

Oral Communication

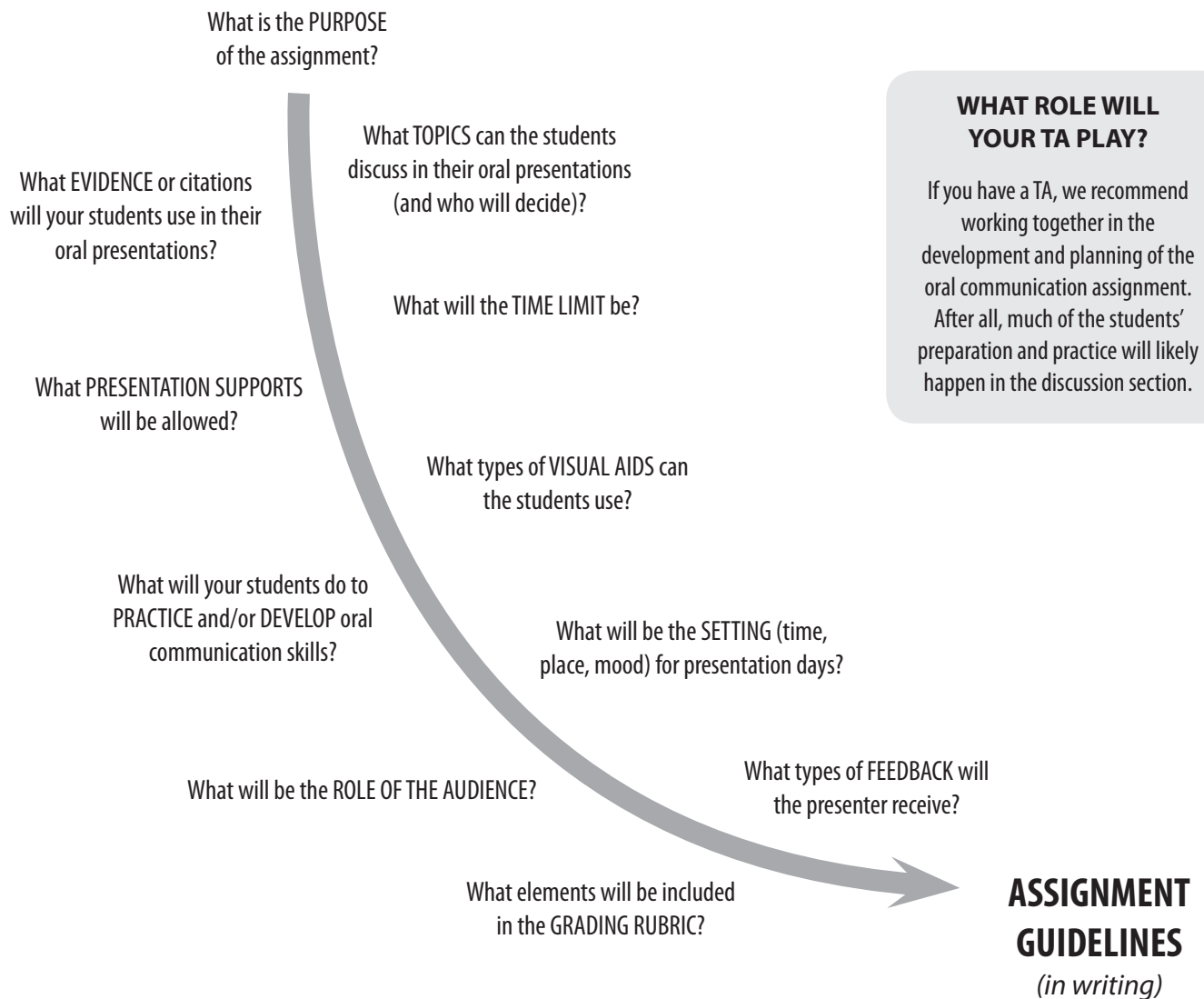
in Your Signature Course

This guide provides information on:

- Designing an oral communication assignment
- Implementing the assignment
- Activities to help your students practice and prepare
- Sample peer feedback forms
- Sample grading rubrics

Designing an Oral Communication Assignment

A well-conceived assignment will yield better presentations. Consider the following ...



Oral communication and writing are linked skills. As you plan your semester, consider how written assignments could support speaking opportunities, and vice versa.

What is the PURPOSE of the assignment?

Any type of oral communication assignment will help students improve their ability to speak articulately in front of an audience. But what other skills do you want your students to practice? Select a presentation type that will support the development of those skills.

