Humanities Division Degree Learning Outcome(s)

Oral communication skills are deemed essential skills necessary for UHWO students as reflected in the Institutional Learning Outcome (i.e. *ILO 1: Effective Communication*) and in the General Education Learning Outcome (*i.e. GELO 2: Oral Communication*)*.* All students admitted to UH-West Oʻahu before graduation are required to complete one course designated as oral communication as part of their General Education Focus requirements.

The Humanities Division (HUM) is a multi-disciplinary division covering six Concentrations (i.e. Creative Media, English, Hawaiian-Pacific Studies, Mathematics, and Philosophy) and three Certificates (i.e. Asian Studies, Gender Studies, and Music). However, assessment for Creative Media courses offered in the Humanities is covered by the Academy for Creative Media , and the assessment for Mathematics courses offered in the Humanities is covered by another newly established Division – Math, Natural, and Health Science – wherein the concentration of Applied Mathematics is housed. All in all, four established Concentrations (i.e. English/ENG, History/HIST, Hawaiian-Pacific Studies/HPST, Philosophy/PHIL) and one Certificate program (Music/MUS) have participated in the Humanities assessment effort in recording and providing relevant student artifacts. This widespread cooperation among the HUM faculty speaks volume to the sense of collegiality and the high level of professionalism, characteristic of a welcoming work environment.

There are six Degree Learning Outcomes for the HUM majors, and highlighted is the requirement on oral communication:

Degree Learning Outcomes

Graduates with a major in Humanities from UH West Oʻahu
will be able to:

- DLO1 – Demonstrate knowledge of the history, philosophy, arts, and/or literature of different cultures from different global regions and indigenous traditions including Native Hawaiian.

- DLO2 – Analyze contemporary issues from multiple cultural perspectives of global regions and indigenous traditions including Native Hawaiian.

- DLO3 – Demonstrate an understanding of different Humanities disciplines' concepts, methods, primary sources, and knowledge.

- DLO4 – Demonstrate well-organized and competent writing using relevant information in Humanities subjects, particularly in their discipline of study in Humanities.

- DLO5- Deliver well-organized, competent oral presentations on Humanities subjects to relevant audiences.

- DLO6 – Analyze research questions, problems, and issues in Humanities subjects

Relevant Concentration Learning Outcomes (*CLOs*) to oral communication are presented below. All four concentrations have a learning outcome addressing oral communication skills.

Concentration Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
(Note: only the CLOs relevant to Oral Communication are included here.)

ENG:

> CLO 3: Develop sophisticated written and oral skills to construct interpretations, analyses and arguments in a variety of genres.

HIST:

> CLO 2: Give well-organized and competent oral presentations that involve the use of history (either historical topics, or the use of history in the classroom).

HPST:

> CLO 3: Present well-organized and competent research findings or creative work on specific Hawaiian-Pacific Studies topics in writing, orally, performances or other acceptable media.

PHIL:

> CLO 6: Articulate philosophical ideas orally in either a formal or informal presentation.

Humanities Division Curriculum Maps (Appendix A) & OC Courses (Appendix B)

In Appendix A, the most updated curriculum maps for all four concentrations plus MUS certificate program in the Humanities division are attached. Curriculum maps are intended to show how each concentration learning outcome is met in various courses, and how all three levels of development - indicated as Introductory (I), Reinforcement (R), and Mastery (M) – for each learning outcome are addressed across the curriculum. Generally speaking, 100 level courses are designed to meet the introductory level, 200-300 level courses are at the level of Reinforcement, and lastly, 400 level courses should be at the Mastery level. There are, however, slight variations in each Concentration depending on how the overall progression of curriculum is designed. Taken as a whole, the HUM division provides an array of courses from 100 to 400 levels for the HUM majors to develop their oral communication skills from the Introduction, the Reinforcement, to the Mastery level.

Since the HUM division offers the bulk of courses for students to fulfill the General Education requirements, there is usually an abundance of courses that can be identified as potential sources for artifacts, especially for ENG and HIST courses. In Appendix B, each concentration has identified some of the courses from the Fall semester as potentials for artifacts. Please note here that Appendix B did not reflect the entirety of the Fall courses that are identified in the curriculum maps as meeting the Oral Communication Learning Outcome. Highlighted are those courses that have submitted artifacts for the assessment. And as noted earlier, all four Concentrations, plus MUS certificate, have contributed artifacts to support the oral communication assessment effort, indicative of the overall sense of

collegiality and professionalism among the HUM faculty. Unfortunately, not all the courses submitted artifacts were included in the scoring process (for more details see table 1 below).

