

80s Pop Culture (B.A.) Program  
Alternative Assessment Summary, June 2016

In the Fall 2015, due to achieving exemplary status on the previous year’s assessment report, the 80s Pop Culture program became eligible to complete an alternative assessment project during the 2015-2016 academic year. With the approval of the unit head, Dr. Keston Fulcher, the program’s assessment committee decided to focus on improving student’s oral communication skills.

According to the program’s student learning objective for these skills:

“Students graduating from the B.A. program in 80s pop culture will deliver effectively a presentation with an (a) engaging introduction, (b) a logical and fluid body, and (c) a conclusion that reinforces the main ideas of the presentation and closes smoothly.”

However, as noticed in the most recent assessment report, students’ skills have not met the faculty set standards in two of the four oral communication areas of the rubric (Introduction and Conclusion). In addition, students reported on the graduation survey that they made the least gains in the area of oral communication. After meeting as a faculty, we determined that students did present orally in the 6 courses mapped to the oral communication objective. However, the implementation of these presentations varied considerably by course. Faculty placed different emphasis on the skills necessary and appropriate for the presentation and therefore graded students based on varying criteria.

Oral Communication Rubric (n=25) 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = emerging, 3 = competent, 4 = highly competent						
Delivery Skills	4	n/a	n/a	3.3 (.42)	3	n/a
Introduction	4	n/a	n/a	2.8 (.55)	3	n/a
Body	4	n/a	n/a	3.4 (.38)	3	n/a
Conclusion	4	n/a	n/a	2.8 (.49)	3	n/a

The faculty assessment committee has decided (with support from all program faculty) to implement two interventions: 1) Aligning assessments in all classes mapped to this objective and 2) Putting greater emphasis on the capstone presentation. A brief description of each intervention is provided below, followed by a proposed timeline for implementation.

1. *Aligning Assessments in Classes Mapped to Oral Communication Objective:* The faculty are in the process of developing a common oral communication rubric to be used in the six courses in which students give presentations. This same rubric will also be used for the capstone course presentation. After the rubric has been finalized, with the help of the Center for Assessment and Research Studies, faculty will attend a training session on how to use the rubric, which should improve inter-rater agreement and give us confidence in the results of the assessments.
2. *Greater Emphasis on the Capstone Presentation:* Since students were not meeting the faculty standards for the capstone oral presentation, we are planning to make the presentation more formal. That is, all faculty and students in the program will be invited to attend these presentations and they will be rated by three program faculty members. Students will be told that this presentation is intended to demonstrate to the faculty and their fellow

students what they have learned during their time in the program and it should be given like a formal conference presentation.

2015-2016*			2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019	
Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall*	Spring**	Fall	Spring*	Fall	Spring*
Meet as faculty to determine coverage of the oral communication objective	Develop common oral communication rubric	Rubric training with CARS	Collect pre-assessment data prior to making changes to the courses.	Implement changes to PCUL 302, 303, 404, & 480 (Spring courses) and collect data.	Implement changes to PCUL 301 and 402 (Fall courses) and collect data.	Discuss reliability of data collection and continue to collect data.	Collect data.	Collect data.
*Planning and development of oral communication common rubric			*Baseline data collected. **Class of 2017 has received part of intervention in 404 and the capstone course.		*The class of 2018 has received approximately half of the intervention. Two capstone cohorts have received the intervention at this point.		*The class of 2019 has received the entire intervention. Data will be analyzed to note any possible changes from pretest cohort data.	