



General Education Assessment of Oral Communication (Spring 2015)

History of the Assessment Program

Assessment of student learning outcomes is a national expectation in higher education, and the expectation calls for increased accountability. Section 2.7.3 of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' (SACS) accreditation standards requires in each undergraduate program the successful completion of a general education component that:

- 1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree,
- 2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and
- 3) is based on a coherent rationale.

Section 3.5.1 of the SACS accreditation standards also requires that “the institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.”

Based on these standards, in 2005, the Provost charged the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) with developing and implementing an assessment program. To accomplish this directive, the committee developed and modified rubrics to measure student performance in the competencies stated in the preamble of the General Education Plan: “The General Education Program at the University of Louisville fosters active learning by asking students to:

- 1) think critically,
- 2) to communicate effectively, and
- 3) understand and appreciate cultural diversity.”

The GECC initiated the first General Education Assessment in fall of 2005. The university adopted LiveText© as the platform for electronic assessment of General Education artifacts in the fall of 2010. The assessment is currently in the third cycle, which is scheduled to be complete in spring of 2016. This report summarizes the process, results, and findings for the assessment of student performance in General Education Oral Communication (OC) courses for the spring 2015 semester.

Assessment Administration

The General Education Program at the University of Louisville advances three over-arching competencies: critical thinking, effective communication, and cultural diversity. In addition, the university has defined additional learning outcomes for the following content areas: Arts and Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Oral Communication, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Written Communication. The University of Louisville Student Learning Outcomes are closely aligned with the Statewide General Education Student Learning Outcomes. A crosswalk of the outcomes and assessment measures is provided in Appendix A.

University of Louisville Oral Communication Learning Outcomes

Oral communication is the ability to convey ideas, emotions, and information through speech. Students who satisfy this requirement will demonstrate that they are able to do all of the following:

1. Speak publicly, in both formal and informal context, demonstrating skills such as appropriate selection of topic and materials, clear organization, effective presentation, and the ability to adapt to audience, setting, and occasion;
2. Participate effectively in discussion; and
3. Analyze and critique the oral communication of oneself and others.

Statewide Written & Oral Communication Student Learning Outcomes

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.
2. Listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, which may include public, interpersonal, and/or small-group settings.
3. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts.
4. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view; and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
5. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.

University of Louisville General Education Rubric Measures

Effective Communication (EC) Rubric

1. Writer articulates clear purpose and employs tone consistent with purpose and audience.
2. Writer employs clear and coherent organization.
3. Writer demonstrates analysis or synthesis.
4. Writer uses appropriate conventions and style.

Critical Thinking (CT) Rubric

1. Claim – States thesis; Identifies purpose; Demonstrates recognition of problem or question.
2. Evidence – Uses evidence, information, data, observations, experiences, and/or reasons.
3. Inference – Makes a logical argument; Develops a line of reasoning based on evidence.
4. Influence of Context and Assumptions.
5. Implications – Evaluates implications, conclusions, and consequences.

Cultural Diversity (CD) Rubric

1. Writer recognizes ways that culture shapes behavior and attitudes.
2. Writer demonstrates ability to understand the relationship of culture to its environment and history.
3. Writer recognizes that cultural groups are internally diverse.
4. Writer brings awareness of cultural diversity to the analysis of problems or issues.

The University of Louisville General Education Rubrics use a four-point scale, with 4 indicating performance of the measure as “clearly evident,” 3 indicating performance as “usually evident,” 2 indicating “minimally evident,” and 1 indicating performance as “not evident.” In addition, a score of “not requested” could be assigned for assignments that did not provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate the criterion within the rubric measure.

Assessment Process

For the spring 2015 assessment of Oral Communication, the Office of General Education Assessment notified department chairs of the upcoming assessment and met with them to provide an overview of the project, the outcomes to be assessed, and sampling process. A formal memo outlining the project and process was also provided to each of the department chairs to ensure a mutual understanding of project expectations.

After the semester drop deadline passed, the Office of General Education Assessment requested the class rosters for all General Education courses in OC from the Office of the Register and systematically selected every fourth or fifth student¹ for assessment from the roster. Instructors of all General Education courses in Oral Communication were sent assessment rosters along with detailed instructions requesting that instructors provide a copy of one assignment along with the ungraded responses for the selected students to be sent via email to the Assessment Coordinator.

Student artifacts were collected and stored in an electronic repository and uploaded into the LiveText© assessment management system. A panel of 21 faculty (tenured and tenure-track faculty, term faculty, and adjunct faculty) and graduate teaching assistants assessed student artifacts using the Effective Communication, Critical Thinking, and Cultural Diversity rubrics. Two days prior to the assessment reading, assessors were brought together for a five-hour training session coordinated by the Office of General Education Assessment. In the training session, the assessment process and context for General Education Assessment at the University of Louisville were presented. Faculty engaged in dissection and discussion of rubric criteria, and faculty assessors individually reviewed and scored three benchmark sample assignments. Assessors then engaged in discussion about the benchmark assessment scores to share their rationales for why particular scores were selected. To highlight the reliability of the training scoring, the results from the scoring of benchmark samples using the Effective Communication rubric are displayed in Table 1 and Figure 1 and Critical Thinking rubric are displayed in Table 2 and Figure 2.

¹ Per mutual agreement with the Communications Department Chair, every fourth student was selected. Every fifth student was selected in the other content areas in keeping with the Office of Assessment’s standard assessment procedures.

