Core Curriculum Assessment Annual Report

General Information

1. Name / Number of Course / Sequence:
   COMM 1000

2. SLO(s) being assessed:
   Student will demonstrate effective oral communication skills.

3. Department:
   Communication and Journalism

4. Department Representative:
   Margaret Fitch-Hauser

5. AGSC Content Alignment:
   AREA IV: History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences

Assessment Information

6. Assessment Method: [Explain how assessment for the measures associated with this SLO – not grading for the course as a whole was conducted.]

   The Department uses the existing COMM 1000 committee as an Assessment committee. They are responsible for meeting three times a semester. The first meeting involves evaluating taped informative speeches. The department randomly selects one student from each section, watch his/her informative speech and assess how well he/she meets the criteria on the speech rubric.
The committee also meets to evaluate a random number of student outlines that is evaluated using a rubric to make sure students are using the correct format, citing correctly, and overall organization.

Lastly, the department evaluates retention of subject matter by selecting 10 questions from the final exam that correlate with the fundamental elements of the course, such as language, critical thinking, claims, informative vs. persuasive speaking and gathering sources. The assessment committee reviews answers for those 10 questions and compare sections.

Finally, all speeches are graded for appropriate organization. Particularly relevant to assessing measure 3 is that persuasive speeches are graded on how well the students use argument to persuade.

7. Findings: [What assessment data did each assessment method produce?]
See information at end of report.

8. How did you or will you use the findings for improvement: [What questions / issues/ concerns did your data raise for the faculty teaching the course? What discussion did the faculty have about the findings? What future actions to improve student attainment of this outcome will the department / program take as a result of this analysis?]

The committee conducted assessments in the Fall, 2010 and Spring, 2011 semesters. Based on the findings of the Fall assessment, the Course Director chose to focus specifically on the problem areas of counterarguments, visual aids and delivery. She met with the instructors and GTA’s who teach and/or assist with the class to direct them to focus greater attention to these problem areas. The results of the Spring assessments show an 8% improvement in successfully addressing counterarguments, an almost 1% improvement in delivery, and a 16.5% improvement in the construction and use of visual aids.

9. Additional comments: [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]
For the next cycle, the emphasis on the three areas will continue with the addition of examining the correlation between outlines and the actual presentation.

10. Core Curriculum General Education Committee Comments:

The Department has presented a great deal of data and obviously has taken the time to think about how students are performing in the COMM 1000 classes. Attention could be profitably be paid to increasing broad discussion among all faculty teaching the course about how to increase student performance in particular areas.
Assessment Data for speeches

For the evaluation of speeches for spring semester, I chose to focus more specifically on the problem areas identified in the fall assessment. Those things included counterarguments, visual aids and delivery. I still conducted an analysis of the introduction, main points and conclusion, but did not focus on every aspect of those parts of the speech because students seemed to have a clear understanding of those based on the fall assessment. I will conduct more assessments for summer and fall 2011. In Spring 2012 I will meet with our instructors and GTAs to focus more on the problem areas, which again were the counterarguments, visual aids and delivery.

The data for assessing actual student speeches was collected by viewing one persuasive value speech from each section. There were 28 sections of COMM 1000 taught in the Spring of 2011. One of the speeches did not record properly, so there were only 27 speeches viewed. The data breakdown is as follows:

**Speech Introduction**
6 out of 27 students had all five elements of an effective introduction
18 out of 27 students had most or some of the elements of an effective introduction. Most of these students were only missing one of the five required statements.
3 out of 27 students had no introduction

**Speech Body**
13 out of 27 students had well developed main points
11 out of 27 students had clear points, but were missing things like effective transitions and citing sources correctly
3 out of 27 students had no clear points and the speech seemed made little sense

**Conclusion**
11 out of 27 students had a well developed conclusion
13 out of 27 students had most or some of the elements of an effective conclusion. Many of the students in this category failed to end with a statement of passive agreement or a call to action.
3 out of 27 students had no conclusion
**Visual Aid**

1. Organization of Content on the Aid
   - 10 out of 27 students organized the content in a clear and effective display
   - 17 out of 27 students did not organize the content in a clear way

2. Effective Supporting Material for the Visual
   - 13 out of 27 students included effective supporting material for the visual
   - 14 out of 27 students did not include any type of supporting material for the visual

3. Effective Delivery of the Aid
   - 11 out of 27 students delivered the aid effectively
   - 16 out of 27 students did not effectively deliver the aid

4. Choice of Visual Aid (i.e. the type of visual aid chosen complemented the spoken material in the most effective manner)
   - 15 out of 27 students chose a visual that complemented the material
   - 12 out of 27 students chose a visual that did not complement the material

**Delivery**

- 22 out of 27 students relied too much on their notes and read too much of the speech
- 12 out of 27 students had too many vocal fillers in the speech
- 5 out of 27 students had good to excellent delivery

**Language**

- 22 out of 27 students employed language techniques in an effective manner
- 0 out of 27 students used inappropriate or offensive language
- 5 out of 27 students presented at least one fallacy in the speech

**Counterarguments**

- 14 out of 27 students addressed a counterargument in the speech

The remainder of the 27 can be broken down as follows:

- 1 student addressed the counterargument, but didn’t give it fair weight
- 4 students addressed the counterargument, but didn’t present enough evidence to effectively refute it
- 8 students did not address any type of counterargument
Time Limit
20 out of 37 students delivered speeches within the time constraints specified
4 out of 27 students went over the time limit
3 out of 27 students were below the time limit

Assessment Data for Peer Speech Evaluations

Based on the data below, students seem to be able to recognize important speech elements like the topic, conclusion and whether a speaker demonstrates effective eye contact. However, for the majority of the content of the speech student’s seem to be poor judges of identifying other important elements like the speech’s specific purpose, the main points, the speech’s organizational pattern and actual transitions. In the future more speeches will be shown in class where the instructor asks some of the same questions and then goes back to focus on specific parts of the speech in order to help students become more effective listeners.

