



College of Business & Economics

Assurance of Learning

Program Learning Objective (PLO): Oral Communication
Spring 2013

BSBA

PLO3; LO3A

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BSBA Learning Goal 3: Students who graduate will be effective communicators in a diverse and global environment.

Learning Objective:

LO3a: Students who graduate will apply effective oral communication skills.

Assessed Quarter: Spring 2013

Curriculum Alignment: Students take MGMT 4650 as a capstone course. This is a core course and is typically attended by graduating seniors in the BSBA program. The course takes a top management perspective and integrates the functional disciplines into decision-making. Emphasis is placed on evaluating complex business situations, integrating theory with practices, and *presenting* comprehensive strategic business plans. This course requires an oral presentation as part of successful completion.

Methods and Procedures: Students prepared a group presentation in the form of a 'Stockholder Debriefing' of their company pertaining to the Capsim simulation integrated into their course. Presentations were valued between 10 to 15% (varying by section and instructor) of the student's overall grade. A sample of thirty-eight individuals was assessed across sections of the course.

Assessment Measurement Tool Used: 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. The BSBA faculty group teaching MGMT 4650, mapped to Communication, decided to replace the existing rubric entirely with the proposed AAC&U VALUE Oral Communication rubric for the Spring 2013 assessment. The faculty will customize the AAC&U rubric to better fit CBE's program in the future.

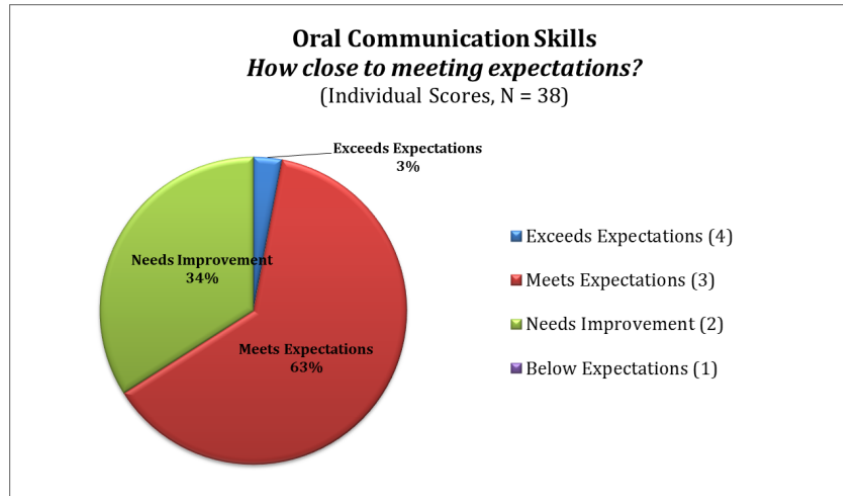
Status of Assessment: Completed. "Closing the loop" currently underway.

Performance Targets:

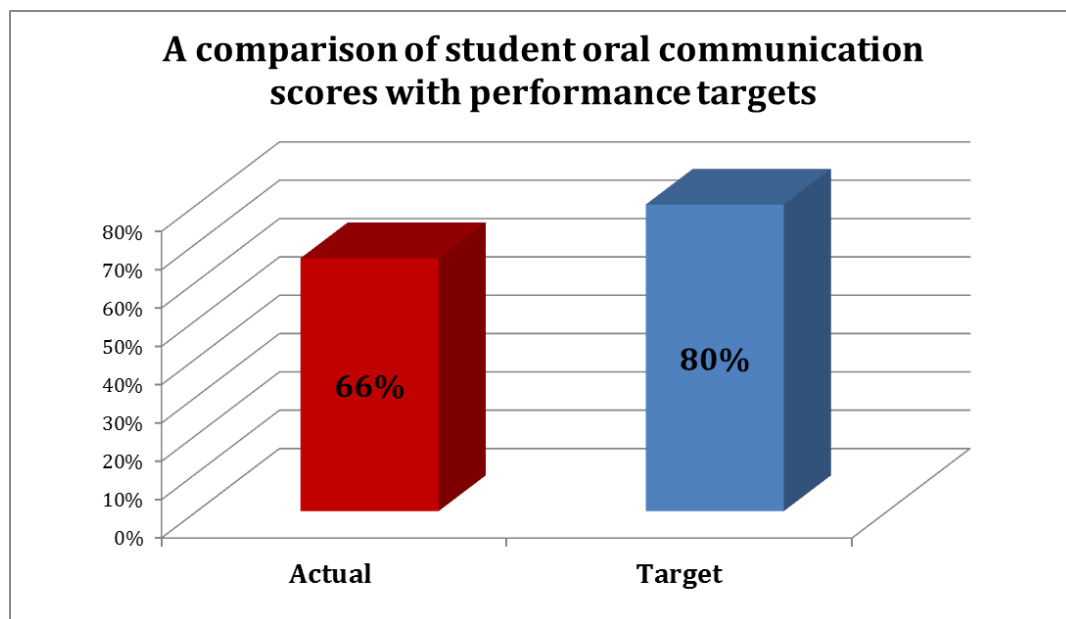
- 80% of students will meet or exceed expectations.
- Less than 10% of students will score "1" (below expectations) on any "trait" in the rubric.