Table 1

Results of Benchmark Sample Assessments for Effective Communication

Benchmark Sample 1

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
EC1	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%		
EC2		71.4%	28.6%		
EC3		23.8%	76.2%		
EC4	5.3%	89.5%	5.3%		

Benchmark Sample 2

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
EC1	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%		
EC2		50.0%	50.0%		
EC3		5.0%	85.0%	10.0%	
EC4		68.4%	31.6%		

Benchmark Sample 3

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
EC1	10.0%	80.0%	10.0%		
EC2	25.0%	75.0%			
EC3	5.0%	60.0%	35.0%		
EC4	40.0%	60.0%			

Table 2

Results of Benchmark Sample Assessments for Critical Thinking

Benchmark Sample 1

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
CT1	10.0%	45.0%	45.0%		
CT2		21.1%	78.9%		
CT3		85.0%	15.0%		
CT4		62.5%	31.3%	6.3%	4
CT5		84.2%	15.8%		

Benchmark Sample 2

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
CT1		20.0%	73.3%	6.7%	4
CT2		22.2%	77.8%		
CT3		82.4%	11.8%	5.9%	
CT4		35.0%	50.0%	15.0%	
CT5		10.0%	55.0%	35.0%	

Benchmark Sample 3

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>
CT1	9.1%	63.6%	22.7%	4.5%	
CT2	11.8%	64.7%	23.5%		
CT3	5.6%	88.9%	5.6%		<i>I</i>
CT4		66.7%	33.3%		<i>I</i>
CT5		73.7%	26.3%		