In the process of identifying relevant courses as potential sources for artifacts, there was some confusion as to whether the curriculum map or the actual OC (oral communication) designation granted to each individual course should be the priority. For example, on the curriculum map, both HIST 231 and HIST 282 are identified as meeting the oral communication learning outcome (i.e. HIST CLO 2), but in the Fall semester course offerings, HIST 231 carried the OC (oral Communication) Focus designation and HIST 282 did not. In this case, which course should be selected? To further complicate the issue, the OC designation is usually attached to the individual instructor, not to the course, and hence each semester depending on who the instructor is, the same course may or may not have the same OC designation. This is a problem need to be worked out in order to streamline the process of assessment.

Oral Communication Rubric (Appendix C)

In Appendix C, the UHWO's Oral Communication rubric which is based on the AAC&U VALUE Rubric is presented. As stated in the AAC&U, "*rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading.*" The Assessment Committee - composed of the Director of Assessment, Sharon Valente, and assessment coordinators from each Division and the Writing and General Education committees – modified the rubric in October 2019 based on several rounds of faculty feedback from the Divisions as well as from the monthly assessment committee meetings.

In the November monthly meeting, assessment committee members participated in calibration training on several sample artifacts to verify interrater reliability. The committee members discussed each artifact and the reasons for each rating and tried to find ways to reconcile discrepancies and differing disciplinary expectations. After the training, the oral communication rubric was applied to the artifacts from each division collected in the Fall 2019 and the work of rating took place in the Spring 2020 despite the interruptions brought by the COVID 19 crisis that has contributed to the difficulties of preserving and retrieving the artifacts collected in Fall 2019. Nonetheless, the assessment committee proceeded with the work of rating in the Spring, and multiple raters from the assessment committee represented by each division were assigned to rate many of the same artifacts to ensure interrater reliability.

Descriptive Information for Oral Communications Artifacts

Presented below are two tables and a figure presenting the findings of the Fall 2019 oral communication assessment for the HUM division. Even though all four concentrations (i.e. ENG, HIST, HPST, PHIL) as well as MUS certificate program have each submitted relevant artifacts for the oral communication assessment, not all of the courses submitted artifacts were included in the scoring process. For instance, all the artifacts from MUS 208 were not assessed; neither was HPST 490/491 artifact assessed. Furthermore, the entire collected artifacts from ENG 357 were not used, nor the artifacts from HIST 490/491. In addition to the interruptions and difficulties brought by the COVID 19 crisis, many technical issues in dealing with the visual and audio aspects of the artifacts have also contributed to the inability to include these collected artifacts in the scoring process.

The Assessment Committee did what it could to salvage all the submitted artifacts. But, as a result, some concentrations were over-represented (such as PHIL and ENG) and some were entirely missing (such as MUS and HPST) from the scoring process. Hence, the assessment outcome for the HUM is also askew and is not representative of the HUM division as a whole.

Table 1—List of Courses Submitted Artifacts:

A total of 9 courses from the Fall 2019 in the HUM division have submitted oral communication artifacts from all four Concentrations plus MUS certificate program. The table below summarizes each course with the number of submitted artifacts and the teaching modality. Highlighted are the courses whose artifacts were randomly selected for rating.

Table 1 – List of Courses Submitted Artifacts

Curriculum Map Level	Course	Number of Artifacts	Modality: Online/Hybrid vs. Face-to-Face
Introductory	PHIL 100	17	F
	MUS 208	8	F
Reinforced	HIST 231	8	F
	PHIL 220	20	F
	ENG 357	8	Online/Hybrid
	HPST 490/491	1	F
Mastery	PHIL 439	4	Online/Hybrid
	ENG 490/491	9	F & Online/Hybrid
	HIST 490/491	4	F & Online/Hybrid

As shown above, all four concentrations (ENG, HIST, HPST, PHIL) plus MUS have participated in the oral communication assessment effort, and all three levels of development were met by various courses across the curriculum in the HUM division. Unfortunately, due to the COVID 19 crisis and some technical difficulties, only five courses were included, with PHIL courses over-represented in the scoring process especially at the Introductory and Reinforcement levels, and with ENG at the Mastery level.