Type	Key features	Student preparation outside of class	Real world application
INFORMATIVE (6-8 minutes) <i>Speaker informs the audience about an issue, how something works, or how to do something.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops research and writing skills• Suitable for demonstrating student knowledge on related topics• Can be a form of content knowledge assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Research topic> Write speech> Practice delivery	Updating colleagues about progress on a project
PERSUASIVE (7-10 minutes) <i>Speaker aims to persuade audience to change some belief and/or behavior with a tangible call to action.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops research and writing skills, awareness of audience, critical thinking• Suitable for topics for which the audience is open to reconsidering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Research topic> Formulate argument, thesis, or opinion> Write speech> Practice delivery	Pitching a proposal
IMPROMPTU (2-3 minutes) <i>Speaker is given only a few minutes to develop and present ideas in a clear and concise manner.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops ability to think on one's feet• Suitable for a variety of topics and can be used to support other course requirements (e.g., impromptu progress report on a large assignment)• No prior preparation needed; shorter speech time/ less class time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> None	Answering a novel question in a job interview
ENTERTAINMENT (4-6 minutes) <i>Speaker engages the audience with amusing elements of a topic, similar to a special occasion speech.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops awareness of audience• Encourages students to think creatively about key themes• Shorter speech time/less class time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Write speech> Practice delivery with an audience that can provide feedback	Accepting an award at a banquet
DEBATE (20-30 minutes) <i>Speakers present and defend opposing sides of an issue.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops research and writing skills, awareness of audience, critical thinking, ability to think on one's feet, ability to work in groups• Suitable for exploring multiple viewpoints• Suitable for larger groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Coordinate with peers> Research topic> Write in debate format (speech/rebuttal)> Practice delivery	Responding to questions that challenge a proposal

These presentation types can be customized to your course in many ways. For group presentations, ensure there is a structure in place that requires each group member to actively participate.



Shorter, simpler assignments provide practice opportunities for the skills that will make students successful at longer, more complex presentations. Mix and match to build the skills that are relevant in your discipline.

What TOPICS can the students discuss in their oral presentation (and who will decide)?

Decide what you consider a “good” topic for this assignment. We recommend that it be:

- Specific
- Interesting to the audience and presenter.
- Suitable to the type of presentation (for example, a “persuasive” topic ought to have some legitimate controversy associated with it).
- An extension of class material that goes beyond the coursework.

Decide how you will oversee topic selection. For example:

- You assign topics
- Students select from a brief list
- Students choose, but topics must be pre-approved
- Free-for-all, based on assignment prompt (common, but risky)



A class discussion about topic selection can be a great opportunity for students to share ideas and practice speaking extemporaneously. In larger classes, this can be accomplished using small groups.

What EVIDENCE or citations will your students use in their oral presentation?

Depending on the type of presentation and the topic, the students will need to have the guidelines for using evidence in the construction and delivery of their talk. Consider:

- What type of evidence do you want your students to use in their presentation?
- What types of sources are acceptable, and which are not?
- How many scholarly sources should students provide?
- How will students cite their sources when actually delivering the oral presentation?

The citations can be presented verbally during the speech, as a bibliography within the associated visual aid, or as presentation materials that are turned in.



What will the TIME LIMIT be?

We have provided suggestions for each presentation type (see pg. 2). The time limits you set for presentation may also be influenced by the number of students in your course and the class time available for the assignment. Also consider the following:

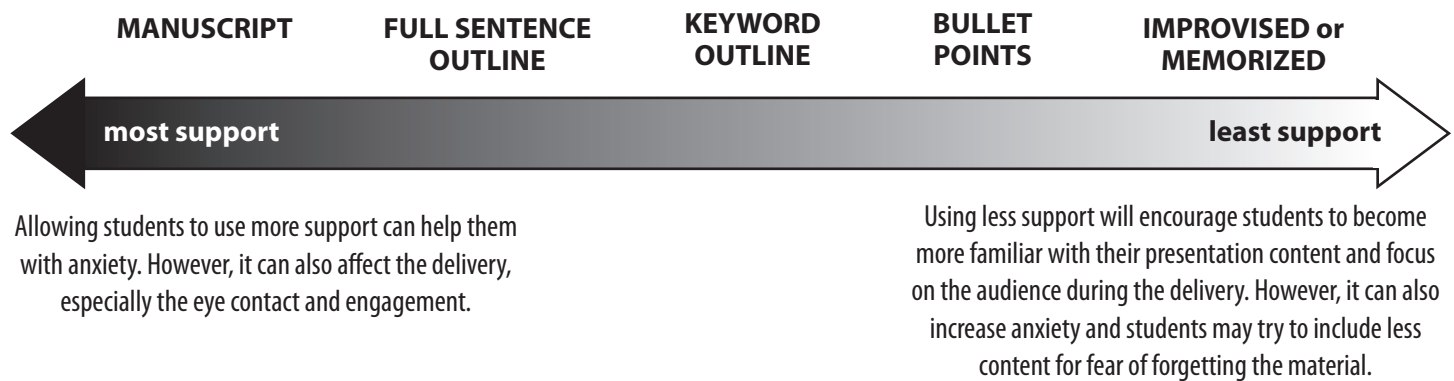
- Will you provide a “buffer” to allow students to go over or under allotted time and still fulfill the requirements?
- If a student does go over-time (and over the buffer time), how will you communicate that it’s time to stop?
- Will you deduct points or have another type of consequence for a presentation that is well below or above the time limit? (This can be a useful way to avoid particularly short or long presentations.)
- Are there activities such as audience Q&A or verbal feedback that will be incorporated into the time allotted for each presentation?



Discuss ways for students to keep track of their time during the presentation (designate a time keeper, give the speaker a stopwatch, etc.).

What PRESENTATION SUPPORTS will the students use?

Presentation supports refer to what a speaker uses as memory prompts while delivering a presentation to an audience. There are many forms of presentation support, and most can be used with any presentation type (with the exception of impromptu, which is always improvised). Encourage students to aim for a moderate level of support (i.e., outline or bullet points).