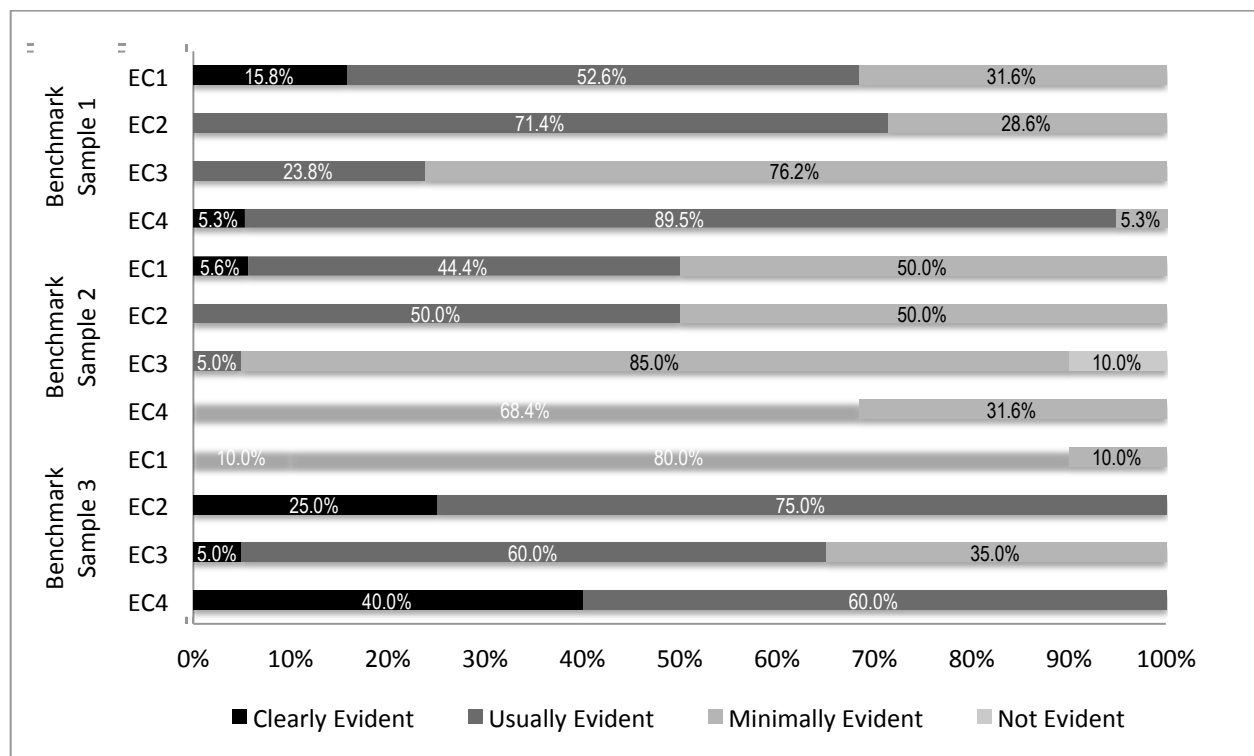


Figure 1. Results of Benchmark Sample Assessments for Effective Communication

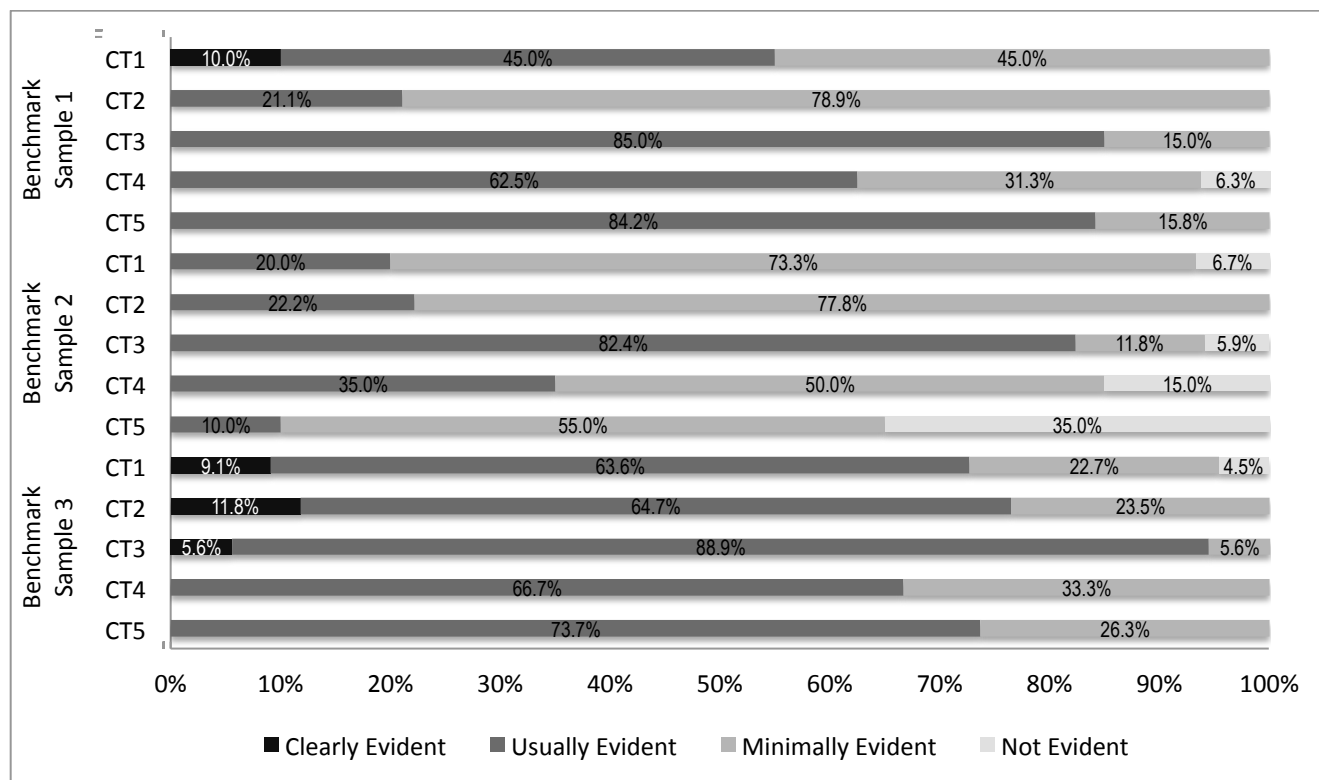


Figure 2. Results of Benchmark Sample Assessments for Critical Thinking

Faculty assessors received training on the LiveText© assessment management system the morning of the assessment reading. Each faculty assessor was assigned a username and password for one of three LiveText© accounts and a list of courses and sections to assess. Each artifact was assessed by three faculty readers so that scores could be compared across assessors for reliability purposes.

Data Collection Overview

As of the spring final withdrawal date, 1046 students were enrolled in 49 sections of General Education courses in Oral Communication. A total of 153 student artifacts (14.6%) were received and determined to be eligible for review. Table 3 presents the number of assessable artifacts received from each of the OC departments and courses.

Table 3

Sample for Oral Communication Assessment

<u>Course</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Course Sections</u>	<u>Number of Artifacts</u>	<u>Sub-total</u>
COMM 111	Intro to Public Speaking	24	107	
COMM 112	Business & Professional Speaking	4	19	
COMM 115	Interpersonal Skills	3	15	
				141
HON 214	Social Sciences and Oral Communication	2	6	6
POLS 111	Political Discourse	1	2	2
WGST 203	Gender & Public Dialogue	1	4	4

Summary of Assessment Data

For the assessment of OC outcomes, 153 student artifacts were assessed by faculty and graduate teaching assistants from the College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education & Human Development, Kent School of Social Work, Speed School of Engineering, and the School of Dentistry using the Effective Communication, Critical Thinking, and Cultural Diversity rubrics. A summary of results from the OC assessment is provided in Table 4 and Figure 3.

The criterion for both the Effective Communication and the Critical Thinking rubrics was set by the General Education Assessment Coordinator and the General Education Curriculum Committee Assessment Subcommittee at 60% of artifacts to score at a 3 or 4, indicating that at least 60% demonstrate performance at either the “usually evident” or “clearly evident” level. The criterion was met for EC1, EC4, CT1, and CT3 and was not met for EC2, EC3, CT2, CT4, and CT5.

The criterion for the Cultural Diversity rubric was set by the General Education Assessment Coordinator and the General Education Curriculum Committee Assessment Subcommittee at 40% of artifacts to score at a 3 or 4, indicating that at least 40% would perform at either the “usually evident” or “clearly evident” level. The criterion was met for all CD measures.

Table 4

Summary Results for Oral Communication Assessment
Effective Communication

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>	<u>% Above (3 or 4)</u>
EC1	28.5% (131)	43.4% (199)	25.1% (115)	3.1% (14)		71.9%
EC2	13.7% (63)	42.9% (197)	37.5% (172)	5.9% (27)		56.6%
EC3	6.8% (31)	39.2% (180)	46.8% (215)	7.2% (33)		46.0%
EC4	19.8% (91)	54.9% (252)	22.2% (102)	3.1% (14)		74.4%

Critical Thinking

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>	<u>% Above (3 or 4)</u>
CT1	20.2% (90)	45.6% (203)	27.2% (121)	7.0% (31)	14	65.8%
CT2	11.8% (54)	46.2% (212)	38.6% (177)	3.5% (16)		58.0%
CT3	13.5% (62)	65.1% (298)	18.1% (83)	3.3% (15)	1	78.6%
CT4	5.3% (24)	37.7% (171)	41.9% (190)	15.2% (69)	5	43.0%
CT5	7.2% (33)	45.9% (210)	39.5% (181)	7.4% (34)	1	53.1%

Cultural Diversity

	<u>Clearly Evident</u>	<u>Usually Evident</u>	<u>Minimally Evident</u>	<u>Not Evident</u>	<u>Not Requested</u>	<u>% Above (3 or 4)</u>
CD1	25.0% (4)	25.0% (4)	43.8% (7)	6.3% (1)	2	50.0%
CD2	16.7% (3)	27.8% (5)	50.0% (9)	5.6% (1)		44.4%
CD3	5.9% (1)	52.9% (9)	35.3% (6)	5.9% (1)	1	58.8%
CD4	5.9% (1)	35.3% (6)	52.9% (9)	5.9% (1)	1	41.2%