Data Summary & Analysis:

As depicted in the graphics, our students' overall oral communication skills fell considerably short of our performance targets by far. Only 63% of individuals met expectations.

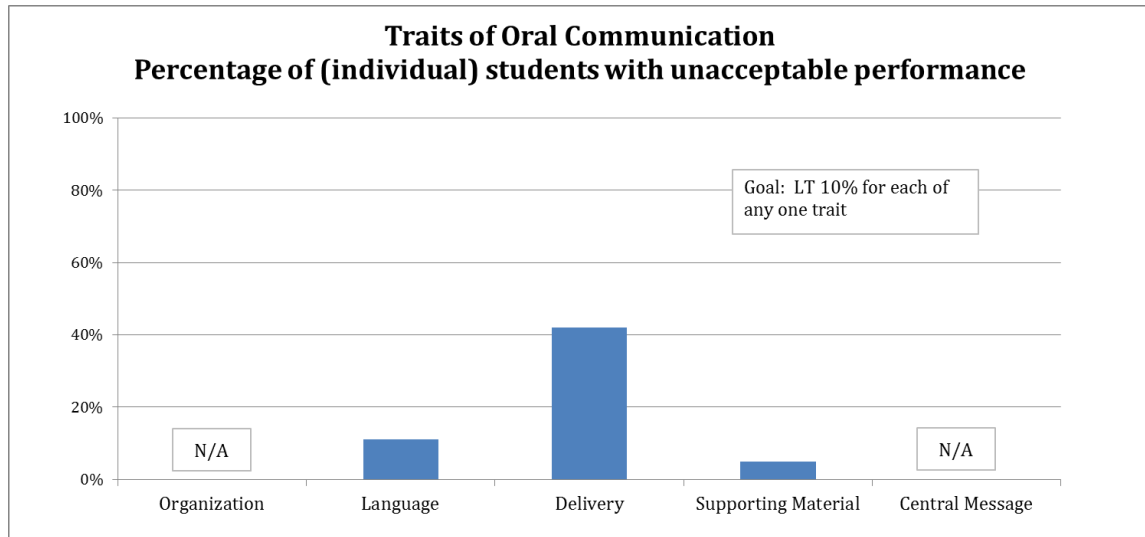


This does not compare favorably with our target that 80% of our students would meet or exceed our expectations. Actual scores fall below the targeted 80% of students meeting or exceeding expectations. Thus, the gap between our students’ oral communication skills and our performance targets is significant and must be attended to.



With regard to the individual components of oral communication that are described on our rubric, our goal was that less than 10% of our students would score “below expectations” on any of these traits. Again, our students’ performance fell short of our targets on each trait, particularly “delivery,” which refers to the students’ delivery techniques including posture,

gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness, “organization,” which refers to organizational patterns such as specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions, and “central message,” which looks at how compelling and consistent is the core message.



