



## **Undergraduate Oral Communication ILO Assessment Report**

### **Overview of the Assessment Project**

During the 2022-2023 academic year, HPU assessed the Oral Communication (OC) competency of our students in both general education lower division courses as well as undergraduate capstone and other upper-division courses. This assessment project was the second time HPU assessed OC as part of an established series of annual assessments of our five institutional learning outcomes (ILOs): written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy, and quantitative analysis.

### **Methods**

We learned from previous ILO assessment projects that a few assignment parameters were warranted to ensure the OC rubric could be applied uniformly to a variety of artifacts collected from both the general education and upper division levels across the various disciplines. Therefore, in late Spring 2022, the Academic Assessment and Program Review Shared Governance Committee (AAPRC) designed minimal guidelines for the creation of an assignment that could be assessed for this project and provided those guidelines to faculty teaching Fall courses with the OC ILO. In August 2022, the AY 22-23 OC ILO assessment project was first introduced at our Fall 2022 Faculty Assembly kick-off meeting and then reiterated along with a more complete discussion of assignment guidelines during our annual Assessment Day. In early December 2022, the guidelines were distributed to faculty teaching Spring 2023 courses with an OC ILO.

A total of 682 student videos were collected across the Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023 semesters from General Education and Upper Division courses by direct upload from Blackboard to Watermark. In Fall of 2023, a rubric-norming session was conducted involving faculty volunteers who then proceeded to score a total of 495 randomly chosen student videos. Faculty from all Colleges and Schools participated in the scoring project which was completed by January 2024. Assessment scores were downloaded from Watermark and matched with Banner/IPEDs data, and statistical analyses were performed in Excel. Results were reviewed by the AAPRC, and reported to administrators and faculty attending our annual Assessment Day in August 2024. Program-specific results were distributed to individual Programs for analysis and inclusion in their 5-year self-studies. This report is a result of those efforts and upon approval by the AAPRC and provost, it was uploaded to our Student Success website.

## Assessment Findings

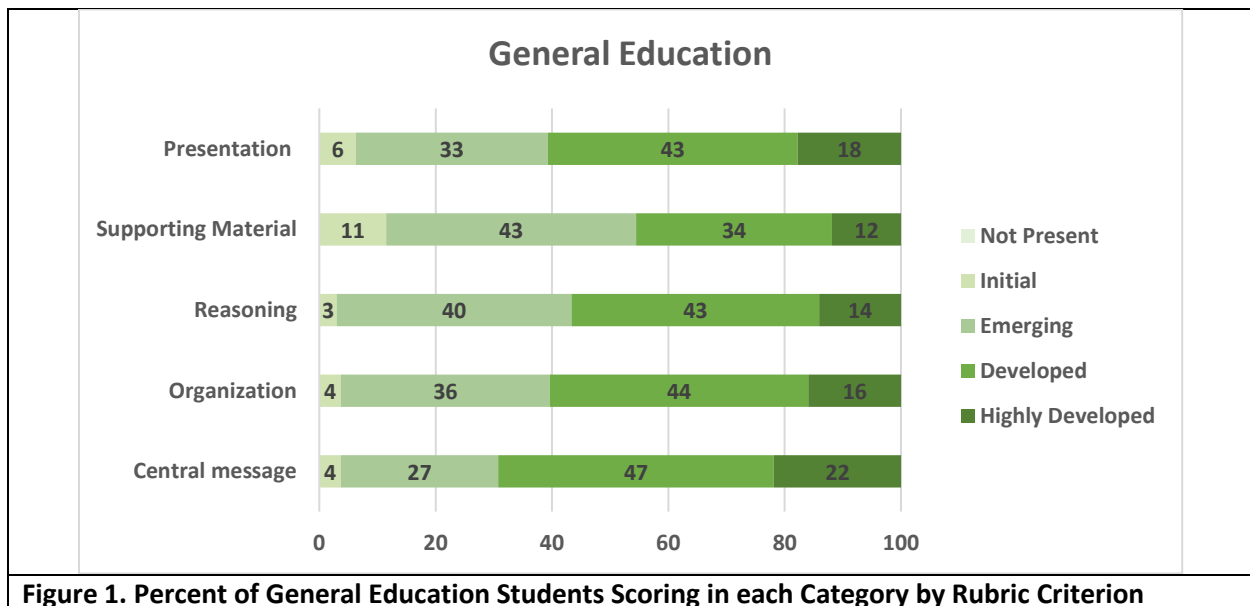
### General Education

Project Target: 85% of students enrolled in General Education courses will achieve initial, emerging, developed, or highly developed score for each of the 5 rubric criteria.

During the 2022-2023 Academic Year, 270 student videos were assessed in 12 General Education courses from the “American Experience” and “Critical Thinking” Core Curriculum areas. At the General Education level, students reached the preset target in every rubric category (Table 1 and Figure 1).