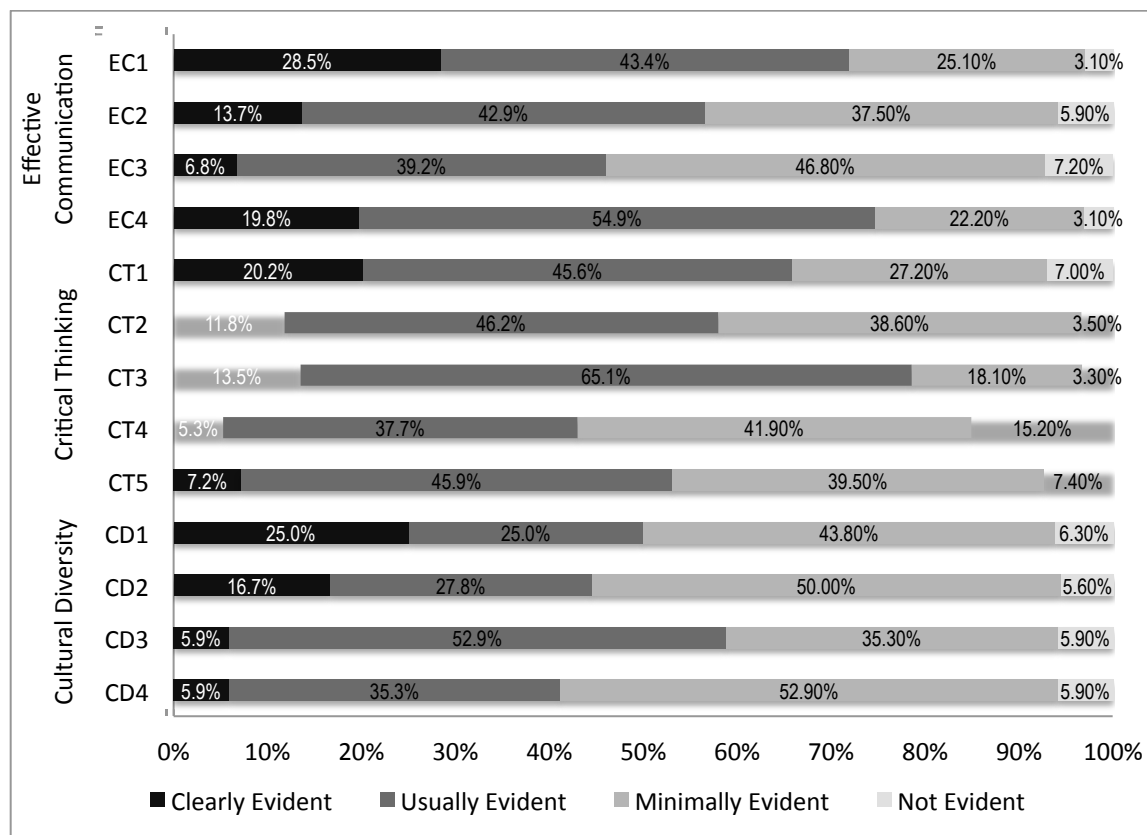


Figure 3. Summary Results for Oral Communication Assessment

The “not requested” scores were excluded from calculation of the percentage of overall ratings (Table 4), and mean and mode (Table 5). A count of “not requested” is provided in Table 4. The “not requested” category was only selected with the Critical Thinking and Cultural Diversity rubrics. The mean and mode for each rubric measure is provided in Table 5 and Figures 4 and 5. A breakdown of scores by department is not provided in this report due to the small sample size with one course each from the Honors, Political Science, and Women and Gender Studies.

Table 5

Oral Communication Assessment Mean and Mode by Rubric Measure

Effective Communication

	<u>EC1</u>	<u>EC2</u>	<u>EC3</u>	<u>EC4</u>
Mean	2.97	2.64	2.46	2.92
Mode	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00

Critical Thinking

	<u>CT1</u>	<u>CT2</u>	<u>CT3</u>	<u>CT4</u>	<u>CT5</u>
Mean	2.79	2.66	2.89	2.33	2.53
Mode	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00

Cultural Diversity

	<u>CD1</u>	<u>CD2</u>	<u>CD3</u>	<u>CD4</u>
Mean	2.69	2.56	2.59	2.41
Mode	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00

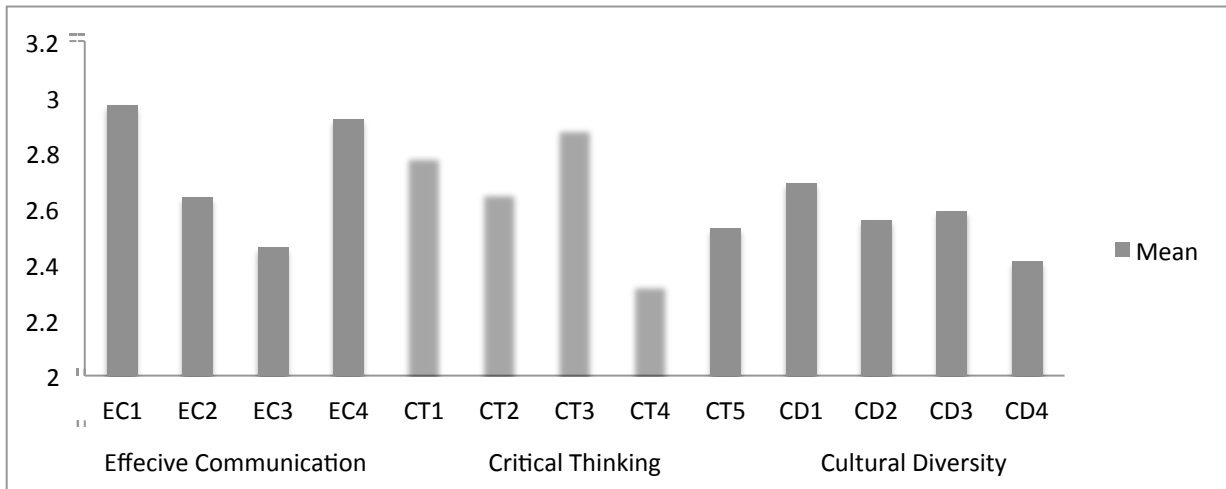


Figure 4. Mean Score by Rubric Measure

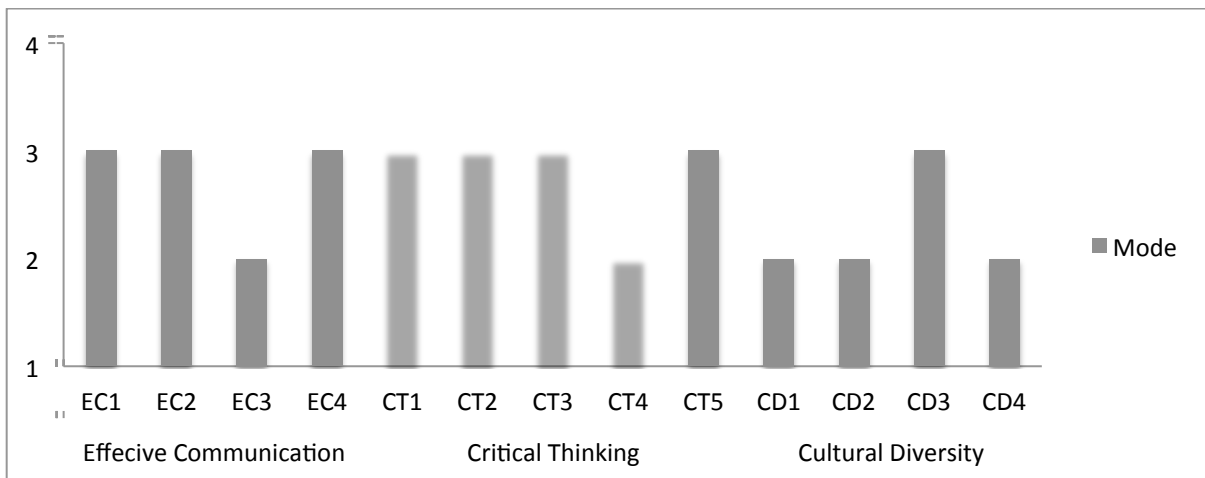


Figure 5. Mode by Rubric Measure

Table 6 displays the mean score for the three separate readings of all artifacts.

