

Cal Poly Oral Communication Learning Community 2016

May 4, 2016

3:10 to 4:00pm (01-301)

Membership

Academic Programs, Jack Phelan, Mary Pedersen, Bruno Giberti, Student Affairs: Tim Archie, Trevor Forzetting
CLA: Richard Bessel, Bethany Conway, Cassandra Carlson
Library: Kaila Bussert

Meeting Notes

1. Approve Meeting Notes April 24, 2016
 - a. Meeting notes are approved.
2. Discussion: Review of Rubrics (Criterion, Traits and Levels of Performance)
 - Prior Cal Poly Oral Communication Rubric: ULO Project
 - How does the current ULO project rubric fit into the OCLC's assessment plan?
 - What is the priority? Improving the instrument or using for rubric assessment comparison purposes? Comparison is a time-consuming process.
 - Committee agrees that the current rubric is not the best, and there is scope for improvement. The current layout of the rubric, laid out longitudinally is not the best in terms of assessment. The longitudinal layout, which has been defined as comparing statistical analysis. Just having a category of "Using language effectively" does not capture the necessary distinguishing traits.
 - There are a total of 7 dimensions in the current rubric. Other dimensions like Occasion and audience are not present in the current rubric.
 - The problem is, there is no rubric out there which is acceptable without similar needs for improvement. They are all kind of like this. Single line measurement.
 - The committee focuses on areas to improve. Refinement is required. To move forward in the future, some dimensions need to be added e.g. occasion and audience, how does a presentation fit in a different audience environment?
 - Is it a priority to make comparisons based on results from the last rubric? Are using two completely different rubrics a possibility? Probably not.
 - Streamlining would be the priority. Paying for two separate teams to execute two separate rubrics would be an expensive proposition.
 - It depends on prioritizing, if the committee wants to compare using the old rubric, it depends upon how useful that rubric is.
 - Moving forward is the main goal. If the current rubric can be improved, after all it is not a "bad" rubric. Everybody is going through the same process. If there is option to improve it, the committee agrees to take this path.
 - Washington State Adapted Oral Communication Rubric
3. Discussion: Assessing Oral Communication
 - Susan Hatfield slides on "Choices and Challenges"
 - Susan Hatfield's ideas, exercises and outcomes focusing on core competency assessment and oral communication was brought in front of the committee by Jack P. and Mary P. During a WASC conference session, a large room (approx. 200) engaged in a brain storming exercise in which 4 criteria rose to the surface. Susan Hatfield's core idea was to capture these common criteria and establish these as the core or "non-negotiable" dimensions - and then leave room for all disciplines to

- include elements important to their program, using language that is specific to their discipline or is somehow tied to their program learning outcomes.
 - The committee agrees that it is indeed a great idea. Richard describes the process as Factor Analysis. Cassandra adds that 200 is a good sample size for the exercise. The committee agrees that nobody knows what the outcome would be. And how much the faculty are willing to participate.
 - Currently the ULO project rubric has 7 dimensions. Other dimensions are still missing. Are there too many?
 - Occasion & audience are not present in the current rubric.
- [AACU Oral Communication Value Rubric](#)
 - Jack Phelan introduces the Value rubric and it's layout to the committee and initiates discussion on what can be a good scaling system. Can 4 point be a good scale to measure oral communication competency?
 - 5 points will be even. Richard Bessel, Bethany Conway and Cassandra Carlson state the necessity to discuss this internally. 4 is a fair option, but that is still a 5 point scale, 1-4 and then cop out. 1-5 expresses a linear distinction, 0-4 is better than 1-5. Statistically it matters more than conceptually. Either scale might be ok.
 - Jack P. initiates discussion on differences between assessment rubric and grading rubric and draws examples from QR, Writing and CT rubrics. The committee usually defines a benchmark scale, which is expected from the students as a minimal level of achievement. Below the benchmark is something that did not meet the expectation, and above the benchmark is if they have met or exceeded the expectation.
 - For assessment, the idea should be, each of the items to be assessed has to be unique. The committee needs to identify the critical ones. The most important are reporting data, communication criteria, ease of expressing statistical data. It does not have to be decided right now.
 - Discussion continues on the differences between an assessment rubric, a grading rubric and a benchmark rubric. 4 point versus 5 point, either is good. The problem with 5 is that, if averaged, 3.5 comes back and there is no middle category, which gets leaned towards the higher, third option.
 - A larger picture of campus-wide assessment is a different animal. Different colleges may agree with the dimensions, but disciplines will rewrite the rubric to fit the language of the traits to match their own discipline.
 - Multiple items are listed in each category, how detailed does the committee want to go with the instrument? The committee wants the rubric to be used by the faculty, Mary refers to her earlier experience as a part of the assessment of diversity where a very sophisticated rubric was used. The committee does not want the rubric to be sophisticated, they want it to be a useful tool. If the rubric is designed then it is required to be accessible to the audience who are not COMS people, and it should use easily understandable terms rather than difficult language.
 - The committee discusses approaching the senior-level and/or capstone classes and coordinating with faculty as potential partners in assessment.
 - The committee agrees that though everyone is a fan of concession, but concession might not be the ideal option.
 - The committee decides to come up with 5 important traits.
 - Mary asserts that Oral Communication is different from other assessment committees. She adds that the members of the committee come with different backgrounds, and declares Richard, Bethany and Cassandra as experts in the field.
 - The committee agrees to get in touch with faculty and address their input. Richard raises concerns on the time that the faculty might be willing to spend, as most faculty are part-time at COMS.
- Survey of Courses for Oral Communication Partnerships

- The committee expresses concerns with the fact that there are no representatives from all the colleges, and refers to the examples of other assessment committees where a number assignments from different disciplines are collected, involvement from different colleges are asked, letters are composed. The committee emphasizes the necessity of the involvement of the colleges. The committee discusses the option of sending a campus-wide letter to faculty and follow up by reaching out to all department heads and chairs asking for assignments. D
- Discussion of the right timing for reaching out to find interested faculty to build relationships with. First a campus-wide outreach, letting the faculty know what the committee is trying to implement and if she/he might be interested in joining the group.
- The COMS leaders agree to prepare and bring a draft of a rubric model to the next meeting,

4. Plans for next meeting (5/25)

- The committee agrees review a rubric model at the next meeting and to discuss the rubric being developed in Student Affairs (presented by Trevor Forzetting).

Spring 2016 Schedule

~~Wednesday 4/20 3:10pm to 4:00pm 01-301~~

~~Wednesday 5/04 3:10pm to 4:00pm 01-301~~

Wednesday 5/25 3:10pm to 4:00pm 01-301

Wednesday 6/01 3:10pm to 4:00pm 01-301