Table 2-Descriptive statistics:

The following table provides a summary of the mean scores for the selected five courses at the Introductory, Reinforcement, and Mastery curricular levels. Each artifact was rated based on the five categories of the Oral Communications rubric: (1) *Organization* pattern of ideas presented in presentation; (2) *Language* choices including discipline-specific vocabulary; (3) *Vocal Expressiveness* enhancing interest and understanding of presentation; (4) use of *Supporting Material* in presentation; and (5) the clarity and appropriateness of the overall *Objective* of the presentation. Scores range from 0 to 4, with 4 being highly proficient.

(Rubric performance levels— 0 = Fails to Meet Benchmark; 1 = Benchmark; 2 = Developing; 3 = Proficient; 4 = Highly Proficient)
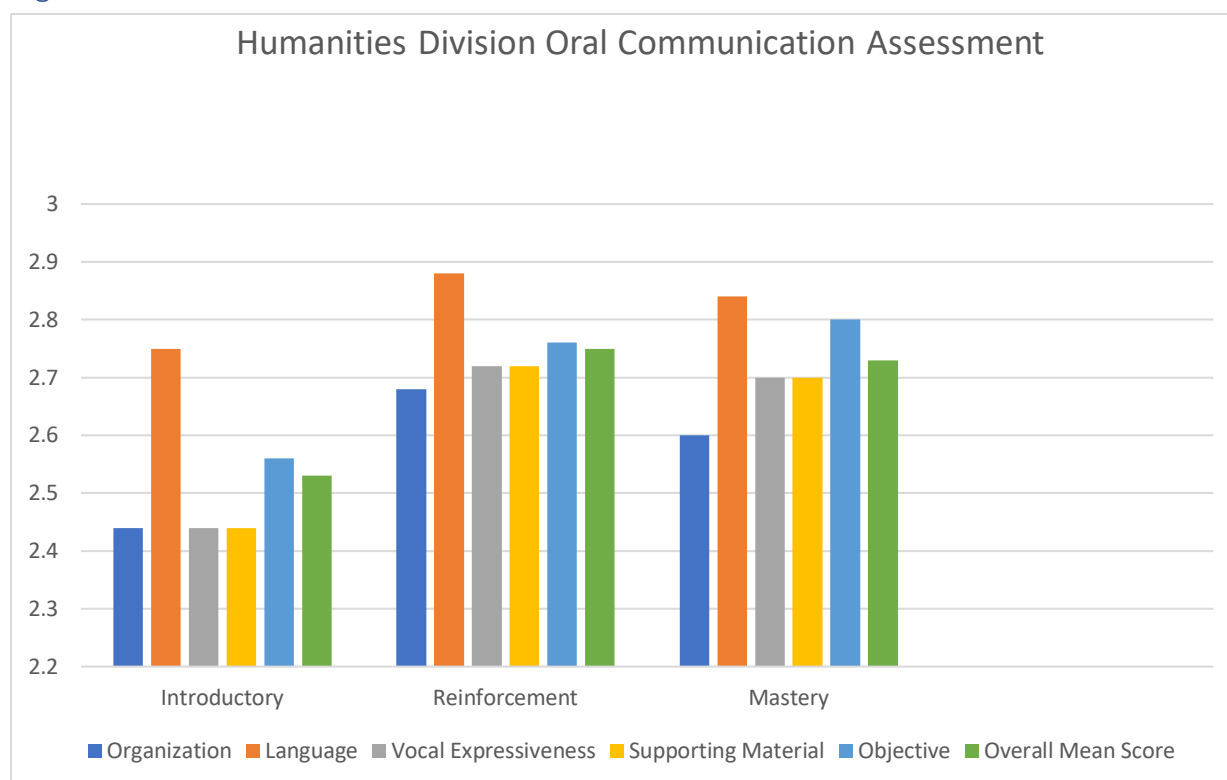
Table 2—Descriptive Statistics

Curriculum Map level	Organization	Language	Vocal Expressiveness	Supporting Material	Objective	Overall Mean Score
Introductory	2.44	2.75	2.44	2.44	2.56	2.53
Reinforcement	2.68	2.88	2.72	2.72	2.76	2.75
Mastery	2.6	2.84	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.73

As shown above, the scores for the Introductory and the Reinforcement levels range from mid-2 to high-2 which are appropriate for their intended levels (i.e. meeting the benchmark/developing). But the overall mean score for the mastery level is about the same as the Reinforcement level, and hence it could be improved further. Ideally, the scores for the mastery level should be in the range of 3 or 4. However, the over-reliance on one single concentration at the Mastery level might also contribute to the askew result as well.