TIP

Early in the semester, allow students to choose the type of presentation support they will use. Then encourage students to use less support for the final presentation.

What types of VISUAL AIDS will the students use?

Visual aids can range from a chalkboard, to a PowerPoint presentation, to a prop. Well-chosen visual aids add something to a presentation, rather than simply outline it. If you decide visual aids are appropriate, consider:

- Which types of visual aids are acceptable and logistically possible given the time/place?
- What guidelines will you provide on the use of visual aids? (for example, how will you relate best practices for using PowerPoint?)

A well-chosen visual aid will supplement the content of the presentation. Help students make a plan to avoid becoming overly dependent on their visual aid during the presentation.



TIP

What activities will your students do to PRACTICE?

Practice opportunities are critical to the development of oral communication skills. We recommend you offer three or four speaking opportunities throughout the semester, increasing in difficulty, level of preparation, formality, and/or length. Practice can occur during class/discussion time, or be assigned as homework, as long as you have some way of holding students accountable. **For a variety of practice activity ideas, see Appendix A.**



TIP

Encourage students to practice in different places and in front of different people to become comfortable with the presentation and receive feedback.

What will be the **SETTING** of presentation days?

Time & place. When will these speaking opportunities take place? Will students give their presentations in class or discussion sections? We recommend that speaking opportunities (and any resulting feedback) be distributed throughout the semester. This gives students a chance to improve their performance over time. We also recommend spending no more than about half of any class period on oral communication presentations. If timing issues arise, having extra time set aside keeps the presentations on schedule.

Mood. Oral communication skills are best practiced in an atmosphere where the presenters feel respected and listened to by an engaged audience. An engaged audience can help a presenter feel more relaxed and confident when speaking. To create this atmosphere, develop audience rules and regulations for oral communication activities and presentation days, with consequences for students who do not follow them.



Presentation day can be stressful for everyone involved. Preempt the chaos by presenting a clear agenda for your students at least a week in advance.

What will the **ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE** be?

For best results, describe your expectations of audience etiquette within the assignment. Also consider how student audience members could play a more active and important role in the oral communication experience. One or more of the following roles may be appropriate:

- *Students respond after the presentation with questions and/or comments.*
Audience members have the opportunity to ask follow-up questions for clarification, or challenge a point that may be controversial. Some structure may be needed here, as students are generally reluctant to respond to a generic inquiry of “any questions?”.
- *Students help classmates improve skills through informal feedback.*
Prompts like “what do you remember the most?” or “what’s one thing to change for next time?” give each audience member a focus for the post-presentation conversation. Students can also write down their informal responses that get collected and given to each speaker.
- *Students give written feedback as part of a formal evaluation of the speaker.*
If you decide to do this, we recommend providing the audience with a rubric or worksheet similar to the one you are using for grading, and incorporating student responses in your formal written feedback.

In any case, the audience role needs to be explicitly stated as part of the assignment. Also, decide in advance how you will hold students accountable for meeting that expectation.

If you want a lively discussion, use prompts or a worksheet that focusses student response and prepares them to speak up with something meaningful to say.



What types of FEEDBACK will the presenter receive?

We recommend that students receive feedback after each speaking opportunity (including practice) and that the amount of feedback is consistent for every student.

Feedback from you: Plan ahead and decide how you want to provide your students with feedback—in verbal and written form. Then let students know how you intend to offer feedback by including details in the written assignment guidelines.

Feedback from peers: In addition to your feedback, student feedback can be invaluable. Include opportunities for students to discuss what they have seen or write down their feedback anonymously for the presenters. **See Appendix B for sample student feedback forms.**



Getting feedback from the audience can be an excellent way for a speaker to become mindful of their presentation habits and to further develop ideas. Encourage a safe and positive environment for this by asking students to treat the presenter as they would want to be treated when it's their turn to present.

What elements will be included in the RUBRIC?

We recommend that some portion of the grade be based on delivery, and some portion be based on content. You might also assign a grade for supporting materials, or for being a good audience member when other students are speaking. For best results, provide your students with the grading rubric in advance. This will allow your students to focus their preparation efforts on the aspects that you identify as most relevant. **Sample rubrics are available in Appendix C.**

The rubric for an oral presentation assignment may have elements that your students find unfamiliar. When in doubt, over-explain what you are looking for and provide examples.



AND FINALLY...

Provide clear ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES in writing

It is critical that your students know exactly what is expected of them from the assignment. The more detail you can provide—and the better you can define what success looks like—the better your students will perform. Providing assignment guidelines *in writing* is the best way to clearly communicate these expectations to students.

Spend time in class discussing the aspects of the oral presentation and how they differ from other assignments. Be specific about each part of the assignment and take student questions. Also make the assignment available electronically (e.g., on the class Blackboard page).

Continue to refer to the assignment guidelines document as the presentations approach. Remind students it's *their* responsibility to read, understand, and ask questions about the assignment well in advance of presentation day.

Implementing the Oral Communication Assignment

Many students have anxiety related to giving a formal oral presentation, in part because they don't know how to prepare or deliver a presentation effectively. By following up your detailed assignment guidelines and rubric with opportunities for preparation and practice, your students will have all the tools they need to make an effective—and even enjoyable—presentation.

