



College of Business & Economics

Assurance of Learning

Program Learning Objective (PLO): Oral Communication
Winter 2015

MBA PLO 2; LO2C

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MBA Learning Goal 2: Students who graduate will be effective communicators in a diverse and global environment. [Statement is prior to quarter to semester revisions.]

CBE Learning Objective 2C:

Students who graduate will apply advanced oral communications skills. [Statement is prior to quarter to semester revisions.]

Assessed Term: Winter 2015

Assessed Course: MGMT 6800

Curriculum Alignment: Students take MGMT 6800 as a graduate capstone course. This is a core course for students completing the MBA program. The course is an integrative capstone experience in which students learn to conduct a strategic situational analysis, identify strategic alternatives and write an implementation plan for a strategic initiative. Real world organizational opportunities relating to globalization, innovation and sustainability are emphasized. This course includes an oral presentation assignment.

Participating Faculty: 2 faculty members.

Methods & Procedures: Students prepared a group presentation in the form of a 'Stockholder Debriefing' of their company from the Capsim simulation integrated into their course. Presentations were valued between 10 to 15% (depending on section assessed) of the student's overall grade. Thirty-eight individuals were assessed across multiple sections of the course.

Faculty reexamined measurement tools in Spring 2013, specifically which rubrics to use to assess oral communications. Faculty teaching the course mapped to the learning goal met in groups and were presented with the CBE version of the rubric and given an option to either modify the existing rubric or replace it entirely in Spring 2013. The MBA faculty group teaching MGMT 6800, mapped to Communication, decided to replace the existing rubric entirely with a graduate Oral Communication rubric from a third party university, with the understanding that it can be modified further in the future to better assess according to CBE's programs.

Winter 2015 piloted a new method for assessing oral communications. To prevent conflation of assessment with grading, and to accurately retrieve reliable and consistent data, external assessors were used in the assessment of Oral Communications and Teamwork. Faculty from the business communications department were brought in to be external assessors in capstone courses. The faculty used a graduate Oral Communication rubric from a third party university rubric, which was previously selected by faculty upon review of measurement tools (see above). Assessment personnel would coordinate with teaching faculty and assessing faculty on dates and times, as well as proper procedures. Communications faculty assessed students according to rubric and noted observations regarding possible edits to improve the rubric and make the tool more applicable to the program and effective in measuring the learning objective overall.

Assessment Measurement Tool Used:

- External faculty assessors
- Graduate oral communication rubric from third party university

Status of Assessment: Completed

Artifacts Archived: Score sheets with faculty feedback reported and saved

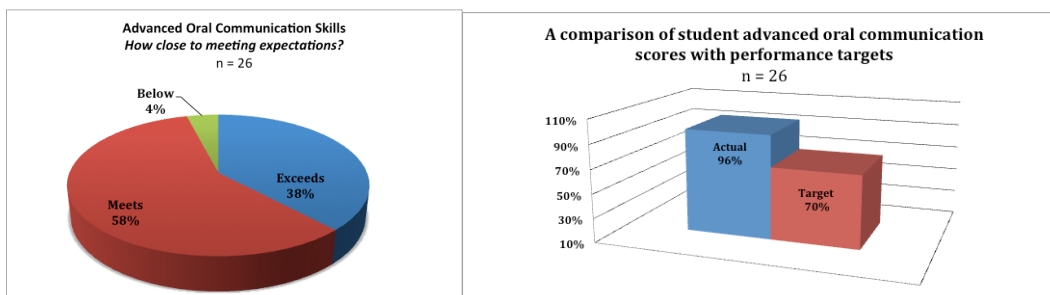
Performance Targets:

- 70% of students will meet or exceed expectations.
- Less than 10% of students will score “1” (below) on any “trait” in the rubric.

