



## ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC – WORKING DRAFT

Central Connecticut State University

### Definition

CCSU General Education Objective 5: To strengthen writing and communication skills. Relevant outcomes include the ability to: develop a chosen topic, organize specifics to support a main idea, use proper grammar, address a particular audience, and revise and edit to produce focused and coherent texts (<https://ccsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Undergraduate-Graduate-Catalog/Undergraduate-General-Education-Program>).

Employers and society demand that college graduates demonstrate competence in oral communication. The National Association of Colleges and Employers, in their 2016 Job Outlook report, rated oral communication as the most important skill needed in the workforce. Also included among the most desirable skills in this report listed teamwork, problem-solving, and the ability to influence others. This assertion suggests that 4 of the top 10 skills demanded by the working world are in direct relation to and demand competence in oral communication (NACE, 2017). Moreover, NACE (2019) argues that oral communication is one of 8 critical skills that students need to be career ready. Career readiness is the “attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.” A 2018 study by the American Association of Colleges and Universities found that 80% of executives and 90% of hiring managers rated oral communication skills as a priority for recent graduates.

This rubric assesses speaking behaviors, as opposed to knowledge/cognition and motivation/affect, related to the preparation and delivery of a public speaking performance (Morreale, Moore, Surges-Tatum, & Webster, 2007).

Hart Research Associates. (2018). *Fulfilling the American dream: Liberal education and the future of work*. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

<https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2018EmployerResearchReport.pdf>

Morreale, S., Moore, M., Surges-Tatum, D., & Webster, L. (2007). *The Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form, Second Edition*.

[https://www.natcom.org/sites/default/files/pages/Assessment\\_Resources\\_Competent\\_Speaker\\_Speech\\_Evaluation\\_Form\\_2ndEd.pdf](https://www.natcom.org/sites/default/files/pages/Assessment_Resources_Competent_Speaker_Speech_Evaluation_Form_2ndEd.pdf)

NACE Staff. (2019, March 29). *The four career competencies employers value most*. <https://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/the-four-career-competencies-employers-value-most/>

NACE Staff. (2017). JOB OUTLOOK 2016: THE ATTRIBUTES EMPLOYERS WANT TO SEE ON NEW COLLEGE GRADUATES' RESUMES.

<https://www.nacweb.org/career-development/trends-and-predictions/job-outlook-2016-attributes-employers-want-to-see-on-new-college-graduates-resumes/>

### Framing Language

Oral communication takes many forms. This rubric is specifically designed to evaluate oral presentations of a single speaker at a time and is best applied to live or video-recorded presentations. For panel presentations or group presentations, it is recommended that each speaker be evaluated separately. This rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed, supported by one or more forms of supporting materials and includes a purposeful organization. An oral answer to a single question not designed to be structured into a presentation does not readily apply to this rubric.

### Glossary

**Central idea/purpose:** The main point/ thesis/ "bottom line"/ "take-away" of a presentation. A clear central idea is easy to identify; a compelling central idea is also vivid and memorable.

**Vocal Delivery:** Delivery techniques enhance the effectiveness of the presentation when the speaker makes a concerted effort to modify speech rate, volume, and pitch to enhance audience interest and understanding.

**Nonverbal Delivery:** Posture, gestures, eye contact, and use of the voice. Nonverbal delivery enhances the effectiveness of the presentation.

**Language:** Vocabulary, terminology, and sentence structure. Language that supports the effectiveness of a presentation is appropriate to the topic and audience, grammatical, clear, and free from bias. Language that enhances the effectiveness of a presentation is also vivid, imaginative, and expressive.

**Organization:** The grouping and sequencing of ideas and supporting material in a presentation. An organizational pattern that supports the effectiveness of a presentation typically includes an introduction, one or more identifiable sections in the body of the speech, and a conclusion. An organizational pattern that enhances the effectiveness of the presentation reflects a purposeful choice among possible alternatives, such as a chronological pattern, a problem-solution pattern, an analysis-of-parts pattern, etc., that makes the content of the presentation easier to follow and more likely to accomplish its purpose.

	Capstone - 4	3 Milestones	2	Benchmark - 1
<p><b>1.</b> <b>Context:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to narrow a topic appropriately for the audience and occasion.</p>	Content, style, and/or visual aids are exceptionally appropriate and targeted to audience and context. Presentation makes effective use of time and stays within parameters.	Content, style, and/or visual aids are consistently appropriate to the audience, and/or context. Presentation meets set time and content parameters.	Content, style, and/or visual aids are occasionally inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Presentation falls slightly outside time and content parameters.	Content, style, and/or visual aids are frequently inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Presentation falls well outside time and content parameters.
<p><b>2.</b> <b>Content:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate a central idea/purpose and provide support appropriate for the audience and occasion.</p>	Central idea/purpose is vividly stated; content is accurate, thorough and directly on point; strong support is provided for each assertion through the integration of appropriate evidence.	Central idea/purpose is clearly stated; content is accurate and relevant; credible support is provided for each assertion through the integration of appropriate evidence.	Central idea/purpose is stated; content is accurate but not always relevant; support is offered but inadequate for some assertions.	Central idea/purpose is not stated; content is erroneous and/or irrelevant; support for assertions is largely absent.
<p><b>3.</b> <b>Organization:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to use an organizational pattern appropriate to the message.</p>	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful, interesting, and effective sequence. Transitions are used effectively and consistently to tie ideas together.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed mainly in a logical sequence. Transitions are used in most places where needed.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistently executed; may contain statements that are not in a logical sequence. Transitions are used but not consistently.	Little or no structure present. Presentation is confusing to the audience; no logical sequence or ideas. Transitions are not used.
<p><b>4.</b> <b>Vocal Delivery:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to use vocal variety to heighten and maintain interest appropriate to the audience and occasion.</p>	Vocal delivery is varied and dynamic. Speech rate, volume, and pitch enhance audience interest and understanding.	Vocal delivery is clear and distinct. Rate, volume, and pitch facilitate audience interest and understanding.	Vocal delivery is audible. Rate, volume, or speech disruptions only occasionally distract from audience interest and understanding.	Vocal delivery is too soft to hear, too fast to understand and/or long unintended silences. And speech disruptions [repetitions; filled pauses, e.g., "um"] impede audience interest and understanding.

<p><b>5.</b> <b>Nonverbal Delivery:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to use physical behaviors that support the verbal message.</p>	<p>Most or all of the following apply: Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement or facial expressions enhance the presentation.</p>	<p>Some, but not all of the following apply: Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement or facial expressions enhance the presentation.</p>	<p>Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement, and facial expressions neither enhance nor hinder the presentation.</p>	<p>Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement, and/or facial expressions are inappropriate and significantly distract from the presentation.</p>
<p><b>6.</b> <b>Language:</b> Students will demonstrate the ability to use language that is ethical, free from bias, and at the audience's level of sophistication.</p>	<p>Language is exceptionally clear and vivid, free from usage that is misleading and/or biased, and appropriate for the situation and audience.</p>	<p>Language is appropriate to the goals of the assignment, free from conspicuous errors, with no evidence of usage that is misleading and/or biased.</p>	<p>Language does not consistently meet the audience's level of sophistication (e.g., jargon, slang) and is occasionally misleading and/or biased.</p>	<p>Language fails to meet the audience's level of sophistication, is frequently misleading and/or biased.</p>

*Note.* Adapted from *Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Oral Communication Rubric*. Available online at: <https://mgccc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Oral-Communication-Rubric-Rev2020.pdf>.