▫ Time/resource consumption
Performance Targets?

- Acceptable Score = 65%;
  - 70% of students >= Acceptable
- Raise target % of students?
- Keep target % of students at 70% but raise acceptable score (standard) to ____?

External validity or justice?

- In the future, should we:
  - Seek external validity by scoring presenters as a group? or
  - Seek individualized justice by scoring each student as an individual?
Discrete course verses modules in courses?

- COB has a discrete upper-division communications course
  - “Discrete course” verses “module in courses” approach to building a communication foundation for our students in lower division

-Time/resource consumption?

- Data collection was more time consuming for assessment of oral presentations than for other SLOs (2 [group] presentations / session).
  - For next cycle should we either increase the number of assessors or allow two semesters for the assessment?
  - “Creative” alternatives?