Closing the Loop:

- Late in Spring 2013 to Summer 2013, initial results of the communications assessment were presented. The results were of little surprise to faculty and administrators.
- It was clear that students are lacking in oral communication by the time they arrive at the capstone level. This fueled discussions that led to critiques of the BSBA curriculum. Discussions were held as to whether an introductory communication course needs to be added part of the required courses.
 - It was recalled during a meeting of the Assurance of Learning Task Force that CBE had, in the past, courses on communication but were then eliminated from the curriculum. Discussion continued regarding whether these classes needed to be reintegrated as part of the BSBA curriculum.
- Discussions led to a proposal for an Oral Communication Workshop to be offered to BSBA students. A proposal detailing the workshop’s conception and a brief overview of its implementation plan has been drafted by the HIRE Center and can be found in the *‘Proposal for the Oral Communication Workshop,’* on the following page.

Proposal for Oral Communication Workshop to Address Learning Goal: Communication

Purpose of the Workshop:

The workshop's purpose to help BSBA students improve their oral communication skills and better prepare them to make effective and professional presentations.

Why it is Necessary?

One of BSBA's learning goals is Communication. Under that learning goal we have three learning objectives. These three learning objectives are Oral Communication, Written Communication, and Teamwork. In Spring 2013, we assessed the Oral Communication learning objective. The assessment was conducted in the undergraduate capstone course MGMT 4650: Seminar in Strategic Business Management. The assignments used were group presentations. Some groups involved all members in the presentation, while other groups nominated one presenter. The rubric used for this assessment was the AAC&U VALUE rubric for Oral Communication. CBE's existing rubric for communication was deemed insufficient and ineffective. As a result, to begin the rubric modification process faculty teaching the mapped course MGMT 4650 were given the option of reviewing the existing CBE rubric and modifying it accordingly, or to adopt the AAC&U VALUE 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 VALUE rubric as a starting point. The assessors for the selected sections for assessment were two HIRE Center staff members. The two staff members went through the process of norming the rubric and proceeded to assess the identified sections of course MGMT 4650.

For the BSBA program, 13 groups and 38 individual students were assessed. The following were concluded:

Individual Score	
By Learning Objective	Learning Objective: Oral Communication
Exceeds Expectations (4)	3%
Meets Expectations (3)	63%
Needs Improvement (2)	34%
Below Expectations (1)	0%

As a result, faculty group meetings were held and led by the course coordinators to discuss possible actions that can be taken to improve in the area of oral communication. A number of suggestions were made by the participating faculty. Of these suggestions, one was presented to the AoL Task Force and the Dean's office for review. This suggestion was developing an Oral Communication workshop.

CBE faculty has raised the issue that a possible reason why some students have scored lower than others on oral communication is due to their cultural backgrounds. CBE has a very diverse student body, with a large international population. Some international students come from academic cultures where oral presentations are not part of the academic curriculum. This creates a need for an oral communication workshop that caters to international students. For example, research from the National University of Singapore found that "components of effective public speaking such as maintaining good eye contact, lightening up a talk with humor, or 'dressing for the occasion' can be difficult to implement for students from some cultures" (Krantz, 2008).

Coordinating and Executing a Workshop:

The design of the workshop is still in progress and currently being led by Professor of Marketing and industry expert, Dr. Tom Bagwell. Below consist of some potential ideas for the structure of the workshop, which are likely to be part lecture and part active participation through group and individual exercises. The instructors of the workshop will consist of CBE staff and guest lectures from the business community who will focus on communication within the field of business.

The workshop will be a non-credit offering to BSBA students only. There will be 40 spots available. Spots are reserved on a first come first serve basis. The maximum number of available spots allow for a manageable size to conduct exercises and allow for active participation in the workshop.

The workshops will likely be held on two-consecutive days and will be open to only students taking the capstone course MGMT 4650.

Examples of possible workshop topics include:

- Preparations prior to giving a presentation
- Giving your presentation
- Appropriate material and dress
- Organization
- Delivery
- Handling questions
- Managing nervousness
- Audience rapport
- Expectations in the business community

Developing a Workshop Webpage:

A dedicated webpage will be created under the HIRE Center website to house workshop information, updates, handouts, and supplemental material. The workshop webpage will also

allow students to learn about the structure and expectations of the workshop and about the instructors leading the sessions.

