1. **Name(s) and Number(s) of Course being assessed for Oral Communication:**

   HDFS 3080: Development of Interpersonal Skills

2. **Number of Students enrolled per year AND number of those students whose work was assessed for oral communication (SLO 7) competency:**

   - There are approximately 170 students enrolled in HDFS 3080 per year.-All students (68 total) enrolled in HDFS 3080 Spring semester 2012 were assessed for oral communication competency. An additional 64 students will be assessed Fall 2012.

3. **Assessment Method(s): Explain how assessment for this SLO - not grading for the course as a whole-was conducted. You may cut/paste rubrics for inclusion here, identify faculty reviewing committees, or identify specific kinds of test questions important to your method.)**

   Students enrolled in the HDFS 3080 – Development of Interpersonal Skills for Spring semester 2012 were required to demonstrate basic oral communication skills through an in-class role-play assignment. Students were randomly assigned a role-play partner and provided with role-play scenarios from which they could choose. Prior to the assessment, students received lectures on skills necessary for effective interpersonal communication and practiced the skills targeted for assessment through in-class role-plays and written assignments for which they received feedback. Any perceived deficiencies were addressed prior to students completing the assessment assignment. Requirements for the oral communication assessment and the grading rubric were also reviewed with students prior to completion of the role-play assignment. In completing the in-class role play, student pairs were given 10-minutes to demonstrate their oral communication skills in front of the class. Oral communication skills were assessed by at least two instructors and their peers in three areas: listening, speaking, and non-verbal behavior. A grading rubric was created for the assessment (see attached) and it addressed key skills such as whole messages, “I” messages, paraphrasing, open-ended questions, and non-verbal attending behavior. Some presentations were video recorded for training and evaluation purposes for future semesters.

4. **If the Assessment methods differ from those initially proposed to the CCGEC, identify the differences and explain the rationale for those changes:**

   N/A

5. **Findings: (what add assessment data tell you about student proficiency in this outcome?)**

   The analysis of the assessment data provided both areas of student proficiency and areas where students’ oral communication skills could be further developed. Based on the two instructors’ evaluation of the in-class role-plays, 19.13% of students demonstrated an “A” level of proficiency, 33.82% demonstrated a “B” level, 32.35% demonstrated a “C” level, 13.23% demonstrated a “D” level, and 1.47% below a “D” level. Student proficiency regarding skill areas were as follows:

   - 39.71% of students were able to effectively demonstrate a whole message. Students were more proficient in communicating facts and opinions (100% and 92.65% of students respectively) than they were in communicating needs and feelings (60.29% and 66.91% of students respectively).
   - Students were very proficient in communicating “I” messages and avoiding “you/but” messages. 100% of students demonstrated “I” messages and only 2.21% demonstrated “you/but” messages.
   - Students were proficient in paraphrasing the content of their role-play partner message (81.62% of students); however only 67.65% of students paraphrased feelings. Even fewer students paraphrased both content and feeling...
(56.62% of students).
-24.27% of students always or almost always provided appropriate prompts to convey listening, 37.5% provided appropriate prompts sometimes, and 38.23% never or almost never provided prompts.
-All students demonstrated proficiency in asking open-ended questions; however 36.03% of students included closed-ended questions when seeking clarification from their partner.
-Students demonstrated proficiency in avoiding some disconfirming responses, such as cold comfort and advising (13.24% and 8.82% respectively), but they demonstrated less effectiveness in avoiding analyzing and judging responses (54.41% and 27.94% of students).
-Non-verbal skills were measured using an acronym “SOLER.” Students were proficient in Squarely facing their partner (99.27% of students) and maintain Eye contact (74.27%), and moderately proficient in maintaining an Open body position (72.06%) and Leaning toward their partner (53.68%). Students were deficient in maintaining a Relaxed demeanor (40.44%).

The role-play assessment also demonstrated concurrent validity with overall grades (after removing role-play assessment scores) in the course \( r(66) = .465, p < 0.001 \). It appears that students’ scores on the role-play assessment is a significant indicator of overall content in the interpersonal communications course.

6. 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?)

Based on our initial findings from the spring 2012 assessment, there appears to be several areas that can be improved both in the instruction of oral communication and the assessment of SLO 7. In regard to instruction, students had difficulty communicating needs and feelings when demonstrating a whole message and in paraphrasing feelings. They also did not perform as proficiently on avoiding disconfirming responses and using appropriate prompts. Additional class time will be spent before and after student presentations to address these identified deficiencies. The following changes in instruction for the fall 2012 semester have already been implemented:
-Adjustments have been made in the course schedule to provide students with more in class practice time and immediate feedback to promote enhanced learning of the oral communication skills found to be deficient in the spring assessment.
-Behavioral modeling of ideal skills will be provided. Some presentations from the spring semester were video recorded for training purposes. A selection of these will be used in class to highlight examples of excellent interpersonal skills. The video recordings also will be used to provide students with better training in the use of the grading rubric.
-Student pair role-plays will be video recorded by students and uploaded into Canvas for grading. This should allow for improvement in their ability to display ‘a relaxed demeanor’ when demonstrating SOLER. It will also decrease the number of class days needed for presentations. Decreasing presentation days will open-up class periods for additional instruction and rubric training.
-Additional feedback on students’ performance will be provided following the grading of their assessment role-plays. The course instructor will hold a debriefing session to discuss the oral communication skills that were demonstrated well and not so well by students.
-The role play scenarios provided to students for guiding their interpersonal exchange will be modified and expanded to include options that require greater engagement, such as can be obtained through problem-solving and conflict resolution.
Changes in assessment will be as follows:
- Additional grading rubric training for students. Inter-rater reliability among the instructors was excellent (ICC (3, 2) = 0.80; 95% CI [0.678, 0.879]; F = 5.05, p < 0.001) when grading according to the rubric; however inter-rater reliability between the students’ and the instructors’ averages was only fair (ICC (3, 2) = 0.493; 95% CI [0.172, 0.69]; F = 1.972, p < 0.01). Lower inter-rater reliability suggests that the students and the instructors differed in how they assessed student role-plays. Additionally, an analysis of the concurrent validity indicated that instructors’ grading of the role-play was a significant indicator of overall student learning in the course [r(66) = 0.311, p = 0.01]; however, students’ grading of the role-play was not an indicator of overall student learning in the course [r(66) = 0.226, n.s.]. The purpose of peer-evaluation in the assessment was to increase awareness of oral communication skills through observation. It was anticipated that students would be able to distinguish between the effective and ineffective application of these skills during the role-play presentation. Students, however, were lenient in their assessments which may reflect their inability to accurately distinguish between good and poor interpersonal skills, at least as defined by the grading rubric. As mentioned above, additional class time will be dedicated to better prepare students for effectively using the grading rubric based on the video exemplars.
- The grading rubric also will be refined. Because spring 2012 semester was the first time the rubric was used, several modifications will be implemented fall 2012. Examples of revisions include oThe evaluation of “I” messages will be excluded. All students demonstrated proficiency in the use of “I” messages and this area of assessment was found to be redundant with the evaluation of whole messages. Also “I” messages did not add incremental validity to the overall assessment rubric.

An A measure of time will be added to the rubric as well. In spring 2012, some student pairs finished in 2 minutes while others finished in 8 minutes. A time requirement of 4-6 minutes will be required fall 2012 as it was determined to be an adequate length of time for students to demonstrate their oral communication skills during the role-play.

7. Additional Comments: (What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?)

N/A

8. Committee Comments

3.8/4- No specific comments were made beyond the score through the rubric