Figure 1:

The following chart shows the mean scores for the five rubric categories at the three levels of development.

Figure 1—Bar Chart

Humanities Division Oral Communication Assessment

Legend: Organization, Language, Vocal Expressiveness, Supporting Material, Objective, Overall Mean Score

Analysis

As shown in the above chart, at all three levels (Introductory, Reinforcement, Mastery), Humanities students scored the best in the "use of language" category, which is consistent with the disciplinary practice of the Humanities division. Meeting the "objective of the presentation" is the next highest scoring category for the Humanities majors. It is then followed by "vocal expressiveness" and "supporting material." As it is apparent, the HUM majors need to work on their organizational skill in their oral presentations.

Even though the Humanities faculty in all four concentration plus MUS certificate program have submitted an array of artifacts from various courses for the oral communication assessment, not all courses that have submitted artifacts were included in the scoring process. And hence despite the widespread cooperation among the HUM faculty, the generated scores here could hardly represent the HUM division as a whole. For instance, the scores at the Introductory level came from one single course (i.e. PHIL 100), and 75% of the scores at the Mastery level relied on one single Concentration (i.e. ENG 490/491). If the selected artifacts were more equally distributed across the various concentrations, then the overall scores would be more representative of the HUM division as a whole.

As shown above, the overall mean scores for the Introductory and the Reinforcement levels are aligned with the intended progression from the Introductory to the Reinforcement levels with the Introductory

level having the lower overall mean score than the Reinforcement level. But the mean scores for the Mastery level are lagging behind the Reinforcement level and hence some remedial works need to be done for those courses that are supposed to meet the Mastery level. Ideally, the scores for the mastery level should be around 3 to 4.

Recommendations

Even though the current scores do not reflect the Humanities Division as a whole, in terms of the widespread cooperation among the HUM faculty to support the assessment process, nor the pedagogy used in an array of courses all across the HUM curriculum to help develop students' oral communication skills. The discrepancy between the amount of effort put into the assessment process and the actual scores being generated for the HUM however do reveal some areas of concern for future assessment. The following recommendations fall into four categories: 1) Better Tech Supports for Collecting Visual and Audio Artifacts; 2) Privacy Concerns and Possible Disruptions to the Classroom; 3) Confusion over the OC Focus Designation and Curriculum Maps; 4) Strengthen the Senior Project/Practicum Courses.

1. Better Tech Supports for Collecting Visual and Audio Artifacts

As pointed out earlier, many of the submitted artifacts across disciplines in the HUM division were not included in the scoring process and hence the eventual scores are not representative of the HUM division as a whole. Many of the artifacts were discarded due to some technical issues associated with collecting visual and audio artifacts. Faculty are not trained in the technical aspects but were tasked with the duty of collecting these artifacts and hence some issues resulted in the artifacts not being suitable for scoring purposes. If a better tech support were set up to support the collection effort, then the randomly selected sample artifacts would be more representative of the actual student performance in these assessed courses across the curriculum. The COVID 19 crisis has acerbated the problems since most IT resources have been shifted to support the students in their online learning. Even though there is an IT support available on campus and the IT could come into the classrooms to help film the students' oral presentations, some faculty opted to record the oral presentations themselves due to concerns over privacy issues and possible disruptions to the classrooms.

Recommendation: see below for the recommendation.

2. Privacy Concerns and Possible Disruptions to the Classrooms

Even though for the purposes of assessment students' consent was not required for videotaping and audio recordings, the HUM faculty during the monthly division meetings repeatedly voiced concerns over the privacy issues for students as well as possible disruptions to the classrooms. Some students, especially those in the 100 and 200 levels are just starting to learn how to do oral presentations and many students have to grabble with the issue of public speaking anxiety. Compounding these issues, students now have to deal with the added burdens of having someone from the IT whom they have no relationship with to record them. In addition, some students are uncomfortable with the idea of being

recorded worrying over the possibility of data breach. Lastly, some faculty also expressed concerns over using faculty's own personal devices to do the recording.