Table 6

Inter-rater Summary for Oral Communication

Effective Communication

	<u>Assessor 1</u>	<u>Assessor 2</u>	<u>Assessor 3</u>	<u>SD</u>
EC1	2.81	3.12	2.99	0.16
EC2	2.66	2.54	2.74	0.10
EC3	2.52	2.30	2.55	0.13
EC4	2.86	2.88	3.00	0.07

Critical Thinking

	<u>Assessor 1</u>	<u>Assessor 2</u>	<u>Assessor 3</u>	<u>SD</u>
CT1	2.80	2.87	2.70	0.08
CT2	2.65	2.58	2.76	0.09
CT3	2.81	2.88	2.97	0.08
CT4	2.42	2.21	2.36	0.11
CT5	2.56	2.49	2.53	0.04

Cultural Diversity

	<u>Assessor 1</u>	<u>Assessor 2</u>	<u>Assessor 3</u>	<u>SD</u>
CD1	2.75	2.17	3.17	0.50
CD2	2.33	2.33	3.00	0.38
CD3	2.60	2.17	3.00	0.42
CD4	2.00	2.17	3.00	0.54

Measures of inter-rater reliability are provided in Table 7. The percentage agreement was calculated to determine the percentage of artifacts for which all three assessors scored at the same performance level or within one level. Values for *Total Agreement* provided in Table 6 represent the percentage of artifacts for which all three assessors selected the same score (i.e., Assessors 1, 2, and 3 all selected 3). *Agreement (within 1 level)* represents the percentage of artifacts for which all three assessors scored the artifact at the same performance level or within one level (i.e., Assessor 1 selected a score of 3, Assessor 2 selected a score of 2, and Assessor 3 also selected a score of 2).

In addition to percentage agreement, a one-way, average-measures intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated to assess inter-rater reliability. ICC coefficients between .75 and 1.00 are considered excellent, .60 to .74 considered good, .40 to .59 fair, and below .4 is considered poor (Cicchetti, 1994). Based upon these criteria, inter-rater reliability was within the

acceptable range for all rubric measures. ICC could not be calculated for the CD measures due to the small number of assessments.

Table 7

Inter-rater Reliability for Oral Communication
Effective Communication

<u>Competency Measure</u>	<u>Total Agreement</u>	<u>Agreement (within 1 level)</u>	<u>ICC</u>	<u>95% Confidence Interval</u>
EC1	18.3%	73.2%	.43	(.25-.57)
EC2	15.7%	76.5%	.45	(.28-.58)
EC3	19.6%	83.0%	.43	(.25-.57)
EC4	21.6%	81.7%	.48	(.32-.61)

Critical Thinking

<u>Competency Measure</u>	<u>Total Agreement</u>	<u>Agreement (within 1 level)</u>	<u>ICC</u>	<u>95% Confidence Interval</u>
CT1	14.4%	62.7%	.44	(.26-.58)
CT2	22.2%	86.3%	.59	(.46-.69)
CT3	23.5%	88.9%	.43	(.25-.57)
CT4	13.7%	72.5%	.42	(.24-.56)
CT5	25.5%	87.6%	.61	(.49-.71)

Cultural Diversity

<u>Competency Measure</u>	<u>Total Agreement</u>	<u>Agreement (within 1 level)</u>	<u>ICC</u>	<u>95% Confidence Interval</u>
CD1	0.0%	0.0%		
CD2	16.7%	50.0%		
CD3	16.7%	50.0%		
CD4	16.7%	50.0%		

Note. The Cultural Diversity sample size was too small for the ICC to be calculated.

Supporting Documentation for General Education Oral Communication Assessment

The General Education Assessment project was designed to assess critical thinking, effective communication, and cultural diversity across the General Education Curriculum. Within the existing structures of the assessment, the primary focus for evaluation of effective communication pertains to *written* and not *oral* communication; however, the Department of Communication has taken steps to address the University of Louisville Oral Communication outcomes.

Appendix B provides a review of the Oral Communication course syllabi for the General Education content-specific outcomes. This review revealed that 72.7% of the Communication courses listed the General Education Oral Communication Outcomes and 75.0% of those syllabi also provided assessment methods for the outcomes within the course. In the *Third Edition of the Speech Communication Course Resource Tool* course pack, developed by department faculty, there are extensive examples of how the communication curriculum has been designed to support student development in the many aspects of effective speaking such critical thinking guides, speech outline templates, and mechanisms to address public speaking anxiety. Furthermore, this course packet provides evaluation forms and rubrics that align directly with the Oral Communication Outcomes and are geared at giving students feedback on delivered speeches, discussion with peers, and self-reflection.

In the fall of 2015, a follow-up study will be conducted in collaboration with the Department of Communication. The Office of General Education Assessment will work with the Department of Communication to collect a sample of rubrics completed by faculty and students within the General Education courses in Oral Communication to measure student performance on the Oral Communication outcomes. Each student speech will have an instructor-completed rubric, a self-evaluation rubric, and a peer-evaluation rubric. The results of these assessments will be analyzed and reported to the department and the GECC to further support the development of OC curriculum and student learning within the General Education Program.

Lessons Learned

The spring 2015 assessment of General Education courses in Oral Communication was the first assessment of the OC competency to be completed since the implementation of the General Education Assessment project in 2005. In approaching this assessment, there were several challenges to address regarding the artifact collection and the assessment instrumentation.

Artifacts

The Oral Communication courses require students to complete a series of speeches and engage in self and peer evaluation to support the development of speaking ability throughout the semester. The General Education Assessment project has been designed around the assessment of written artifacts developed by students. For the OC courses, the primary evidence of student knowledge and skills is the speech, and not a written artifact.

