

Date: May 25, 2012

To: UCC

From: Patricia Palmerton, Dir.of Oral Communication

Re: Report Regarding the Speaking Intensive Designation in the Hamline Plan

Part One: Hamline Plan Designation

1. Does the current HP designation have clearly articulated learning outcomes?
2. Align the HP LOW with the appropriate institutional LO.

The current Speaking Intensive requirement has objectives that are focused on the course, not on student outcomes. This is consistent with the kinds of assessment that have taken place in the past, with students providing feedback on what is happening in the course. The outcomes specified are as follows:

The course will

- 1) designate specific oral communication learning objectives appropriate to the course and the discipline
- 2) enable the student to practice and to analyze oral communication behaviors
- 3) focus upon the oral communication process as well as the final product

It is my understanding that this approach is not the approach desired by HLC, which is focusing attention on outcomes demonstrated by students. As a faculty development approach, the current definition works—i.e., it reinforces to faculty the kinds of things they need to be doing in a course, in order to help students learn what they want them to learn about oral communication. However, it should be noted that the objectives here require that specific oral communication LOs need to be developed for a given course (SI requirement #1: *designate specific oral communication learning objectives appropriate to the course and the discipline*).

A revision of the LOs for oral communication is something that should not be done by one person(me), for an entire curriculum. The Hamline University LO for oral communication is: Communicate effectively in speaking,” which is a subcategory of: “communicate effectively in writing and in speaking.” This is a very general LO, giving significant latitude in developing more specific LOs. If we look to the University Mission, this points to potential LOs for this HP designation as well. The HU Mission is “To create a diverse and collaborative community of learners dedicated to the development of students' knowledge, values and skills for successful lives of leadership, scholarship, and service.”

There are multiple areas of oral communication competence, and some disciplines are more concerned with some than with others. There are therefore multiple possible LOs for oral communication. Basing the LO on the HU Mission Statement, a general LO for Oral Communication might look something like:

- display effective interpersonal, group, and public speaking skills needed to function in a successful life of leadership, scholarship, and service. These would include such things as having the ability to:
 - construct effective, ethical oral messages
 - participate effectively in a group presentation
 - apply basic problem-solving skills within a group to develop a plan for implementation

- participate effectively (collaborative with others) in a problem-solving group
 - participate effectively (collaborate with others) in a learning discussion
 - communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds
 - identify and evaluate the effectiveness of nonverbal listening behavior
3. Does the bulletin description of the HP designation currently exist. If so, please include the current designation.
- The current description is:
 - “The student completes two courses designated as ‘speaking-intensive,’ which may be offered in any department and involve explicit attention to the speaking process as well as the subject matter of the course. Emphasis is given to discussion and student presentations. A speaking intensive course has three objectives: (1) to designate specific oral communication learning objectives appropriate to the course and the discipline; (2) to enable the student to practice and to analyze oral communication behaviors; and (3) to focus upon the oral communication process as well as the final product. The student gains experience in oral communication and discussion dynamics with coaching and response from the instructor or peers” (p. 8 of the current 2011-12 bulletin).
4. The description is problematic in focusing only on discussion and presentations, since the oral communication program has always included group interaction (such as task groups, lab groups, etc.), and interpersonal communication. I do not know when the language was changed to limit the program to discussion and presentations. Revision of the learning objectives will likely entail necessary revision to this description—revision is certainly needed if the LOs are not revised, as this is an inaccurate description.

Part Two – Supporting the Revision Proposal

Since there is no proposal for revision, this section is not relevant, beyond what I’ve discussed above.

Part Three – Implement the Revision Proposal and Assessing Learning Outcomes

1. Barriers to current implementation have been identified by many, two of the most important being a) lack of faculty development support over a period of years (this is being addressed currently), and b) increasing class sizes to accommodate increasing enrollments.
2. N/A
3. Quality control is currently done largely through student evaluation responses specific to SI courses. These responses focus on the LOs as they are currently articulated—and focus on the teaching of the course. If the LOs and assessment are shifted away from these evaluation forms, this will raise issues relative to maintaining a semblance of quality control (the director will not know how students are experiencing a course, nor will the instructor).