**Table 1. AY 2022-2023 General Education Oral Communication Results by Criterion (n=270)**

Oral Communication Rubric Criteria (% ≥ Emerging)	Number of Students Scoring in Each Category				
	0	1	2	3	4
	Not Present	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly Developed
<b>Presentation (100%)</b>	0	17	89	116	48
<b>Supporting Materials (100%)</b>	0	31	116	91	32
<b>Reasoning (100%)</b>	0	8	109	115	38
<b>Organization (100%)</b>	0	10	97	120	43
<b>Central Message (100%)</b>	0	10	73	128	59



**Figure 1. Percent of General Education Students Scoring in each Category by Rubric Criterion**

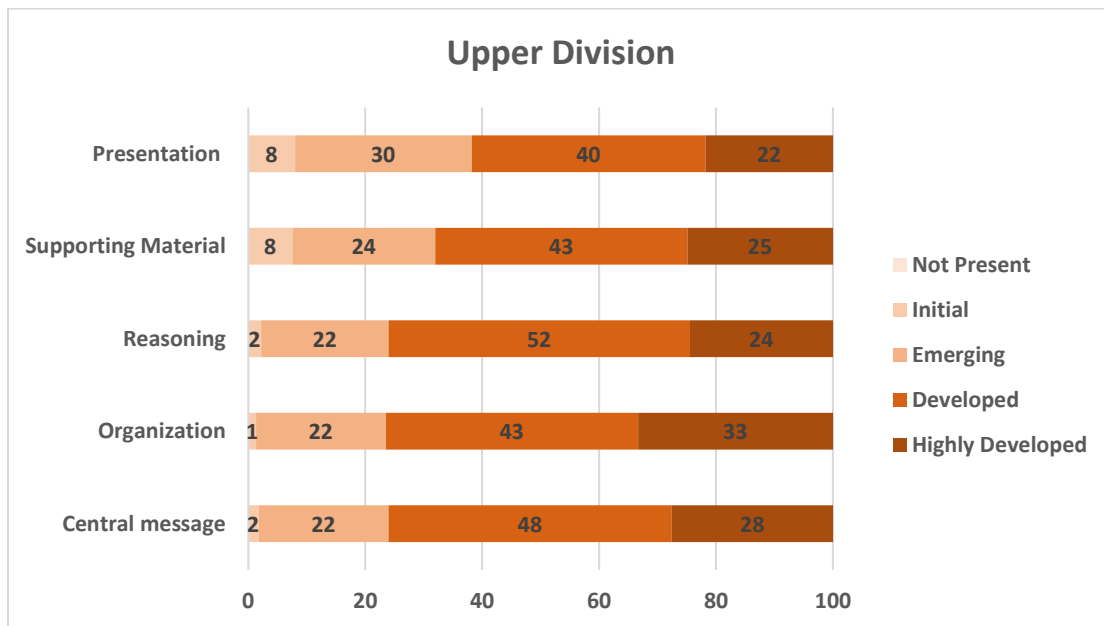
## Upper division

*Project Target: 85% of students enrolled in upper division or capstone-level courses will achieve emerging, developed or highly developed scores for each of the five rubric criteria.*

During the 2022-2023 Academic Year, 225 student videos were assessed from 21 capstone or other upper-division courses. Upper-division students met the preset target in all rubric categories (Table 2, Figure 2).

**Table 2. AY 2022-2023 Upper Division Oral Communication results by criterion (n=225)**

Oral Communication Rubric Criteria (% ≥ Developed)	Number of Students Scoring in Each Category				
	0	1	2	3	4
	Not Present	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly Developed
<b>Presentation (92%)</b>	0	18	68	90	49
<b>Supporting Materials (92%)</b>	0	17	55	97	56
<b>Reasoning (98%)</b>	0	5	49	116	55
<b>Organization (99%)</b>	0	3	50	97	75
<b>Central Message (98%)</b>	0	4	50	109	62



**Figure 2. Percent of Upper Division Students Scoring in each Category by Rubric Criterion**

**Table 3. Mean Oral Communication scores (mean ± stdev) as a function of IPEDs student demographic data and course attributes**

		GENERAL		UPPER DIVISION		
		EDUCATION				
		mean ± stdev	n	mean ± stdev	n	
Overall*		13.5 ± 3.2	270	14.7 ± 3.3	225	
Gender	Female	13.7 ± 3.1	185	14.5 ± 3.1	156	
	Male	12.9 ± 3.3	85	15.0 ± 3.5	69	
IPEDS race/ethnicity	Black or African American	12.9 ± 2.8	22	13.2 ± 4.0	5	
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	na		14.0	1	
	Asian	12.8 ± 3.5	39	14.7 ± 3.1	63	
	Caucasian/White	13.3 ± 3.3	83	14.8 ± 3.2	59	
	Hispanic	13.9 ± 3.1	63	15.3 ± 2.8	28	
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	12.8 ± 1.9	4	19.0	1	
	Two or more races	13.6 ± 3.3	38	15.4 ± 3.2	31	
	First generation college student	YES	12.8 ± 3.1*	85	14.5 ± 3.3	68
		NO	13.8 ± 3.2	185	14.8 ± 3.3	157
STEM major	YES	12.8 ± 2.9	61	14.6 ± 3.0	50	
	NO	13.7 ± 3.3	209	14.7 ± 3.3	175	
Semester term	8-week	13.4 ± 3.0	165	15.2 ± 3.4	33	
	16-week	13.5 ± 3.3	105	14.6 ± 3.2	192	
Course modality	Face-to-face	13.6 ± 3.3	130	14.7 ± 3.2	191	
	Hybrid	12.0 ± 1.8	7	na		
	Online	13.4 ± 3.2	133	14.5 ± 3.4	34	
Pell eligible	YES	12.8 ± 3.0*	94	14.6 ± 3.1	70	
	NO	13.8 ± 3.2	176	14.7 ± 3.3	155	