To support the assessment of the General Education Program, the Department of Communication provided student reflections of their speeches. The student reflections provided a mechanism to assess effective communication through writing and critical thinking skills. The reflections also provide evidence of meeting Oral Communication outcome 3, “the ability to analyze and critique the oral communication of oneself and others.”

The reflection prompts and student artifacts varied by section. Some students completed a short reflection paper, while other students were asked to answer a series of questions. Feedback from assessors (Appendix C) indicated that the artifacts structured as questions and answers were challenging to apply the University of Louisville General Education Effective Communication and Critical Thinking rubrics. Assessment readers commented to a follow-up survey and stated

that question and answer reflections were difficult to assess, especially for EC2 and EC3. Inclusion of this type of artifact may have impacted the overall scores for EC2, which is focused on employing clear and coherent organization in written communication and EC3, which asks the writer to demonstrate synthesis and analysis.

Assessment Instrumentation

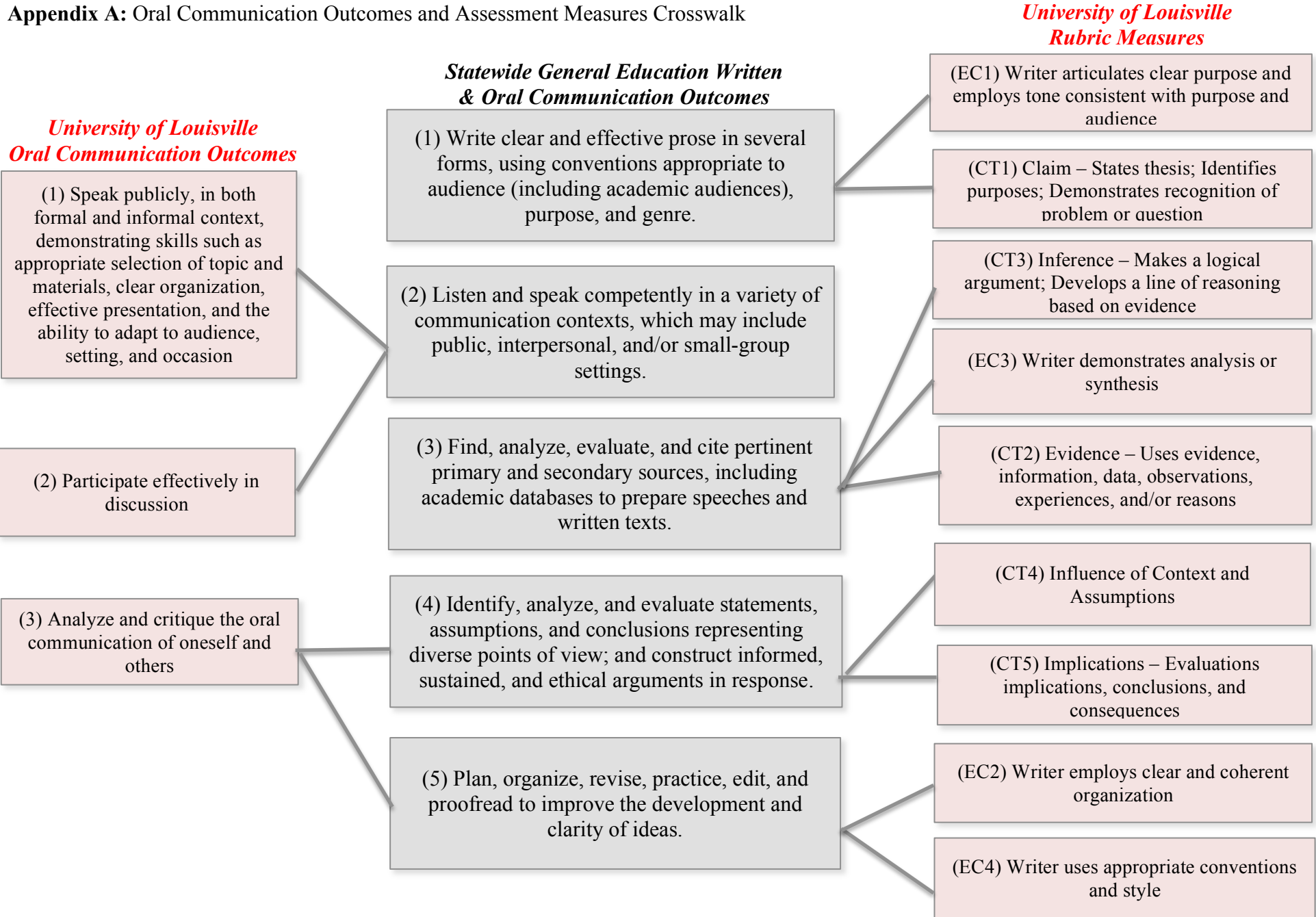
As previously mentioned, the Effective Communication rubric is designed to assess a student's written communication and not oral communication. This poses a challenge in assessing student learning outcomes within the OC when the primary evidence is a speech demonstrating a student's ability to communicate through speaking. A rubric designed to address oral communication is recommended for future assessments.

Beyond these challenges, the assessment captured baseline data regarding effective communication measures, critical thinking measures, and cultural diversity measures (Political Science and Women & Gender Studies courses only) within the Oral Communication curriculum. This data presents the strengths and suggests areas for improvement when considering students' ability to analyze and critique their oral communication skills and their ability to think critically and communicate effectively through written reflection.

References

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Appendix A: Oral Communication Outcomes and Assessment Measures Crosswalk



Appendix B

General Education Oral Communication Syllabus Review (Spring 2015)

History of the Syllabus Review

In 2012, the General Education Syllabus Review Project was initiated to evaluate the congruence of general education course syllabi with the approved content-specific general education student learning outcomes. Specifically, it was designed to determine: (a) if the student learning outcomes stated in each course syllabus are congruent with the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes, and (b) if corresponding assessment methods are stated that support the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes.

In the spring of 2015, the GECC Assessment Subcommittee proposed that the Syllabus Review Project be incorporated into the existing General Education Assessment Project. Therefore, the syllabi from each content area will be collected and reviewed by the Office of General Education Assessment in alignment with the corresponding assessment cycle.

This report summarizes the review process and the results of the syllabi review for the Oral Communication content area.