Data Summary & Analysis:

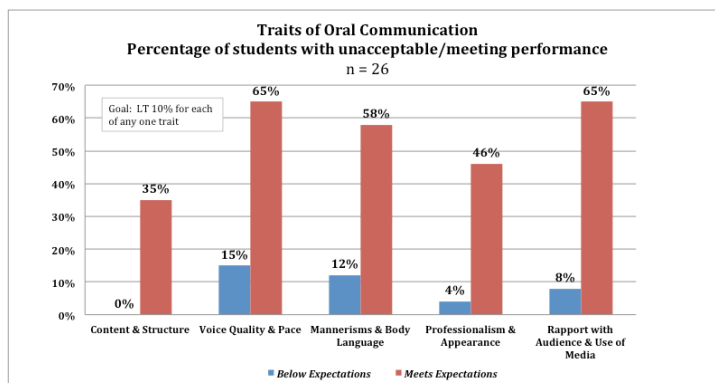
The following graphics display the results and findings from the conducted assessment.

As depicted in the graphics, our students’ overall advanced oral communications scores met our performance targets. Proficiency benchmarks were set at 70% of students falling under Meeting or Exceeding expectations. Findings show 96% of students assessed met or exceeded expectations. For additional data, refer to individual trait analysis where data may be more telling of area weaknesses.



With regard to the individual components of oral communication that are described on the rubric, our proficiency benchmark was set at less than 10% of our students scoring “below expectations” on any single trait assessed.

Findings show students did not meet proficiency benchmarks for traits 2 and 3 with 15% of students scoring below expectations in voice quality and pace and 12% of students scoring below expectations in mannerisms and body language.



To score 'below expectations' on the Trait #2: Voice Quality and Pace, student "mumbles, mispronounces words, grammatical errors, umms. [Is] difficult to understand. Speaks too quietly or too loudly. Speaks too fast or too slow. Loses train of thought, tentative. Lacks enthusiasm." To score 'below expectations' for Trait #3: Mannerisms and Body Language, student demonstrates "distracting mannerisms which may include bad posture, shifting feet, too much or too little hand movement. Body language reveals reluctance to interact with audience. Seems fearful/very nervous."

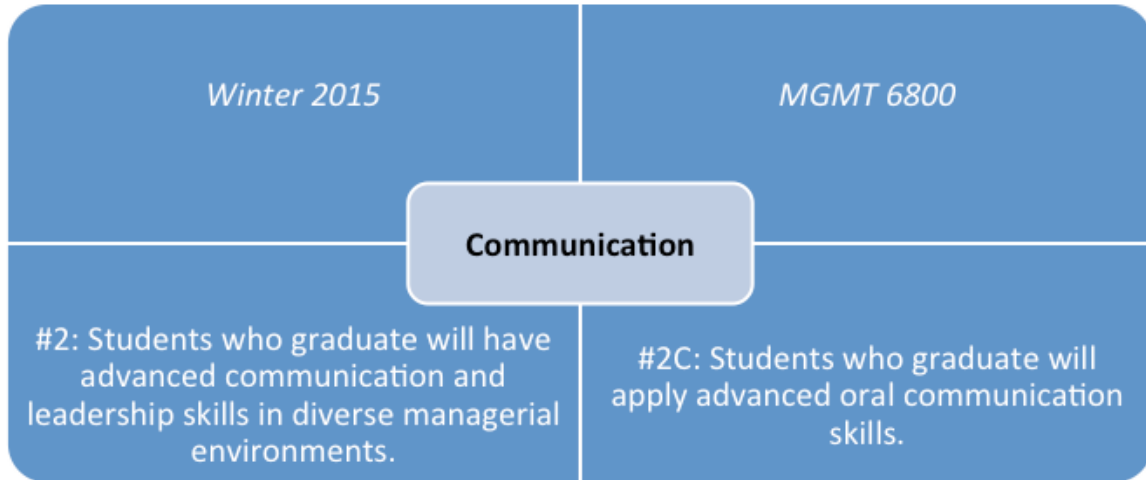
Majority of students scored in the meeting expectations range across the board. A significant amount of students scored exceedingly in Trait 1: Content and Structure and Trait 4: Professionalism and Appearance, with 65% and 50% of students respectively.

