Minutes from the AoL Day of Oral Communication Day

September 25, 2015

Members Present: Jean Snavely (chair), Allen Hunt, David Zimmer, Mary Jane Gardner, Thad Crews, Josh Hernsberger, Shane Spiller (ex officio). Member not present: Ron Rhoades
Guest present: Stacey Gish, Communication Coordinator for the Gordon Ford College of Business

Undergraduate Communication Assessments

Committee members evaluated presentation skills using samples from the following classes in Spring 2015.

- MGT 305,
- MGT 498 (3 different instructors) and
- ENT 496

The sample included students from all majors in the college of business. Each student was evaluated first using the college's Oral Communication Rubric (included at the end of these minutes) with a 5 point scale where a score of 1 describes the Amateur category and a score of 5 describes the Admirable category. A score of 3 is acceptable for undergraduate students.

Individual Student Results

Student	Organization	Content	Language	Nonverbal	Visuals	
1	3	5	3	3	2	
2	2	5	3	2	2	
3	3	5	3	2	2	
4	3	5	3	2	2	
5	1	2	1	1	1	
6	3	3	3	3	3	
7	5	5	3	5	5	
8	4	4	3	3	2	
9	4	4	4	4	4	
10	3	3	3	3	3	
11	2	2	2	2	2	
12	3	3	3	3	3	
13	4	4	4	4	4	
14	5	5	5	5	5	ENT 496 students who had
15	5	5	4	4	5	numerous training sessions with Stacey Gish
16	4	4	3	4	3	
17	5	5	4	4	4	
18	4	4	4	4	4	
19	4	4	3	3	4	
Mean	3.5263	4.0526	3.2105	3.2105	3.1579	Acceptable
Median	4	4	3	3	3	
Mode	3	5	3	3	2	

Overall results are acceptable, but the committee identified recurring areas of weakness. After assigning overall individual scores, the committee then focused on areas that did not reach Admirable to determine areas where students could improve. Those results follow.

Criteria	Yes	No
Organization		6
Speaker presents topic clearly, consistent with purpose		
Speaker uses memorable, engaging introduction	12 and 17	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11
Speaker provides clear thesis		
Body reflects clear, logical organization		
Transitions between main points are succinct		2 and 6
Conclusion leaves audience with undeniable message or call to action		
Fits within time limits		
Content		
Speaker uses supporting materials linked to thesis		
Quality and variety of materials enhances clarity of topic and credibility of speaker		
Speaker provides adequate explanation of key concepts and theories		4
Speaker provides valid research with a variety of sources		
Names and facts are precise and explicit		
Language		17
Speaker uses language that enhances audience comprehension and interest for topic while avoiding inappropriate jargon and slang.		10 and 13
Speaker uses proper grammar and no disfluencies (un, er, so, y'know)		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18
Vocals are exceptional and appropriately well-pace, easily heard by all audience members, and varied in pitch to enhance the message		5, 8
Nonverbal		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12
Speaker demonstrates exceptional posture, hand gestures, body movement, facial expressions, eye contact		
Speaker maintains proper distance from audience		
Speaker wears appropriate attire for the purpose of topic		10 and 19
Visuals		1, 2, 3, 8, 9,17
Speaker uses graphics that reinforce thesis and maximize audience understanding of topic		
Use of media is appropriate, readable, and professional	11	2
Speaker looks planned, prepared and practiced		1, 2, 6, 12, 16

Conclusions from these results:
In general,

- Students need much stronger introductions: engage the audience in the first minute or so with an interesting hook and enthusiasm,
- Students demonstrate too many disfluencies,
- visuals used in presentations are not up to a desirable level for GFCB graduates,
- students need to spend more time practicing and preparing for presentations, and
- students need to be more aware of their surroundings and appearance when making presentations.

Remedies

The Business Infomatics/Computer Information Systems department has begun addressing the need for better Power Point presentations in CIS 141.