Review Process

The Provost requests that all faculty load their syllabi to Blackboard© each semester. These syllabi are then available through the university's course catalog system. For the purpose of this review, the Office of General Education Assessment collected all General Education Oral Communication syllabi that were loaded to Blackboard in spring 2015.

The review of syllabi sought to answer two questions:

- 1) Does the syllabus contain the content-specific general education learning outcomes approved for the course? (The statement can use either the exact language of the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes or they may be articulated using the instructor's own words, provided they are comprehensive in content and address all of the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes for the course.)
- 2) Are assessment methods stated that support the content-specific general education learning outcomes approved for the course?

An evaluation of the congruence between the listed assessment methods with the content-specific approved general education learning outcomes was not conducted when a reviewer determined that the syllabus does not contain a statement of the approved content-specific general education learning outcomes.

Sample

The review included syllabi from 33 of the Oral Communication General Education courses offered in the spring of 2015 resulting in an 89.2% sample. Syllabi were available for all four academic departments (Communication, Honors, Political Science, and Women & Gender Studies) included in the spring 2015 General Education Assessment. Appendix Table 1 provides a breakdown of the number of General Education courses offered in each area and the number of syllabi available by department.

Table 1.

<i>Sample</i>	<u>Oral Communication General Education Courses Offered in 2014</u>	<u>Syllabi Available in Blackboard</u>
Communication	33	29, (88%)
Honors	2	2, (100%)
Political Science	1	1, (100%)
Women & Gender Studies	1	1, (100%)
Total	37	33, (89%)

Results

The review of the 33 General Education Oral Communication syllabi identified 24 syllabi (72.7%) containing the content-specific general education learning outcomes approved for the course. Further review of the 24 syllabi containing the General Education Outcomes revealed that 18 syllabi (75%) also listed the assessment methods for the General Education Outcomes. The assessment methods included exams, quizzes, presentations, written outlines, written analyses, impromptu speeches, and other in-class speaking assignments.

Table 2.

<i>Results</i>	<u>Syllabi with General Education Outcomes Provided</u>	<u>Syllabi with Assessment Methods Stated</u>
Communication	23, (79.3%)	18, (78.3%)
Honors	0	Not applicable
Political Science	0	Not applicable
Women & Gender Studies	1, (100.0%)	0
Total	24, (72.7%)	18, (75.0%)

Appendix C. Oral Communication Assessor Feedback

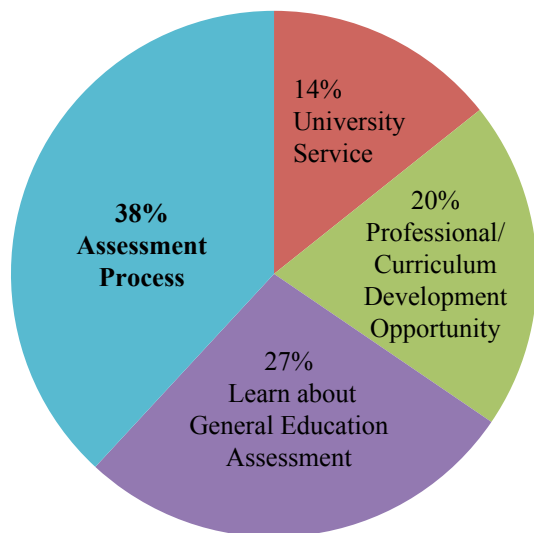
An online survey was conducted to collect feedback and recommendations from assessment readers. The survey contained nine open-ended and multiple-choice questions, including two “hot spot” questions for the Effective Communication and Critical Thinking rubrics in which participants could pinpoint areas of concern and feedback. Fifteen out of 21 assessors responded, yielding a 71.4% response rate.

The results of the survey indicated the following:

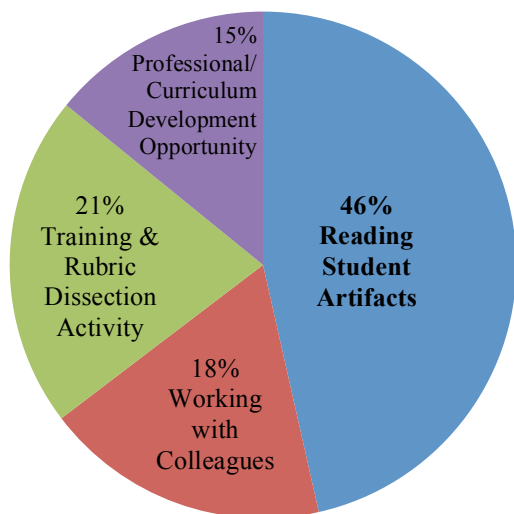
- 100% of assessment readers agreed that the training adequately prepared them for the assessment reading (13% agreed and 87% strongly agreed with this statement).
- 100% of assessment readers would participate as an assessment reader again, if asked.

Reader Participation

*I participated in the assessment because:*²



*The aspect of the assessment I enjoyed the most was:*¹



Reader Recommendations

- *Training:* 72% of readers either complemented the existing training process or made no recommendations for improvement. Fourteen percent recommended that LiveText training be held on the reading day instead of at the start of the training day. Fourteen percent recommended separate training for new readers.
- *Reading:* 86% either complemented the existing reading process or made no recommendations. Fourteen percent recommended that LiveText training be held on the reading day instead of the training day.
- *Artifacts:* Several assessors remarked that they experienced difficulty assessing critical thinking and effective communication using speech self-critique assignments, suggesting that assessing the speeches themselves or papers about the content of the speech may align better with the existing rubrics. Assessors found question and answer assignments did not typically require students to demonstrate competencies identified in the rubrics, such as stating a clear purpose, or employing clear and coherent organization.
- *Rubrics:* See the following two pages for rubric-specific feedback and recommendations.

¹ This pie chart presents themes found in write-in responses to open-ended questions.

Critical Thinking Rubric

Row 2: "It is a rare assignment which calls for the presentation & analysis of evidence which does not support a student's claim, and therefore artifacts we assess almost never have this kind of counter evidence." "Reflections and responses don't really ask students to think about counter-claims."

"Several relevant contexts is difficult to apply"

Row 4: Self-evaluations "do not require students to think about others' assumptions or larger contexts."

Identifying *all* assumptions, contexts, etc. can be difficult if the topic is subject/context specific.