| By Individual Trait | Content & Structure | Voice Quality & Pace | Mannerisms & Body Language | Professionalism & Appearance | Rapport with Audience & Use of Media |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Exceeds Expectations (4 to 5) | 65% | 19% | 31% | 50% | 27% |
| Meets Expectations (2 to 3) | 35% | 65% | 58% | 46% | 65% |
| Below Expectations (0 to 1) | 0% | 15% | 12% | 4% | 8% |

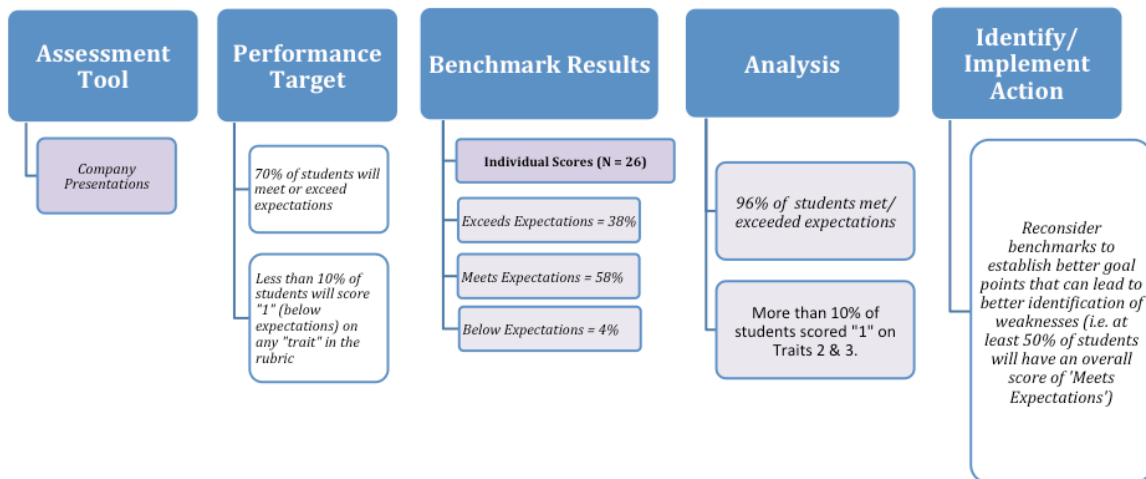
Preliminary Closing the Loop Suggestions:

- Continued implementation of MBA Leadership Boot Camps
 - Suggest efforts to modify slightly to target weak traits
- Conduct a discussion, beginning within the AoL Task Force, regarding a re-examination of what it means to 'Meet Expectations;' i.e. have we lowered our standards on what it means and how we view student performances?

Assessment Summary: Winter 2015



**Statements are prior to quarter to semester revisions.*



MBA Oral Communication Boot Camp Summary

MBA Leadership Communication Boot Camp: The learning goal of “Oral Communication” has been an area that needs improvement among MBA students. The interactive communication skill building exercise, “Lead through Inspiring Others”, was offered to MBA students on Saturday, September 28, 2013, from 8:30AM to 4:00PM. A total of 45 students registered for the event, 25 participants attended. Students learned about the importance and the elements of authentic leadership. Building upon the understanding of leadership communication principles, students were immersed in hands-on exercises to develop and enhance their communication skills through techniques that were designed to build eye contact, positive body language and inspiring story-telling. The agenda for the boot camp included the following:

- **Authentic Leadership:** Communication Principles/What Employees Want/Purpose of Theatre/Actor's Skills
- **Soul Portrait:** What I Want You to Know About Me Is, My Communication Goal Is, What's Holding me Back, My Legacy
- **The Tempest:** Be Not Afeared, The Isle is Full of Noises, Sounds and Sweet Airs, That Give Delight and Hurt Not
- **Story Telling for Leaders:** Video, Story Telling Skills
- **Curtain Up Curtain Down:** Paired walks/Discussions/Presentation

Students were mentored as a group, split into small groups and coached individually. Three coaches were present to work with students. The students’ feedback on the boot camp experience was excellent (rating of 5 on a five point scale with 5 being “very satisfied”). Almost all participating students indicated appreciation for improvement in their skills and confidence in public speaking, listening and inspiring/connecting with others.