Assessment of student learning outcomes ought to take place at the classroom and department level. This is because there are significant differences in the kinds of oral communication that students are being asked to develop, depending upon the department and discipline. Comparing a student’s work in a small group as a first year with their work in a presentation in a capstone is not going to show change over time that is in any way meaningful. However, if work in groups (or in presentations, or in discussion) is what is important to a department in

developing their majors, then they are in a position to look at how to ladder courses to help develop this skill.

4. This has nothing to do with a revision, but rather with ongoing needs: there should be a space that students can go to easily video-record their work, without having to depend upon their own resources (e.g., their own mobile phone's video capabilities), or provide their own space to do this. We are working on a secure way to have video recordings placed on-line for students to review; at this point, that is not in place, but I believe the funding for it came through and it is in process.

Appendix: Generic Rubrics for Oral Communication Assessment

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Discussion

<i>Group Communication Rubric (generic)</i>	<i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i>	<i>Approaches Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Exceeds Baseline Expectations</i>
Contributions to the content of discussion	Is unprepared and not very reliable; does not provide relevant information or opinions, and may throw the discussion off track	Does minimally acceptable preparation; comments are relevant	Is typically well-prepared, evidenced by notes, questions, or completed discussion preparation assignments; comments are relevant and furthers the discussion	Is reliably well-prepared evidenced by notes, questions, or completed discussion preparation assignments; provides information that goes beyond the assignment; comments are relevant and furthers the discussion
Clearly expresses ideas in an organized way	May tend to introduce tangents that interfere with the progress of the discussion	Seldom asks questions or provide information or opinion, but is willing to contribute if asked.	Provides information and opinions that fit with the track of the discussion; expresses self clearly, connecting ideas to the points under discussion. Provides summaries or other points that help keep on track	Provides information and opinions that fit with the track of the discussion; expresses self clearly, connecting ideas to the points under discussion; helps further the discussion, and helps deepen it with analytic insight. Provides summaries or other points that help keep on track
Facilitates contributions from class members	Is silent through the discussion, or may monopolize the discussion.	Responds to input from others, but doesn't ask for input.	Asks for input from others; actively listens to others.	Asks for input from others by asking pertinent questions; actively listens; gate-keeps, explicitly asks quiet class members for

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Discussion

				their thoughts, opinions, & information. Is quiet when needed, so others can participate
Responds to others appropriately	Shows little to no interest in what others have to say, or visibly puts down, insults, or otherwise antagonizes those who disagree with his/her ideas. May diminish the sense of safety in the discussion.	Tends to be open only to those with whom he/she agrees. May appear uncomfortable with others' statements, but does not respond, or may monopolize the discussion	Is open-minded. Responds to others' ideas and opinions in a way that progresses the discussion. Shows interest in others' ideas, and is willing to hear the points of view offered by those who disagree.	Is open-minded. Responds to others' ideas and opinions in a way that progresses the discussion. Shows interest in others' ideas; is willing to hear the points of view and reasoning offered by those who disagree. .

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Group Communication

<i>Group Communication Rubric (generic)</i>	<i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i>	<i>Approaches Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Exceeds Baseline Expectations</i>
Facilitates contributions from group members	Shows little to no interest in what others have to say.	Responds to input from others, but doesn't ask for input.	Asks for input from others; actively listens.	Asks for input from others by asking pertinent questions; actively listens; gate-keeps, explicitly asking quiet group members for their thoughts, opinions, & information.
Makes individual contributions that support the work of the group	Is unprepared and not very reliable; does not provide relevant information or opinions; may tend to introduce tangents that interfere with the work of the group	Does minimally acceptably preparation; is generally reliable; may ask questions and give information, but usually waits until is asked	Demonstrates commitment to the goals of the group; is well-prepared; provides information and opinions	Demonstrates commitment to the goals of the group; is well-prepared; is reliable; provides information and opinions that help further the work o f the group
Uses evidence & supporting materials appropriately	Does not make an attempt to provide evidence, or insists on the relevance of fallacious evidence.	Makes at attempt to provide evidence and supporting materials, but some is out of date, irrelevant, or based on fallacious reasoning	Provides relevant evidence and other supporting materials, consistent with the quality of evidence appropriate for the topic	Provides relevant evidence and other supporting materials, consistent with the quality of evidence appropriate for the topic; puts evidence into useable and understandable form (e.g., charts, graphs)
Participates constructively in problem solving and	Lets everyone else do the critical analysis, and	Makes suggestions and offers opinions;	Contributes to analysis of issues; makes	Handles conflict constructively;