This portion of the guide includes information on:

- How to help students prepare for the presentation
- How to create a valuable experience for the audience
- How to deliver feedback that helps students develop further

1. Helping your students prepare for the presentation

As an instructor, you are in a position to help your students develop the necessary component skills and be more confident about speaking in front of others. Here are some ways to do it:

a. Lead a discussion on how to prepare for the oral presentation.

To help your students understand what they will need to do (and when they will need to do it!) lead a discussion about the mechanics of preparation. Encourage students to share their previous experiences with oral communication (most probably had to give presentations in high school, in a club or organization, in their religious institution, etc.).

Practice, Practice, Practice

If you don't help your students prepare, it is likely you won't see very good results in their presentations.

Here are some questions to spark discussion. Be sure to have some suggestions of your own to add to the conversation.

- ☐ How will you pick your topic?
- ☐ How will you structure your presentation? How many points and sub-points will you include?
- ☐ How will you include all of your information in the given time frame?
- ☐ How will you incorporate citations?
- ☐ How will you engage with your audience throughout the presentation?
- ☐ Will visual aids enhance the presentation?
- ☐ How many times will you practice your presentation?
- ☐ How will you get feedback when you practice?
- ☐ What materials will you use to help you during your presentation?
- ☐ What can you do in advance to help reduce anxiety and nervousness?
- ☐ How will you decide that you are “ready” for the presentation?

As students are discussing these issues, take notes on the board, and encourage your students to write down a plan for preparation. Better yet, invite students to put down specific details in their calendar or planner ...



Example of student's planner with practice time scheduled.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 3-4 pm Brainstorm topic choice	6 2 pm Go to TA office hours, discuss topic choice	7 1-2 pm Go to PCL to get references 3-5 pm Read reference materials	8 4-6 pm Write presentation 6-7 pm Do a first practice run, time it.	9 1-4 pm Write out notecards for speech	10 12 - 1pm Practice with Jake	11 12 - 1 pm Practice, practice, practice

b. Help students identify properties of an effective oral presentation.

Ask your students to think about effective and ineffective presentations they've seen in previous classes, on television, etc. Ask students to recall specific things the speaker did. You might also want to consider showing your class a video or two. A quick search on YouTube yields lots of options.

Then ask your students to create a list of do's and don'ts. Write ideas on the board and organize them into categories (see example below). Point out that ineffective performance skills will diminish even a well-organized presentation.

<u>NON-VERBAL SKILLS</u>	<u>VERBAL SKILLS</u>	<u>CONTENT</u>
Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appear confident & enthusiastic • Make eye contact • Dress appropriately • Use purposeful gestures Don't: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look down • Constantly move or sway • Seem really nervous • Appear to not care 	Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a conversational sentence structure/word choice • Speak with enthusiasm & inflection • Use clear voice, good pronunciation Don't: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use words that are unfamiliar to the audience • Say "um", "ah", or "like" frequently • Speak too fast or too slow • Speak too quietly or too loudly 	Do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose interesting, relevant topic • Organize - intro, main points, conclusion • Cite sources Don't: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelm the audience with too much info • Throw in extra facts just to fill up time

Example of student brainstorming session. The process of coming up with criteria as a group empowers students to evaluate their own work before and during presentation time.

c. Arrange for students to practice certain aspects of their presentations

Give students the opportunity to practice key aspects of effective oral communication. **See Appendix A for sample activities.**

d. Address the effective use of visuals aids

Many students think of PowerPoint presentations with notes or outlines as the most obvious type of visual aid. Encourage your students to get creative and design visuals that highlight what will be said without being redundant or overpowering.

Some suggestions:

- Prioritize the written content of the presentation before the selection and creation of visual aids.
- Set a time limit on the use of video/multimedia content in a presentation.
- Pre-approve visual aids.

2. Creating a valuable experience for the audience

An essential part of developing oral communication skills is being a good listener in the audience when others are presenting. By emphasizing good listening skills with your students, you can create a polite and engaged audience that will help the speaker feel more at ease.

a. Have students consider how to be a good audience member

Being a good audience member is another subject worth discussing with your students. As with good presentation skills, good listening skills will also help students in their future academic and business careers. You might even want to have a portion of a student's oral presentation grade be based on how good an audience member they were for other students' presentations.

Spend a few minutes leading a discussion on what a good audience member does and doesn't do. Capture ideas on the board.



AUDIENCE DOs

- Look interested
- Take notes
- Look for ideas to incorporate into their next speech
- Ask thoughtful questions after the presentation

AUDIENCE DON'Ts

- Look bored
- Not looking at presenter or presentation
- Unable or unwilling to ask questions
- Check phone/computer/watch
- Fall asleep

Example of student brainstorming session on how to be a good audience member.

b. Keep the audience active

Here are a few structured activities you could ask the audience to do during or after the presentation. All of these can also be used when students are doing practice activities in the classroom:

For sample peer feedback forms, see Appendix B.