Proposal for Guest Talks Lecture Series to Address Learning Goal: Communication

Purpose of the Guest Talks Lecture Series

To improve student learning in the area of Oral Communication, CBE has begun developing plans to implement a Guest Talks Lecture Series. Similar to the Oral Communication Workshop being developed for the BSBA students, MBA students will have the opportunity to attend special guest talks by leaders and experts in the business community. The topic of the talks will emphasize the importance of communication in the business world and how communication skills are valued in the business world compared to other fields.

Long Term Plans for Guest Talks

The Guest Talks will begin by inviting 1 or 2 industry experts to give talks on different topics surrounding communication in the field. This will allow for an opportunity in the future to grow into a Lecture Series for MBA students. Guest Talks will address the importance of Oral Communication in the field of business through topics such as, 'The Importance of Narrative,' or 'Communicating with Vendors and Clients.'

Why is it Necessary?

One of the MBA's learning goals is Communication. Under that learning goal we have three learning objectives. These three learning objectives are Oral Communication, Written Communication, and Leadership/Teamwork. In Spring 2013, we assessed the Oral Communication learning objective. The assessment was conducted in the graduate capstone course MGMT 6800 on our Hayward and Oakland campuses. The assignments used were group presentations. Some groups involved all members in the presentation, while other presentations had one sole presenter. The rubric used for this assessment was the San Diego State University MBA rubric for Oral Communication. CBE's existing rubric for communication was deemed insufficient and ineffective. As a result, to begin the rubric modification process (see Part 2: System Improvements) faculty teaching the mapped course MGMT 6800 were given the option of reviewing the existing CBE rubric and modifying it accordingly, or to adopt San Diego State University's MBA rubric for Oral Communication as a starting point, with plans to modify and customize the rubric for the college in the future. Faculty decided to adopt the SDSU rubric, making slight modifications a starting point. The assessor for the selected sections for assessment was one leading HIRE Center staff member.

For the MBA program, 29 individual students were assessed. The following were concluded:

| Individual Score | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| By Learning Objective | Learning Objective: Oral Communication |
| Exceeds Expectations (4 to 5) | 3% |
| Meets Expectations (2 to 3) | 76% |
| Below Expectations (0 to 1) | 21% |

Following the collection and analysis of the assessment data, discussions were held regarding what can be done to improve the individual scores. One of the suggestions was the Guest Talks concept. As stated, the guest talks may provide a framework for a Lecture Series in the future,

which will have experts from the business community addressing a wide range of topics relevant to graduate business students around communication.

Coordinating and Executing Guest Talks

To start, CBE will begin with outreach efforts to find business experts with the expertise and availability to participate in the Guest Talks. Talks will likely be held in the evenings and be offered once or twice a quarter towards the end of the quarter. These talks will be open to all graduate students including MBA students at the Hayward, Oakland and San Ramon campuses.

Publicizing the Guest Talks

The Guest Talks will be publicized on the newly created Outcomes Assessment website. Emails will be sent to MBA faculty, notifying them of the event to announce in class. Emails will also be sent to graduate students directly notifying them of the event and directing them to the Outcomes Assessment website for details of the event.

How to Assess the Effectiveness of the Guest Talks

In the short term, the effectiveness of the Guest Talks will be assessed via feedback cards from the students attending the first few Guest Talks, asking the students if they found the Guest Talks to be informative and beneficial. Over time, the effectiveness of the Guest Talks will be assessed in continuous assessment of learning goals.

Potential Obstacles

The main obstacle that the Guest Talks may present is finding the funding to support the program when business experts require compensation for their time and are not volunteers. The other potential obstacle is determining where to hold the Guest Talks. Since CBE's three campuses are not all closely located, it will need to be determined which location will be most effective.

Timeline

Efforts are underway to see the first Guest Talk given to graduate students at the end of the Fall 2013 quarter between Week 7 and 8. We hope to have the second Guest Talk in Winter 2014 during the same weeks.

[End of Report]