	Clearly Evident	Usually Evident	Minimally Evident	Not Evident
Claim: States thesis; Identifies purpose; Demonstrates recognition of problem or question.	States a clear, precise, and significant thesis; Demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose of the assignment, recognition of the problem or question	Clearly states a thesis that is precise, but thesis lacks significance for making an argument; Demonstrates an understanding of the purpose of the assignment or recognition of the problem or question	Clearly states a thesis, but thesis lacks precision and significance; Demonstrates a limited understanding of purpose of the assignment or recognition of the problem or question is unclear	Does not state clear, precise, and significant thesis; Does not demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of the assignment, nor recognize the problem or question
Evidence: Uses evidence, information, data, observations, experiences, and/or reasons.	Presents strong, credible evidence and interprets evidence defensibly and convincingly and acknowledges and refutes evidence that does not support the claim	Evidence is sufficient to support the claim and evidence is interpreted defensibly and counter-evidence is acknowledged but insufficiently refuted	Evidence is minimally sufficient to support the claim and evidence is usually interpreted defensibly but ignores some of the counter evidence	Evidence is insufficient to support the claim, or misinterprets evidence, or ignores evidence that counters the claim
Inference: Makes a logical argument; Develops a line of reasoning based on evidence.	Always makes logical connections between evidence and conclusions	Usually makes <i>logical</i> connections between evidence and conclusions	Makes <i>illogical and inconsistent</i> connections between evidence and conclusions	Does not show connections between evidence and conclusions
Influence of Context and Assumptions.	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and <i>several relevant contexts</i> when presenting a position.	Questions ① <i>some assumptions</i> . ② <i>Identifies several relevant contexts</i> when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an ③ <i>emerging awareness of present assumptions</i> (sometimes labels assumptions as assumptions). ④ <i>Begins to identify some contexts</i> when presenting a position.
Implications: Evaluates Implications, conclusions, and consequences.	Identifies and thoroughly discusses implications, conclusions <i>and</i> consequences, considering <i>a</i> relevant assumptions, contexts, data, and evidence.	Identifies and briefly discusses implications, conclusions <i>and</i> consequences, considering <i>most but not a</i> the relevant assumptions, contexts, data, and evidence.	Suggests some implications, conclusions, <i>and</i> consequences, but without clear reference to context, assumptions, data, and evidence.	Fails to identify implications, conclusions, <i>and</i> consequences of the issue, (OR) the key relationships between the other elements of the problem such as context, assumptions, or data and evidence.

Row 1 is difficult to apply because it asks for two separate things: a thesis & to demonstrate an understanding of the assignment purpose. Standard restricts the type of artifacts to thesis-driven analytical arguments, almost excluding all short-answer questions which were submitted in this assessment.

Big jump between logical and illogical. Suggestion: change "and" to "or", or "illogical and inconsistent" connections to "fewer connections"

Row 3 problematically equates reasoning with logic.

Very little difference between ①&② and ③&④. Additionally, the final column is reserved for a fundamental shortcoming where in this case it is an emerging strength. What is an emerging strength is unclear.

Row 5: Suggest changing *and* to *or*. Also, identifying *all* assumptions, contexts, etc. can be difficult for assessors if the topic is subject/context specific.

Effective Communication Rubric

	Clearly Evident	Usually Evident	Minimally Evident	Not Evident
<p>"Universally" is very broad.</p>	<p>I. Writer articulates clear purpose and employs tone consistent with purpose and audience.</p> <p>The writer's purpose is clear throughout without irrelevant digressions. The tone and evidence are appropriate to the intended audience.</p>	<p>The writer's purpose is clear, but not universally consistent. Irrelevant information occasionally appears. The tone is generally appropriate for the audience.</p>	<p>The writer identifies a purpose, but it is not always consistent. There may be irrelevant digressions or conflicting statements of purpose. The tone may be inconsistent.</p>	<p>The purpose of the text is unclear. Either the writer does not articulate a purpose or provides many conflicting statements of purpose. The evidence and tone are inappropriate for the audience.</p>
<p>Row 2: The assumption is that we are assessing an essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Therefore, this standard cannot be applied in cases where a worksheet or question and answer format is used.</p>	<p>II. Writer employs clear and coherent organization.</p> <p>The writer demonstrates control over the organization of the essay's content. Paragraphs are developed in a logical progression and display clearly stated or understood topic sentences. Clear transitions guide the reader through the paper.</p>	<p>The overall organization is coherent. The writer is using transitions throughout the essay to connect ideas and evidence. There are still places where the organization is unclear or jumps from one idea to the next without a clear purpose.</p>	<p>Although there is evidence of logical organization, there are still places where the organization is confusing. The paragraphing may be choppy and disjointed and the overall structure is generally simplistic. This writer uses some transitions but not skillfully.</p>	<p>The organization is confusing and may seem disconnected from the content. It may be impossible to follow the presentation of ideas. Ideas or evidence is presented haphazardly with few transitions.</p>
<p>This feels like it should be assessed as a 4. Suggestion: Replace "Major" with "Some."</p>	<p>III. Writer demonstrates analysis or synthesis.</p> <p>Issues are placed within larger contexts. There is clear awareness of the complexity of the issues. Information is synthesized effectively and imaginatively. Different approaches to the issue are considered.</p>	<p>Major issues and positions are identified carefully with an awareness of the range of possible positions. Specific connections between source material and the essay's controlling idea are provided and explained.</p>	<p>Basic issues are identified and an attempt is made at analysis or synthesis. Positions are often presented simplistically. There are unexamined generalizations and few attempts to go beyond basic analysis.</p>	<p>Issues are presented without analysis or synthesis. There is little understanding of the issues or ideas. There is no evidence of the ability to go beyond stated assumptions and information that may be contained in other sources.</p>
<p>Row 3: Response & self-assessment papers generally do not require this type of positioning and analysis.</p>	<p>IV. Writer uses appropriate conventions and style.</p> <p>There is obvious control over writing conventions. No significant errors distract the reader from the content of the writing.</p>	<p>There are sporadic, minor errors. There are some inconsistencies in using proper stylistic conventions or citations.</p>	<p>There are occasional errors, which may at times be serious enough to interfere with the reader's comprehension.</p>	<p>There is little control over conventions. There are frequent errors, many of which seriously interfere with the reader's comprehension.</p>