- Ask your students to write down at least one question about the presentation. This will make for a more energetic Q&A session afterwards.
- Ask your students to “grade” the presentation according to a rubric you handed out, and to include comments or suggestions. This will help students pay attention to the speech itself and to the qualities that are important for a good presentation. To avoid the impression of an inattentive audience, give students a minute or two to write things down after the presentation is complete. You can also use some of the student comments or suggestions (anonymously) in the written feedback you will give to the presenter later.
- Assign specific students or small groups of students to ask a question of a particular speaker. Give them a minute or two to think about (or discuss) their questions once the presentation is over, and before the Q&A starts.

Establish a safe & respectful space for presentations:

1. Encourage respectful feedback from students in practice and preparation activities. An easy way to get this started is to require applause after each speech to recognize the speaker’s efforts.
2. Establish rules of proper audience etiquette (e.g., no phones/electronic devices out or on; no sleeping; no doing work for another class during a presentation; no reviewing your own presentation materials during someone else’s presentation)
3. Invoke the Golden Rule. Encourage students to consider how they want the audience to treat them when it’s their turn to be the presenter.

3. Delivering feedback

Feedback, whether formal or informal, is invaluable to the development of oral communication skills. Feedback provides important information to the presenter about how effectively they are communicating. Both praise and constructive feedback are necessary for students to grow as confident and effective speakers.

Before their presentation

Students benefit from specific feedback on a presentation before they actually have to give it. Areas for improvement can be identified, and students will then know how they should focus their practice.

- Have each student turn in his or her plan for preparation, including topic choice. Provide verbal or written feedback.
- Encourage students to arrange practice sessions with each other, using the rubric to help each other understand what they are doing well, and where they need to improve.
- A week or so before the formal presentation, have your students give a one-minute “preview” speech that outlines what they will be talking about. This could either be done in front of the whole class, or in a sequence of student pairs. Make sure students receive feedback from you and/or peers.
- Ask students to come to your office hours and do a practice run in front of you. Provide verbal feedback.
-

After their presentation

- Immediately after a presentation, give the speaker specific verbal feedback on something they did well. For instance, “Mike, you did a great job organizing your information. The presentation was really easy to follow.”
- It can also be helpful to provide some constructive criticism to a speaker immediately after a presentation (but prior to the positive verbal feedback). Capitalizing on a “teachable moment” can help not only the presenter, but the other students as well. Do this with care, however; otherwise it can be demoralizing for a novice speaker.
- Within two or three days of the presentation, give each student more thorough written feedback. Explicitly address elements that were identified in the assignment prompt or rubric. You could also include information you gleaned from the feedback of other students (just be sure they remain anonymous). “One of your peers noticed that ...”

If you observe any trends in the class as a whole (such as poor non-verbal skills, or poor use of verbal citations for evidence), it’s probably a sign that students need more clarity regarding assignment expectations. Make sure to address this promptly and with all of your students—both in class and in writing (email, Blackboard, etc.).



Appendix A:

Activities to Help Your Students Practice & Prepare

Effective oral communication is a skill that comes with practice ... lots of practice! If your students do not have adequate opportunity to develop skills and receive feedback, it is unlikely that they will perform well in a formal oral presentation.

How will you ensure that your students get the practice they need? Here are a few possibilities that work well in a discussion section (and if time is tight, you can even assign as homework):

I. Low-stakes mini-presentations:

Throughout the semester, have students develop short (2-3 min) presentations on some aspect of the class. Presentations can be made in front of the whole class or in small groups.

Elevator Pitch

A short speech designed to effectively introduce the speaker or an idea in the amount of time it would take to ride an elevator. Think of this speech as a “verbal business card” to be used when they want their ideas noticed or remembered. Give feedback on content and delivery.

Number of students: 1

Talk Time: <1 minute

Teaser

Have students compose a brief teaser or preview of a formal presentation or paper they are working on. They should highlight the thesis (if appropriate) and some of the main points. Give feedback on content and delivery.

Number of students: 1

Talk Time: 1 to 3 minutes

Verbal Delivery

Give students a short “script” (~one paragraph) or have them write their own on a topic of your choosing. Give each student a role to play when they are reading (e.g. politician, news anchor, professor, etc.). Put students in pairs or small groups and have them practice delivering in the assigned role, giving feedback to each other.

Number of students: groups of 2-4

Talk Time: 2 to 3 minutes

One Minute Impromptu

Have students write down a few topics that they think they could speak about for one minute. Select one of the topics for each student to speak on. Give feedback on presentation delivery.

Number of students: 1

Talk Time: 1 minute

II. “It’s not just what you say, it’s HOW you say it” activities:

Students may also need help identifying particular oral communication skills that need improvement. These include: pacing, posture, and over-use of verbal fillers such as “like” or “um.” The following activities are intended to help students become more aware of behaviors that can distract from an otherwise high quality oral presentation.

Count the “ums”

While one person is speaking (standing or sitting), the other person listens for verbal pauses, such as “um”, “ahh”, or “like.” Have the listener raise their hand to let the speaker know every time a verbal pause is used. Remind students that a brief pause while speaking is fine—in fact it can punctuate or highlight a point—as long as the pause isn’t too long.

Posture

Ask the speaker to focus on standing up straight with their chest open, and without shifting their weight or moving their feet. Ask the partner to observe whether or not the speaker is successful at this. Observers can raise their hand if they see their partner starting to move or sway.