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Group Communication

<p>decision making</p>	<p>appears to just go along with decisions made</p>		<p>suggestions; listens and responds to arguments and suggestions of others; supports the need to analyze the problem before adopting solutions; willing to play devil's advocate</p>	<p>contributes to critical analysis of issues; willing to play devil's advocate; asks for and makes suggestions; listens and responds to arguments and suggestions of others; builds on others' ideas; attends to the need to base any solutions on critical analysis of the problem.</p>
<p>Balances task and social aspects of the group; contributes to a cohesive climate</p>	<p>Focuses only on his or her needs in the group; may focus only on the task or only on social aspects of the group, without attending to the needs of group members.</p>	<p>Tends to focus on either the social aspects or the task aspects of the group, but responds to corrective action from others</p>	<p>Participates or supports both the task and social aspects of the group.</p>	<p>See that the multiple needs of group members are attended to (which may be by a different group member); participates or supports both the task and social aspects of the group; shows concern for others in the group while also attending to task</p>

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Presentational Speaking

<i>Presentational Speaking Rubric (generic)</i>	<i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i>	<i>Approaches Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Meets Baseline Expectations</i>	<i>Exceeds Baseline Expectations</i>
Central Message Appropriateness & clarity	Central message is not stated explicitly (or is not easily deduced from the presentation), or may be inconsistent with the supporting ideas and materials presented	Central message is stated, but may be vague or lack clarity, connection to supporting materials may not be very clear	Central message is stated clearly, is appropriate for the context and supporting materials	Central message is compelling, raises critical issues, and creates a need to listen to and understand the supporting materials
Adaptation to audience	Little attention seems to have been paid to how the message relates to the audience, and materials and language are not consistent with audience needs, or may even be alienating. There may be problems with pronunciation & grammar.	Message and materials are generally appropriate for the audience, but there is little attention to connecting with the audience. There may be some problems with language use.	Message and materials are appropriate for the audience; materials and language are at a level of appropriateness for the audience.	Message and materials are appropriate for the audience; materials and language are at a level of appropriateness for the audience. Particular attention is given to make specific connection to the experiences of this particular audience.
Use of Evidence & Supporting Materials Analytic Insight/Depth	There is little connection between the supportive materials and the topic, or the evidence is misused, or insufficient. Visuals, if used are distracting and/or irrelevant.	Evidence is insufficient, but an attempt has been made to support the main message. Visuals, if used, don't particularly aid understanding, or are distracting.	Supportive materials are relevant and appropriate to the topic. Visuals, if used, are supportive.	Supporting materials are creative, innovative, and highly relevant. Visuals, if used, are supportive and add to understanding. Critical analysis is clear and succinct, but provides depth of knowledge into the issue

Hamline University: Generic Rubric for Presentational Speaking

<p>Organization</p>	<p>The presentation is disorganized and difficult to follow, seriously impeding the effectiveness of the speaker.</p>	<p>There are problems with the organization; the speaker should make use of more transitions and markers. While there is an organization, it is not necessarily helpful to getting across the message.</p>	<p>Organization is clear, and listeners can easily follow the train of thought of the speaker. Presentation is cohesive. Organization is supportive of the central message.</p>	<p>Organization is clear, and listeners can easily follow the train of thought of the speaker. Presentation is cohesive. Organization is supportive of the central message. The organization is exceptionally helpful in seeing and understanding the relationship of the central ideas in the message.</p>
<p>Nonverbals / Delivery</p>	<p>Body language gets in the way of the message. Voice may be monotone, gestures may be distracting, eye contact is minimal or nonexistent.</p>	<p>Some aspect of Body language, gestures, voice, or eye contact distracts from the central message.</p>	<p>Body language, gestures, vocal expressiveness and eye contact are all appropriate, and do not distract from the speaker's message.</p>	<p>Body language, gestures, vocal expressiveness, and eye contact all add to the speaker's effectiveness; speaker appears confidence and authoritative.</p>