Assessing Workshop Effectiveness:

Workshop exercises will be assessed by the HIRE Center using AAC&U Rubric Oral Communication. The workshop assessments will also be compared to program assessment scores over time to track any improvement in the learning goal as more and more students take part in the workshop over time.

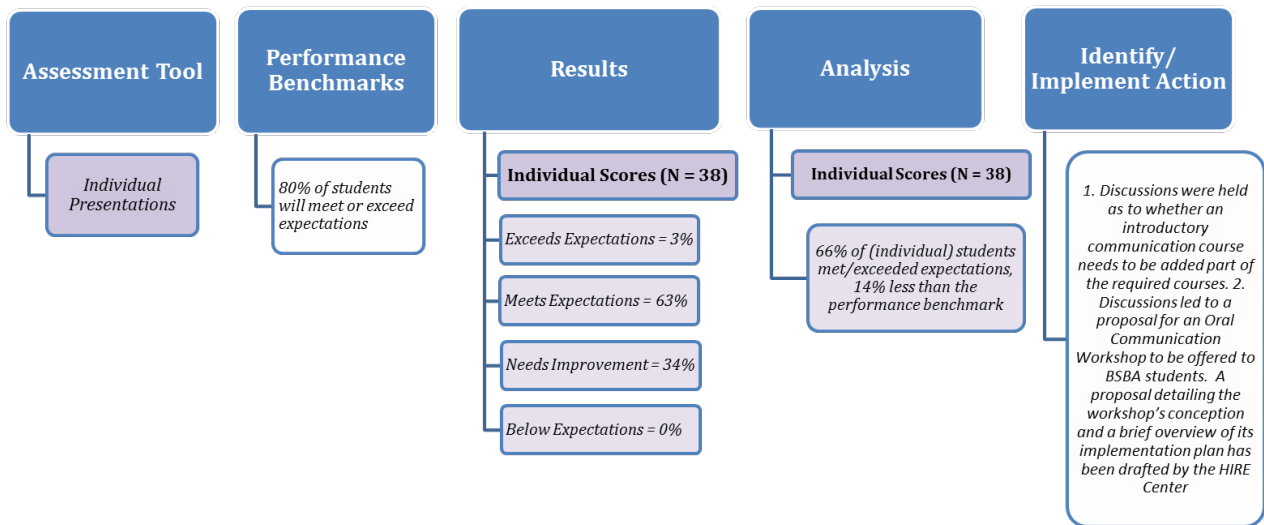
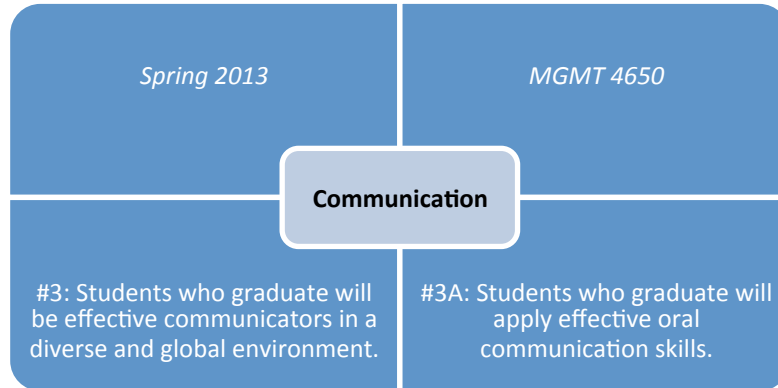
Potential Obstacles:

Possible challenges include too many students taking the workshop to allow for effective exercise review. However, we hope adequate instructor to student ratio will prevent this from becoming a problem.

Timeline:

The workshop will be in the development phase in Summer and early Fall 2013. A pilot workshop will be offered at the end of Fall 2013 in week 7 or 8 of the 10-week quarter.

PLO 3A: Oral Communication in Spring 2013



[End of Report]