Gestures

Ask the speaker (standing) to keep their arms at their sides while talking. Does it feel funny or normal? Ask the partner to look for signs that the speaker is struggling to avoid gesturing. Note that purposeful gestures can add a lot to a speech. Also, if using gestures doesn’t come naturally to a speaker, it’s a good idea to practice incorporating them.

Speaker & Listener

For each of these activities, students can work in pairs and take turns: one person speaking, the other person looking for certain behaviors.

Ask the speaker to talk for one to two minutes about something they know fairly well (course-related, or something personal).

Appendix B:

Sample Student Feedback Forms

Consider these samples as you devise a way to structure audience participation and feedback.

Takeaways

Speaker:

Date:

What was the main idea of this presentation?

What did you learn?

Persuasive Presentation Peer Evaluation Form

Speaker:

Date:

For each of the following, give the speaker feedback, including suggestions for improvement. Check if you noticed:

Content and Organization

- ☐ Thesis statement was evident?
- ☐ Main points and subpoints were clear, substantive?
- ☐ Presentation was organized well?

Delivery

- ☐ Extemporaneous delivery? Speaker was enthusiastic?
- ☐ Appropriate and effective gestures and movement?
- ☐ Appropriate and effective use of language?
- ☐ Visual aids provided additional info and were effective?

Comments:

Adapted from: Schaller, K. (2002).
Principles of Effective Public Speaking: Student Workbook. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Pick Two

Speaker:

Date:

Choose **two** of the following and provide an example of:

- An interesting or novel point:
- An effective verbal delivery skill:
- A suggestion for improvement:
- An element you will add or change in your presentation:

Q & A

Speaker:

Date:

Please write at least one question that you will ask the presenter about his/her topic:



Appendix C:

Sample Rubrics for Oral Presentations

Rubrics help to identify the necessary elements of an assignment by dividing it into a series of component parts and providing a gradient of mastery for each. Having a rubric in place is important to consistently and fairly grade students on their work. When the results are considered in aggregate, rubrics can also help you identify students' strengths and weaknesses overall.

As you're designing your oral communication assignment and rubric, consider the following variety of samples. Use these rubrics to customize your own and to emphasize those skills you want your students to develop.

Sample Rubric 1 - GENERAL USE

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Logic	The speaker effectively incorporates logical reasoning. Speaker provides convincing evidence to support conclusions.	The speaker struggles to use logic when providing some explanations, but comfortably reasons through others. Speaker provides some evidence that supports conclusions.	The speaker does not explain ideas in a logical manner for the majority of the presentation. Speaker provides little or no evidence to support conclusions.
Organization	The presentation has a clear focus, is carefully organized, and has a coherent flow.	The presentation has some focus but could be refined. Some minor improvements needed in organization or flow.	The presentation lacks focus, has little or no apparent organization, and/or an incoherent flow.
Content	The content is accurate and thorough. Speaker effectively analyzes and synthesizes information.	The content is generally accurate and somewhat thorough. Speaker analyzes information but does not synthesize, or struggles with synthesis.	The content is inaccurate and vague. Speaker does not analyze or synthesize information, or does so poorly.
Delivery	The speaker is relaxed and comfortable. Few to no problems with tone, pace, reliance on notes, and/or eye contact. Interacts appropriately with audience.	The speaker is moderately relaxed and comfortable. Minor problems with tone, pace, reliance on notes, and/or eye contact. Audience is sometimes ignored or misunderstood.	The speaker appears anxious and/or uncomfortable. Substantial problems with tone, pace, reliance on notes, and/or eye contact. Audience is largely ignored or misunderstood.



Sample Rubric 2 - GENERAL USE

Name: _____

Organization of speech	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Needs Work
Introduction: Uses an attention getter, clearly states thesis, and previews the main points.					
Body: Body is well organized with transitions between main points.					
Conclusion: Reviews main points, restates thesis, wraps up speech with connection to the introduction.					

Body of Speech	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Needs Work
The points in the speech support the speaker's thesis.					
The speaker used evidence to support their claims and cited their sources.					
The speaker referred back to the original thesis throughout their speech.					

Delivery	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Needs Work
The speaker was clear and easy to understand and hear.					
The speaker used a variety of pitch and pace to keep the speech engaging					
The speaker used gestures and transitions effectively to add to the presentation.					
The speaker uses facial expressions and eye contact throughout the speech					

Miscellaneous	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Needs Work
The speech meets the required time limit.					
The speaker uses the correct level of notes.					

Score: ____/100

Comments:



