Name of Program/Department: *Speech Program*
Year: 2021-2022
Name of Preparer: *Dr. Bryan Fisher*

Program Mission Statement

The Mission of the Speech Program is to equip students with the skills needed to formulate and deliver a wide variety of messages. Such skills include message structure, audience analysis, researching and supporting ideas and arguments, using language effectively, and effective delivery. The speech program is designed to prepare students for success in a world in which oral proficiency is often rated as one of the most important skills one can possess.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. Demonstrate and advance academic integrity in all interactions.

2. Demonstrate the ability to use tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions.

3. Demonstrate the ability to think independently, critically, and creatively.

4. Demonstrate the ability to speak correctly and clearly in forms and style appropriate for specific audiences and purposes they serve.

5. Demonstrate the ability to gain the required skills, knowledge, and dispositions to effectively communicate with audiences and purposes they serve.

Executive Summary

In the 2021-2022 academic year, students in Speech 101 were assessed to determine the extent to which the course equipped them to demonstrate the competencies necessary for effective public speaking. The instruments used for the assessment included one direct assessment and one indirect assessment.
The benchmark for the direct assessment was set at a 5% improvement from their first speech to their last speech in each of the eight of the speech competencies measured.

Results show that the benchmark was met when measuring an aggregate of the eight competencies. Results further showed that the benchmark was surpassed in six of the eight individual areas, while two fell short of the benchmark.

The benchmark for the indirect assessment was set as follows: 80% of responding students will offer a positive endorsement (indicate *agree* or *strongly agree*) on each of the five questions on the Likert-styled survey. Results show that this benchmark was greatly surpassed and a vast majority of students feel more confident in their speaking abilities.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to recognize quality research and offer support for the content of the message.

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke emotion.

SLO 5.0: Students will learn effective delivery skills.

Assessment Methods

DIRECT:

All five SLOs were assessed using the *Competent Speaker* form designed by the National Communication Association. With this instrument, we measured student ability two times during the course. The first assessment was given at the beginning of the course when students delivered their informative speeches, and the second was given at the end of the course when students presented their persuasive speeches. Through this process, we were able to measure the impact of the course on student ability.

Before each semester began, all Speech 101 instructors were given a randomly generated set of five numbers, each under twenty. By applying these five numbers to their rosters, instructors identified the random list of five students to assess in each of their sections.

For the first major speech, all Speech 101 instructors used the *Competent Speaker* evaluation form to assess these five students in each of their sections. Designed by the National Communication Association, the *Competent Speaker* form includes eight competencies as follows:

1) Chooses and narrows a topic appropriately for the audience and occasion.

2) Communicates thesis/purpose in a manner appropriate for the audience and occasion.

3) Provides supporting material (including electronic and non-electronic presentational aids) appropriate for the audience and occasion.

4) Uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.

5) Uses language appropriate for the audience and occasion.

6) Uses vocal variety in rate, pitch, and intensity (volume) to heighten and maintain interest appropriate for the audience and occasion.

7) Uses pronunciation, grammar, and articulation appropriate for the audience and occasion.

8) Uses physical behaviors that support the verbal message.

Students received either a 1 (unsatisfactory), a 2 (satisfactory), or a 3 (excellent) in each of the eight competencies. The total score received was between eight and twenty-four.

These same five students in each section were then evaluated using the same form and guidelines for their last major speeches near the end of the semester. Their performances on each evaluation were then compared.

The *Competent Speaker* assessment tool directly measures each of the desired SLOs.
SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.
　　　　　　　　Addressed by competencies 1, 4

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.
　　　　　　　　Addressed by competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to research and offer support for the content of the message.

Addressed by competency 3

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke
    emotion.
        Addressed by competencies 5, 7

SLO 5.0: Students will learn effective delivery skills.
        Addressed by competencies 6, 7, 8

Statistical analysis of the results of the *Competent Speaker* assessments will allow us to measure the improvement between the pretest (first speech) and the posttest (last speech) for each of the each of the eight competencies and the five SLOs.

BASELINE: The baseline for each of the eight competencies as well as for the total of the eight competencies was established from last year's results as shown below.