To collect this data, all students that met in a technology classroom were shown the same speech and asked to answer the same questions about that speech. From each section, one student’s answer form was evaluated for these purposes. Here are the overall findings:

**Identified Topic**
16 out of 24 students were able to correctly identify the topic of the speech
8 out of 24 students knew the topic was related to music, but could not specify what about music the speaker was focusing on

**Specific Purpose**
13 out of 24 students were able to correctly state the speech’s specific purpose
11 out of 24 students were unable to specify the correct specific purpose (4 of these just listed the speech’s general purpose)

**Identified Preview Statement**
8 out of 24 students were able to correctly re-state the speaker’s preview statement
14 out of 24 students were unable to answer or answered the questions incorrectly regarding the preview statement
2 of the students were able to identify some, but not all of the speaker’s preview statement

**Identified Organizational Pattern**
8 out of 24 students were able to correctly identify the speech’s organizational pattern
16 out of 24 students were unable to correctly identify the speech’s organizational pattern

**Identified Transitions**
22 out of 24 students were able to recognize that the speech had clear transitions
2 out of 24 students were unable to recognize that the speech had clear transitions
Out of the 22 that said the speech had clear transitions, only 5 were able to correctly re-state those transitions correctly.

**Identified Conclusion**
24 out of 24 students were able to clearly recognize the speech conclusion

**Eye Contact**
22 out of 24 students felt the speaker maintained appropriate eye contact with the audience
1 out of 24 students felt the speaker’s eye contact could have been better
1 out of 24 students felt the speaker demonstrated poor eye contact with the audience

**Assessment Data for Outlines**
Based on the data analyzed, most students are completing outlines correctly. To analyze this area we collected an outline from each section. We analyzed 26 out of 28 possible outlines (one instructor did not turn in student outlines for assessment). It is clear from this data that students can clearly follow a sample outline. Some students did not follow the proper outlining pattern or failed to include sources and transitions within the outline. As a whole, students are following the guidelines for outlining their speeches. However, in a future assessment I’d like to analyze the students outline, then his/her speech to see if the delivery and the actual speech match the quality of the outline. Below are the specific findings from our analysis.
Included an introduction with all the necessary elements, including identifying the specific purpose before the introduction
15 out of 26 students included all of necessary information on their outline. Most of the ones that did not have all the information did not identify the specific purpose, but had the rest of the introduction.

Clearly Organized Outline
21 out of 26 students organized the outline in an understandable manner

Main Points
22 out of 26 students had identifiable main points within the outline

Supporting Material
18 out of 26 students included enough supporting material to back up the main points of the speech.

Sources
18 out of 26 students identified their sources of information within the outline

Transitions
19 out of 26 students included transitions where appropriate within the outline

Conclusion
21 out of 26 students included a conclusion section in their outline

Full Sentences
22 out of 26 students completed an outline with full sentences

Form and Indentation
14 out of 26 students turned in an outline in the proper format (i.e. Roman Numerals, numbers, indentions)
Assessment Data for Final Exam Information:

To assess student comprehension of core concepts we selected 10 final exam questions to assess. Student’s scored highest on the questions regarding visual aids and evidence. More than 400 students answered those questions correctly on the exam. There were two questions in which 350-400 respondents answered correctly: organization and anxiety. Between 300-350 students answered the questions about fallacies, delivery, credibility and statistics correctly. Between 250-300 students were able to correctly answer a question about persuasion. Only 105 students were able to correctly identify a clear central idea statement on the exam. Out of the 10 questions being assessed, this was the only one in which more students answered incorrectly than correctly.

Each section’s test data is broken down below:

**Central Idea**
Answered Correctly: 105
Answered Incorrectly: 302
Total: 407

**Statistics**
Answered Correctly: 302
Answered Incorrectly: 105
Total: 407

**Credibility**
Answered Correctly: 324
Answered Incorrectly: 83
Total: 407

**Delivery**
Answered Correctly: 357
Answered Incorrectly: 56
Total: 407
Fallacies
Answered Correctly: 337
Answered Incorrectly: 70
Total: 407

Organization
Answered Correctly: 377
Answered Incorrectly: 30
Total: 407

Anxiety
Answered Correctly: 373
Answered Incorrectly: 44
Total: 417

Visual Aids
Answered Correctly: 413
Answered Incorrectly: 4
Total: 417

Evidence
Answered Correctly: 331
Answered Incorrectly: 86
Total: 417

Persuasion
Answered Correctly: 289
Answered Incorrectly: 118
Total: 407

Variations in the totals exist because some answers were thrown out by the scantron machines that grade the exams. There was also one instructor that turned in incomplete data resulting in slightly higher or lower numbers throughout. The numbers are also slightly lower than the actual number of students that took the exam because information from five sections was never turned in. These sections were taught by GTAs that left without turning anything in. I requested the
information from them and was told by them they would send it, but I never received it.