Sample Rubric 3 - GENERAL USE

Trait		Wow	Good	So-So	Awful
Non-Verbal Skills	Poise	Relaxed, self-confident, no mistakes.	Makes minor mistakes, but quickly recovers from them. Displays little or no tension.	Displays mild tension; has trouble recovering from mistakes.	Tension and nervousness obvious; has trouble recovering from mistakes
	Eye Contact	Holds direct eye contact with all parts of the audience.	Fairly consistent use of direct eye contact with audience.	Occasional but unsustained eye contact with audience.	No effort made to make eye contact with audience.
	Dress	Appropriately dressed for purpose or audience.	Appropriately dressed.	Possible inappropriate dress for purpose or audience.	Inappropriately dressed for purpose of audience.
	Body Language	Movements seem fluid and help the audience visualize.	Made movements or gestures that enhanced articulation.	Very little movement or descriptive gestures.	No movement or descriptive gestures.
	Awareness of Time	5% over or under allotted time.	10% over or under allotted time.	20% over or under allotted time.	more than ~20% over or under allotted time.
Verbal Skills	Voice	Fluctuation in inflection, and pace help to maintain audience interest and emphasize key points. Not too loud or too quiet.	Satisfactory variation of inflection and pace. Not too loud or too quiet.	Little or no inflection, inappropriate pace or volume.	Low volume and/or monotonous tone causes audience to disengage.
	Elocution	Speaker uses a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms. The speaker exhibits very few disfluencies.	Speaker's voice is clear. Speaker pronounces most words correctly. The speaker exhibits very few disfluencies.	The speaker has problems with pronunciation or enunciation. Speaker exhibits disfluencies, such as "ahs", "ums", "you knows", or "likes". The listener is distracted by problems in the delivery of the message and has some difficulty understanding the words in the message.	The pronunciation and enunciation are very unclear. Speaker exhibits many disfluencies, such as "ahs", "ums", "you knows", or "likes". The audience has great difficulty understanding the message.
	Syntax	Speech patterns and syntax are appropriate for a speech, with simple sentence structure and a conversational tone, not too formal or informal. Technical or complicated concepts are defined in a concise manner.	Speech patterns are appropriate, but some jargon is used, or complicated ideas are awkwardly phrased (like this sentence).	Some ideas are clearly phrased, but others are not. Discipline specific words may be misused. Some biased or unclear language is used.	Language choice is limited, peppered with slang or jargon, too complex, or too dull. Language is inappropriate for the audience, occasion, or setting.
Content	Topic Choice	Choice of topic is creative and appropriate to assignment. New and interesting information is conveyed to the audience.	Choice of topic is appropriate to the assignment. New information is conveyed to the audience	Appropriateness or novelty of topic is questionable.	Topic is inappropriate, uninteresting, and/or contains nothing novel.
	Knowledge of Topic	Speaker demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all questions with explanations and elaborations. Use of notes is limited.	Speaker is at ease with expected answers to questions, but fails to elaborate. Use of notes is limited.	Speaker is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions. Over dependence on notes may be observed.	Speaker does not have a grasp of information and cannot answer questions about subject. Over dependence on notes may be observed.
	Organization	Ideas are overtly organized, developed and supported to achieve a purpose. The purpose is clear. The introduction gets the attention of the audience and clearly states the specific purpose of the speech. Main points are clear and organized effectively. The conclusion is satisfying and relates back to the introduction. The speaker helps the listener understand the sequence and relationships of ideas by using organizational aids such as announcing the topic, previewing the organization, using transitions and summarizing.	The message is organized. The introduction clearly states the purpose of the speech. Main points are clear and organized effectively. The conclusion relates back to the introduction. The listener has no difficulty understanding the sequence and relationships among the ideas in the message. The ideas in the message can be outlined easily.	The organization of the message is not readily apparent. The listener must make some assumptions about the sequence and relationship of ideas. The introduction suggests the purpose of the speech, but may not be clear. The main points are unclear or are not well organized. Conclusion does not tie back to the introduction. The sequence and relationship of ideas is difficult to follow and the speaker does little to aid the listener in understanding them.	Ideas may not be focused or developed. The main purpose is not clear. The introduction is undeveloped. Main points are difficult to identify. Transitions may be needed. There is no conclusion, or it may not be clear that the presentation has concluded. Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.
	Use of Sources	Conclusions and ideas are supported by pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics. Sources of information are appropriately cited, including name, date, and/or credentials of source.	Some evidence is given to support conclusions or ideas, but some are left unsupported. Sources are not cited properly, leaving out some appropriate information, such as name of source, date, or credentials.	An attempt is made to give evidence for conclusions or ideas, but it is either weak or not pertinent. Evidence is not cited.	Very weak, or no support for conclusions or ideas. There are no sources to be cited.
	Use of Visual or Audio Aids	Visual or audio aids greatly increase understanding of material.	Visual or audio aids increase understanding of material.	Visual or audio aids do little to increase understanding of material.	Visual or audio aids decrease understanding of material.



Sample Rubric 4 - GENERAL USE

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Factual understanding of topic				
Original analysis offered				
Understanding and application of structural technique				
Incorporation of support and documentation				
Exhibited interest in the assignment				
Vocal delivery skills				
Physical delivery skills				
Fluency and preparation				
Eye contact/Interaction with audience				
Overall impact of speech				

Sample Rubric 5 - IMPROMPTU

Organization: _____/5
Student has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion and does not stray from the topic

Sufficient Support: _____/5
Student clearly develops his/her ideas with examples, information, and evidence

Tone: _____/5
Student is both mature and sincere and approaches the speech with seriousness

Volume: _____/5
Student adjusts his/her volume to the size of the room with consideration for his/her audience

Eye Contact: _____/5
Student connects with his/her audience through natural and sufficient eye contact

Speech Habits: _____/5
Student does not cause distractions or use poor speech etiquette (chewing gum, leaning on podium, "um," "like," fidgeting)

Total out of 30 points = _____

Comments:



Sample Rubric 6 - PERSUASIVE

Name: _____ Topic: _____ Speech Time: _____
 EX=excellent GD=good AV=meets requirement/loosely FR=fair/weak NI=needs improvement

Preparation ____/5

____ Challenging topic, or timely idea	EXCEEDS Req.	MEETS Req.	MISSES Req.
____ Bibliography (at least 4 current sources)	EXCEEDS Req.	MEETS Req.	MISSES Req.
____ Effective outline	EXCEEDS Req.	MEETS Req.	MISSES Req.
____ Target audience description	EXCEEDS Req.	MEETS Req.	MISSES Req.