Type of Speech (2020-2021)		Competency								Average Total 8 Comp	%
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight		
Informative Speech	Informative	2.18	2.03	1.91	2.14	2.23	1.67	2.14	1.78	2.01	66.99
	Average %	72.65	67.52	63.68	71.37	74.36	55.56	71.37	59.40		
	N	78	78	78	78	78	78	78	78		
Persuasive Speech	Persuasive	2.59	2.73	2.44	2.48	2.45	2.23	2.53	2.26	2.46	82.06
	Average %	86.34	90.86	81.18	82.51	81.72	74.19	84.41	75.27		
	N	61	62	62	61	62	62	62	62		

BENCHMARK: Assessed students will improve their score on each of the eight competencies from their first major speech to the last major speech by an average of 5%.

TARGET: In the next three to five years assessed students will increase their score by an average of 10% on each of the eight competencies from their first major speech to their last major speech.

INDIRECT:

At the end of each semester, all Speech 101 students are asked to complete an online self-report survey that measures the extent to which they perceive they have improved. It is a five-question survey using a Likert-style scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree)

The self-report survey asks the extent to which, after taking the course, they feel more confident in their ability to:

choose and narrow a topic for a given audience and a given amount of speaking time.

gather quality research material to support thesis and main points.

organize material into a clear message and easy-to-follow progression.

use appropriate and effective language for a given audience and speaking situation.

offer a clear and smooth delivery of the message.

Statistical analysis of the results of the self-assessment allowed us to measure the extent to which students feel they improved for each of the five SLOs.

SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.
              Addressed by measures 1, 3

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.
              Addressed by measures 1, 4

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to research and offer support for the content of the message.
              Addressed by measure 2

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke emotion.
              Addressed by measure 4

SLO 5.0: Students will learn effective delivery skills.
              Addressed by measure 5

BASELINE: The results from the 2020-2021 indirect assessment and newly established baseline are as follows:

The self-report survey asks the extent to which, after taking the course, they feel more confident in their ability to:

choose and narrow a topic for a given audience and a given amount of speaking time. **85%**

gather quality research material to support thesis and main points. **85%**

organize material into a clear message and easy-to-follow progression. **86%**

use appropriate and effective language for a given audience and speaking situation. **88%**

offer a clear and smooth delivery of the message. **83%**

BENCHMARK: 80% of responding students will offer a positive endorsement (indicate *agree* or *strongly agree*) on each of the five questions on the Likert-styled survey.

TARGET: In the next three to five years, 85% of students will offer a positive endorsement (indicate *agree* or *strongly agree*) on each of the five questions on the Likert-styled survey.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Applicable General Education Goals:

Goal 1. The ability to compose effectively with rhetorical awareness, integrate relevant research when appropriate, and produce developed, insightful arguments.

Goal 2. The ability to demonstrate comprehension of different forms of communication.

Goal 7. The ability to recognize diverse social and cultural practices and to articulate connections between individual behavior and sociocultural processes.

Goal 9. The ability to apply critical thinking skills to assess arguments and solve problems.

SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.

                Addresses General Education goals 1, 9

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.

                Addresses General Education goal 7

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to research and offer support for the content of the message.

                Addresses General Education goals 2, 9

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke emotion.

                Addresses General Education goal 1

Assessment Results

DIRECT:

In the 2021-2022 academic year, 87 students were assessed using the direct measure. As indicated in the table below, the benchmark of a 5% improvement from the first major speech (Informative Speech) to the last major speech (Persuasive Speech) was achieved for the aggregate of all 8 competencies. Additionally, the benchmark was achieved for 6 of the 8 individual competencies. While this marks a decline in performance from last year, it still represents improvement over the results 2 years ago. This represents a normalizing of this new measure as well as indicates the disruption caused by the pandemic and the relatively low number of students assessed last year.

Type of Speech (2021-2022)		Competency								Average Total 8 Comp	%
		One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight		
Informative Speech	Mean	2.41	2.17	2.10	2.23	2.34	1.86	2.28	1.74	2.14	71.41
	Average %	80.46	72.41	70.11	74.33	78.16	62.07	75.86	57.85		
	Std. Deviation	0.756	0.781	0.732	0.710	0.567	0.851	0.726	0.723		
	N	87	87	87	87	87	87	87	87		
Persuasive Speech	Mean	2.30	2.43	2.32	2.20	2.53	2.07	2.47	2.02	2.29	76.39
	Average %	76.63	80.84	77.39	73.18	84.29	68.97	82.38	67.43		
	Std. Deviation	0.779	0.772	0.707	0.696	0.644	0.818	0.546	0.762		
	N	87	87	87	87	87	87	87	87		

As the extent to which the five SLOs are achieved is determined by student performance in each of the eight competencies, the results suggest that 4 of the 5 SLOs were met this academic year. SLO 1.0 needs attention.

SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.
Addressed by competencies 1, 4

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.
Addressed by competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to research and offer support for the content of the message.
Addressed by competency 3

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke emotion.
Addressed by competencies 5, 7

SLO 5.0: Students will learn effective delivery skills.
Addressed by competencies 6, 7, 8

INDIRECT:

In the 2021-2022 academic year 100 students completed the indirect measure. The benchmark of 80% of assessed students offering a positive endorsement (indicate *agree* or *strongly agree*) on each of the five questions on the Likert-styled survey was surpassed. Results:

The self-report survey asks the extent to which, after taking the course, they feel more confident in their ability to:

choose and narrow a topic for a given audience and a given amount of speaking time. **93%**

gather quality research material to support thesis and main points. **94%**

organize material into a clear message and easy-to-follow progression. **95%**

use appropriate and effective language for a given audience and speaking situation. **94%**

offer a clear and smooth delivery of the message. **87%**

As the extent to which the five SLOs are achieved is determined by student performance in each of the eight competencies, the results suggest that all five SLOs were achieved.

SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.
Addressed by measures 1, 3

SLO 2.0: Students will learn to analyze the needs and interests of a given audience.
Addressed by measures 1, 4

SLO 3.0: Students will learn to research and offer support for the content of the message.
Addressed by measure 2

SLO 4.0: Students will learn to use language effectively to convey content and evoke emotion.
Addressed by measure 4

SLO 5.0: Students will learn effective delivery skills.
Addressed by measure 5

Action Items

DIRECT:

From the 2020-2021 Institutional Effective Report "Additionally, we recognize the anomalous nature of this past year and despite rather impressive numbers, we will not be changing our benchmarks. With numbers down considerably and students attending classes in a variety of ways (in person, online, hybrid…etc), we look forward to more data with which to draw more definitive conclusions." The 2021-2022 results appear to bear out the anomalous nature of the 2020-2021 academic year. While there was a decline in performance from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, the latest results indicate improvement from 2019-2020. As more data is gathered over the years and our instrument normalizes, the large swings in results should be minimized. That said, the

poor results on competencies 1 (*Chooses and narrows a topic appropriately for the audience and occasion*) and 4 (*Uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose*) need to be addressed.

The SLO directly affected by these results is SLO 1.0: Students will learn to create a clearly structured message for a given amount of presentation time.

Time issues in public speaking are a direct result of two primary problems, a lack of practice and a lack of organization. We will spend more time explaining the importance of practice. We will provide students with more practice strategies and emphasize the need to approximate the actual speech stetting as much as possible when practicing. We will stress the point that playing the speech over in one's head while driving or doing other things does not constitute adequate practice and can easily result in making the situation worse.

Our outline process is designed to require the students to follow a precise structure for their speeches. This should result in a clear organizational pattern. Students often mistakenly believe that the speech is a somehow a step beyond the outline rather than an oral representation of the outline. They falsely believe that the outline is merely a shell of the speech. This causes them to include things into the presentation that were not part of the overall organization of the outline. This results in a lack of structure and usually, time problems. We need to impress upon our students that the outline, while not a manuscript, is the speech. They are given the organizational tools they need in the outline process; we need to make sure that these carry over into the presentation. We can spend more time in class showing our students how the outlines become presentations. We can use the samples of written outline we provide our students for in-class exercises. We can have our students take sections of those samples and practice converting that written work into an oral message.

INDIRECT:

The results of the indirect assessment indicate that Speech 101 instruction has been successful in building student confidence in regard to all five SLOs. All measures greatly surpassed our benchmark of 80%, and the lowest result was measure five at 87%. Measure 5 ask students 'confidence in their ability to *offer a clear and smooth delivery of the message.* This likely results from the unwarranted weight students tend to give delivery over other aspects of the speech process. It is also the aspect that make them the most anxious. It follows that this measure would show the lowest result. As mentioned in the previous section, in order to address this in our classes, we can spend more time stressing the importance of the other aspects of the speech process while explaining that delivery is only one part. Further, we can help build their confidence by giving them more in-class opportunities to practice, showing them examples of great speeches that

didn't have perfect deliveries (focusing on the unattainability of perfection), and providing more focused on feedback on individual aspects of delivery.

APPENDIX

Link to direct measure instrument:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Speech101StuEvalSpring2022Inf

Link to indirect measure instrument:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SpeechStuSurvSpring2022