Professor in the class with the worst performing students asked for and received feedback from Stacey Gish, GFCB communications coordinator, on improving student presentations. The committee needs to collect data again this semester and reassess his classes.

Stacey Gish will adjust her communication instruction to include videos of bad presentations and emphasize coverage on areas of weakness.

The committee would like to develop a room dedicated to videotaping presentations in the future.

Recommendations from the committee will be developed further at its next meeting.

Graduate Communication Assessments

Face-to-Face

Graduate presentations from Spring 2015 in BA 580, Managerial Communication, were evaluated by the AoL committee as a pre-treatment for the face-to-face first year cohort of students.

Closing the loop activity: Following the spring semester in which data was originally collected, this cohort received training in effective oral communication/presentation skills from the professor at the beginning of the Summer 2015 term in BA 592, Ethical Decision Making in Business. These students made presentations at the end of the summer term. These presentations constitute the post-treatment evaluation. The Oral Communication rubric was used by the AoL committee in evaluating both the pre- and post-assessments.

Results

The size of the cohort allowed the committee to evaluate individual students before and after the closing the loop activity.

Paired results follow.

Student	Pre-	Post-	Change
1	4	4	0
2	2	4	2
3	3	4	1
4	3.5	3	-0.5
5	5	5	0
6	2	4	2
7	4	4	0
8	3	4	1
9	2	3	1
10	4	4	0
11	4	5	1
12	4	3.5	-0.5
13	3	4	1
14	2	3	1
15	2	3	1
Mean	3.166667	3.833333	

The committee interprets these results as evidence that MBA students benefit from receiving instruction and feedback on oral communication skills. A score of 3.5 is acceptable so instruction brought these results into meeting expectations.

Professional MBA (PMBA)

Data to evaluate oral communication skills for the PMBA program data from BA 520, Critical Thinking and Business Ethics, was collected in Summer 2015. This is a small group of students who meet through interactive video sessions (IVS) on Saturdays. The AoL committee was able to close the loop on oral communications for the PMBA using pre- and post-evaluations of individual students. Students were evaluated using presentations at the beginning of the semester. Assessment of the pre-treatment presentations did not meet expectations when all presentations were assessed as a 1 or 2.

Closing the loop activity: Following the unacceptable performance at the beginning of the semester, the professor instructed the PMBA students on good oral communication/presentation skills and expectations for acceptable performance. The AoL committee evaluated the post-treatment results.

Results:

Post-instruction results were dramatically improved and meet expectations. Six out of 8 (75%) of the students enrolled in the PMBA program made presentations and were evaluated by the AoL committee.

Student	Pre-	Post-	Change
1	2	4	2
2	2	4	2
3	2	5	3
4	1	3	2
5	2	3	1
6	1	4	3
Mean	1.666667	3.833333	

The committee interprets these results as evidence that MBA students benefit from receiving instruction and feedback on oral communication skills. A score of 3.5 is acceptable so instruction brought these results into meeting expectations.

Online MBA

Voice over Excel spreadsheet student produced tutorials were evaluated using the Oral Communication rubric suing data collected in BA 513, Information Technology and Strategy, during Spring 2014.

Results:

Student	Organization	Content	Language	Nonverbal	Visuals
1	5	5	4	NA	5
2	5	5	4	NA	5
3	2	3	1	NA	3
4	5	5	5	NA	5
5	2	2	2	NA	2
6	4	5	4	NA	3
7	5	5	5	NA	5
8	4	5	2	NA	5
9	5	5	4	NA	5
10	2	5	1	NA	5
11	5	4	4	NA	5
12	5	5	5	NA	5
13	5	5	5	NA	5
14	2	2	1	NA	5
15	5	5	5	NA	5
16	4	5	4	NA	5
17	5	5	5	NA	5
18	5	5	5	NA	5
19	4	4	4	NA	4
20	5	5	5	NA	5
21	4	4	4	NA	5
Mean	4.19047619	4.47619	3.761905		4.619048

Results were acceptable. There were disfluencies in the presentations as indicated in the Language category. There were no recommendations from the committee.