Content & Structure of Introduction: ____/10

____ Captured attention	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Established relevance to/usefulness for audience	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Speaker establishes/articulates a target audience	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Established ethos/credibility (ethos)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Presented a clear argument (based on a claim of policy)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Previewed main points (Carried us through plan, lists main arguments)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI

Body: ____/20

____ Main points/ minor arguments stated clearly	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Utilized an effective persuasive pattern (PCS, Elimination, Monroes, or Refutation)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Effective use of connectives	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Arguments well reasoned/ Avoided fallacious reasoning	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Identified/ orally cited 4 sources	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Appropriate use of supp. materials (stats, facts, testimony, illust., examples, analogy)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Strength of Argument/ (Counter arguments presented---or---Effectiveness of proposal)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Presence of effective appeals (pathos, ethos, logos)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI

Conclusion: ____/10

____ Summarized main points in review statement	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Reinforces goal	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Provided an effective parting shot/ left a lasting impression	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI

Delivery: ____/15

____ Natural, poised, at ease	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Vocal variety (rate, volume, inflection)	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Dynamism/ Connectedness	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Made eye contact	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Spoke extemporaneously/ limited note reliance	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI
____ Effective use of gestures, movement, body language/ refrained from distracting behaviors	EX	GD	AV	FR	NI

Does the speaker reference data /information gathered from the AA within the speech? Y N

Overall, How well does speaker achieve goal? EX GD AV FR NI

Presentation ____/60

Deductions for Time ____/5

TOTAL POINTS: ____/60

Comments:



Sample Rubric 7 - DEBATE

	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Poor
Argumentation	Confidence with all material which leads to strong, convincing, consistent argumentation; effective and consistent linking between claims, reasoning, and evidence	Confidence with most material; much linking of claims, reasoning, and or evidence; argumentation is strong but not consistently done	Confidence with some material; some linking of claims to reasoning, and or evidence; presents inconsistent argumentation	Some confidence with material; little linking of claims to reasoning and or evidence; argumentation is incomplete and fragmented	Lack of confidence with subject matter which leads to unconvincing argumentation; no linking between claims, reasoning, and or evidence
Refutation	Clear and consistent refutation of nearly all of opponents' points; 4-Step Method of refutation evident in each rebuttal	Frequent and clear refutation of most of opponents' points; usually uses 4-Step Method to refute	Infrequent but clear refutation so some of opponents' points; usually uses 4-Step Method to refute	Infrequent, and unclear refutation of few of opponents' points; almost never uses the 4-Step Method to refute	Attempts to refute 1-2 of opponents' points; haphazard refutation; does not at all use the 4-Step Method to refute
Organization	Exceptional organization makes it easy to flow speech through use of specific and relevant content; examples, points, and transitions are consistently and clearly flagged and create a succinct and even flow	Sequence of information is well-organized for the most part helping the flow of the speech; examples, points, and or transitions are usually flagged but more clarity is needed	Content is connected in general way; some examples, points, and or transitions are flagged but more clarity and consistency is needed	Content is loosely connected; few examples, points, and or transitions are flagged and much more clarity and consistency is needed; flowing the speech is difficult	No apparent logical order of presentation, unclear focus; examples, points, and or transitions are almost never flagged; flowing the speech is nearly impossible
Preparation of Evidence for and during Debate	Thorough and purposeful processing of evidence in preparation for debate; consistent and effective use of relevant evidence from a great many sources during the debate	Evidence of purposeful processing of evidence in preparation for debate; use of relevant evidence from more than 5 sources during the debate	Able to use evidence to an extent; some processing of evidence done; used relevant evidence from more than 4 sources	Attempted to process evidence in preparation for debate, but was misdirected or unfocused; use of some evidence from more than 2 sources, but some not relevant	Unprepared; did not do necessary research or evidence processing; little use of evidence from 0-2 sources if at all; might or might not be relevant
Speaking and Questioning Length	Presented all speeches and questioning right up to allotted time on all speaking opportunities	Presented most speeches and questioning near allotted time	Presented some speeches and questioning right up to allotted time	Falling short of allotted time on the majority of speaking opportunities	Greatly failing short of allotted time on almost all speaking opportunities
Speaking Skills	Exceptional confidence with material displayed through poise, clear articulation, phrasing, intonation, rate of speech, consistent eye contact, and enthusiasm	Confidence with material mostly displayed through poise, clear articulation, phrasing, intonation, rate of speech, eye contact	Some confidence with material displayed some poise, clear articulation, phrasing, intonation, rate of speech, eye contact	Frequent issues with the lack of eye contact; inconsistent rate of speech, articulation, phrasing, intonation, and projection; might be mumbling	Monotone; speaker seemed uninterested in material; continual issues with the lack of eye contact; inconsistent rate of speech, articulation, phrasing, intonation, and projection; might be mumbling