\*significance determined by t-test, unequal variance,  $p < 0.05$

## Discussion

- *How closely do we think these findings reflect the actual level of competence of our students?*
  - To approximate the “overall” OC proficiency of our students, a student’s individual scores in all rubric criteria were summed to create a combined overall OC score. The AAPRC predicted that upper-division students, having had two additional years of college-level OC experience, would score higher than General Education students. Indeed, the overall mean score at the General Education level was  $13.5 \pm 3.2$  (mean ± stdev,  $n=270$ ), and at the Upper Division was  $14.7 \pm 3.3$  (mean ± stdev,  $n=225$ ). The relationship between the means was significant,  $p < 0.05$  (Table 3), which supported the prediction that upper-division students would be more proficient than General Education students. The AAPRC agreed that this analysis provides a reasonable snapshot of our students’ OC competence during the 2022-2023 academic year.
    - Assessment scores at the General Education level were markedly better than results from our last assessment of OC in AY 2017-2018 when General Education students

only met the preset target in one of the five rubric criteria. In AY 2022-2023, General Education students met the preset target in all five rubric criteria (Table 1). This result may be due, at least in part, to “closing the loop” discussions with faculty stemming from the previous OC assessment. In addition, we collected and scored almost 7x as many General Education student videos as were collected for the 2016-2107 project, which lends much greater confidence in our 2022-2023 results at the General Education level.

- In AY 2022-2023 UD students met the preset target in each rubric category (Table 2) with a large % scoring developed or higher in every rubric category (Fig. 2). This result is similar to our AY 2017-2018 results. Furthermore, we collected 2.4x more UD student artifacts in AY 2022-2023 than in AY 2017-2018 which enhances our confidence in these results.
  - The AAPRC agreed that these results seem elevated compared to what we generally experience in the classroom and agreed to increase the preset targets for the next OC ILO assessment project.
  - In addition, the AAPRC agreed that scoring recorded videos cannot accurately assess a student’s ability to interact with their audience, e.g., eye contact and body language, and it was noted that many students were reading their presentations from notes. It was suggested that the AAPRC employ live scoring where possible during the next OC ILO assessment project and consider alternate means of assessing students in distance learning programs. This would necessarily decrease the number of artifacts that could be scored but may provide more accurate assessment results.
- Though unconventional for ordinal rubric data, we applied inferential statistics to explore any marked differences in overall mean score as a function of student demographics or course modality (Table 3). It is important to note that these are preliminary statistical analyses on ordinal data and that further analysis of the effects of combinations of student demographic and/or course modality may be warranted. In short:
- Overall OC scores for UD students were slightly but significantly higher than GE scores as predicted (Table 3).
  - There were no significant differences in overall OC scores based on self-reported IPEDS gender or race/ethnicity at either the General Education or Upper Division levels. Similarly, there were no significant differences at either the GE or UD level based on STEM (or non) major, semester length, or course modality.
  - For the General Education respondents, mean overall scores of first generation college students were significantly lower than the overall mean scores of non first generation students. Similarly, General Education students who are Pell eligible scored slightly but significantly lower than non-Pell eligible respondents. These relationships were not found to be true at the upper division level where there were no significant differences for either category of student demographic.

## Closing the Loop

- *How shall we use these findings?*
  - The data and findings were presented and discussed with faculty and University administrators at Assessment Day in Fall 2024.
  - These University-wide results are posted to our Student Success website to make them available to the University community and the general public.
  - The major-specific data have been distributed to the respective Program Chairs to be used for 5-year self-studies for programs with an OC Program Learning Outcome.
  - In our continuing efforts to “close the loop,” the General Education representative on the AAPRC will present these results at the Fall General Education Assessment and Learning Committee meeting and submit the data for inclusion in the General Education assessment plan.
- *Are we satisfied with the results? If not, what are we going to do about it?*
  - The AAPRC is pleased with the high response rate for the OC ILO assessment project.
  - In the final analysis, we are pleased with these results which indicate our students met the preset target goals for oral communication at both the GE and the UD levels.
    - However, given the seemingly elevated level of student success exhibited by these results, the AAPRC agreed to consider raising the preset targets when OC is next assessed. The AAPRC agreed that the new targets below might better estimate our students’ OC skills:
      - At the General Education level, 60% will score Emerging or higher and 90% will score Initial or higher.
      - At the Upper Division level, 60% will score Developed or higher and 90% will score Emerging or higher.
    - In addition, as discussed above, efforts should be made to score student presentations live in the classroom during the next OC ILO assessment project, which may more accurately assess our students’ OC skills
  - Oral Communication will be assessed again in the 2027-2028 Academic Year