Recommendation:

a) One possible solution to both the first and the second concerns would be to better train the IT to support the faculty so that possible disruptions to the classrooms could be minimized, and the artifacts could be better collected and preserved for assessment purposes.

b) Another possible solution is for the Campus to issue tablets/phones for the faculty to do the recordings if needed.

3. Confusion over the OC Focus Designation and Curriculum Maps

As noted earlier, in the process of selecting courses for the OC assessment, there was some confusion over whether the courses with the OC focus designation should be selected over those identified on the curriculum maps. The OC focus designation is usually attached to the individual instructors, not to the courses, and hence in each semester, the same courses may nor may not have the same OC focus designation. To complicate the issue further, some courses with the OC designation are not identified in the curriculum maps as meeting the Oral Communication Learning Outcome, and in that case, it is not clear whether these courses should be included in the OC assessment.

Recommendation:

One possible solution is to align the OC assessment with the General Education assessment as the way the WI Learning Outcome is assessed. In this way, this confusion could be avoided. Since the way the OC focus designation is attached to the individual instructors instead of the courses, it is nearly impossible to properly identify which courses meet the Concentration OC Learning Outcome on the curriculum maps beforehand. It seems reasonable to assess the OC focus designated courses for the OC Learning Outcome.

4. Strengthen Senior Project/Practicum Courses

Since the mean scores at the Mastery level largely relied on one single course: 490/491 Senior Project/Practicum, their low scores reveal the need to strengthen the course in terms of how the oral communication skills are taught to the students to ensure the graduating seniors have fully mastered the oral communication skills commensurable to the appropriate curriculum level. The problems associated with this required course for all four concentrations range widely, but there is a growing consensus among the HUM faculty that this course needs to be restructured. The HUM seniors oftentimes feel overwhelmed and intimidated by the course, especially the Senior Project that calls for an original research project/creative writing. And hence there is an ongoing discussion within the HUM Division to find ways to revamp the course.

Recommendation:

One possible solution is to expand 490/491 from a semester course into a yearlong course so that students have more time to conduct their own original research and to do a series of mock oral presentations in order to hone in their oral communication skills.

Appendix A: Humanities Division Curriculum Maps (ENG/HIST/HPST/PHIL)

Appendix B: Courses Assessed for Oral Communication Learning Outcome

ENG Concentration

Level of Learning Outcome	Course Number	Number of Artifacts
Introduced (I)	240	
Reinforced (R)	357 383 386 441	8
Mastery (M)	490/491	9

HPST Concentration

Level of Learning Outcome	Course Number	Number of Artifacts
Introduced (I)		
Reinforced (R)	365 482 490/491	1
Mastery (M)		

HIST Concentration

Level of Learning Outcome	Course Number	Number of Artifacts
Introduced (I)	151/001	
Reinforced (R)	231 282 325	8
Mastery (M)	490/491	4

PHIL Concentration

Level of Learning Outcome	Course Number	Number of Artifacts
Introduced (I)	100	17
Reinforced (R)	220	20
Mastery (M)	439	4

MUS Certificate

Level of Learning Outcome	Course Number	Number of Artifacts
Introduced (I)	MUS 208	8
Reinforced (R)		
Mastery (M)		

Appendix C: UH West O'ahu Oral Communication Rubric

	Highly Proficient 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Benchmark 1	Fails to Meet Basic Level Performance 0
Organization	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the presentation.	
Language	Language choices include discipline-specific vocabulary, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices include discipline-specific vocabulary and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices include some discipline-specific vocabulary and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience.	
Vocal Expressiveness	Vocal expressiveness makes the presentation compelling. The speaker appears polished and confident.	Vocal expressiveness makes the presentation interesting. The speaker appears comfortable.	Vocal expressiveness makes the presentation understandable. The speaker appears tentative.	Vocal expressiveness detracts from the understandability of the presentation. The speaker appears uncomfortable.	
Supporting Material	A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/ authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/ authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/ authority on the topic.	Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/ authority on the topic.	
Objective	The objective is clearly stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.	The objective is clear and consistent with the supporting material.	The objective is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	The objective can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.	