

**General Education
Oral Communication Assessment Report
AY 2019-20**

Introduction

Oral communication skills are considered an essential component to a post-secondary education. All graduates will communicate virtually, face-to-face, formally, or informally on a daily basis. The main purpose of oral communication is to transmit thoughts and beliefs to others. Two major components of oral communication include verbal and non-verbal communication. Attainment of university-wide learning outcomes (LO) associated with oral communication are required of all students, as communication skills are vital for a student's academic success and future career prospects.

The University of Hawaii – West O'ahu (UH West O'ahu) has determined that oral communication is so important that successfully demonstrating oral communication skills are a General Education Core Requirement. All students must complete a course with an Oral Communication (OC) Focus designation as a requirement for graduation. Faculty can apply for and receive an Oral Communication (OC) focus designation for a course. UH West O'ahu's General Education Program Learning Outcome (GELO) for oral communication will be assessed based on the student's ability to: *Demonstrate clear and effective speaking skills about relevant information when communicating with an intended audience* (UH West O'ahu Website)

Establishing the OC Focus requirement as part of graduation requirements reflects UH West O'ahu's commitment to developing graduates adept at information presentation, sensitive to relational interfacing, and skilled at persuasion and influence through oral communication. Speaking well typically requires information literacy to access valid source material relevant to a discipline or audience.

For those courses approved for an OC Focus designation, the course must meet the following hallmarks:

1. Each student will conduct or participate in a minimum of three oral communication assignments or a comparable amount of oral communication activity during class.

For lower division Oral Focus courses:

- at least 25% of the final grade for a 3-credit (or greater) course will be based on the student's oral communication activities;
- at least 40% of the final grade for a 2-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities;
- at least 65% of the final grade for a 1-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities.

For upper division Oral Focus courses:

- at least 30% of the final grade for a 4-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities;
- at least 40% of the final grade for a 3-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities;

- at least 60% of the final grade for a 2-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities;
 - and 100% of the final grade for a 1-credit course will be based on the student's oral communication activities
2. Each student will receive explicit training, within the context of the class, in oral communication concerns relevant to the assignment or activity.
 3. Each student will receive specific feedback, critique, and grading of the oral communication assignments or activities from the instructor.
 4. If instructor feedback primarily involves individual or pairs of students, enrollment will be limited to 20 students. If instructor feedback primarily involves groups of students, enrollment will be limited to 30 students. (UHWO Gen Ed OC Hallmark Explanation)

As courses with an OC Focus designation are expected to develop assignments responsive to student needs and to the future professional demands, a variety of artifacts can be utilized to assess oral communication. Examples of oral communications may include (but are not limited to) narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive discourse; in the context of preparing and delivering a speech, giving a class presentation, engaging in a small group discussion, lecturing on or explaining a topic, or debating an issue (UH West O'ahu General Education Laulima site).

Curriculum Map for General Education OC Focus Designated Courses

A curriculum map aligning all the courses with OC Focus designation across all the Divisions has not yet been developed. A large master list encompassing all the courses approved for a General Education diversification or focus requirement exists, but only lists courses in alphabetical order with no consideration for when they are taught within the degree curriculum. It is assumed that curricular updates to OC Focus courses occurs annually, as Faculty choose to renew or let expire the OC approval. Across the institution, degree learning is categorized as Introductory/Introduced (I), Reinforced (R), and Mastered/Mastery (M).

Each division maintains the ability to determine what I, R, and M represent for their respective courses, but in general, lower division courses in which oral communication skills are introduced within the degree and/or academic journey would be considered an "Introduced" or I course. Lower division and upper division courses that provide students an opportunity to reinforce and practice oral communication skills introduced in I courses would be considered "Reinforced" or R. Finally, upper division courses completed at the senior or exit level that contain expectation of demonstrated ability of oral communication would be considered "Mastered" or M courses.

Methodology

Courses included in the assessment include UH West O'ahu courses approved for the Oral Communication (OC) Focus designation by the UH West O'ahu General Education Committee, as well as those courses identified by Faculty that include an oral communication-based project but are not designated with an OC Focus by the General Education Committee (Table 1). For assessment of the 2019-2020 General Education Oral Communication Learning Outcome,

student presentations made as part of regular coursework or program requirements (e.g., symposium presentation) were recorded and submitted as artifacts (student work products). Assessment Coordinators were responsible for contacting the respective faculty members teaching the designated courses to collect embedded, existing artifacts. Faculty were not required to create new assignments to collect appropriate artifacts; faculty were only asked to submit artifacts already in existence.

A detailed explanation as to how the recordings were to be used was provided and students had the choice to opt out of the recording for assessment purposes. All personally identifiable information was redacted from the recording (e.g. if a student's name was announced). Recordings of oral presentation were shared using UH's FileDrop service to maintain privacy of student records. Artifacts were then stored on the Assessment Committee 2019-20 shared Google drive, separated by division. Each student artifact was coded to include the division initials, curriculum map level (I, R, or M), the course alpha and number, delivery method (O for online or F for face-to-face), and an anonymous student ID. An example of the coding would be MNHSRPHYL142F001, representing a course from the Math, Natural and Health Sciences Division, offered at the reinforced curriculum map level, Physiology 142 course offered face to face for the student artifact 001.

The Assessment Director assigned at least three specific artifacts from each division to each Assessment Coordinator. After viewing the recording of the student presentation, Assessment Coordinators completed and submitted ratings via Qualtrics. Ratings were based on the revised AAC&U Oral Communication VALUE Rubric (Appendix A). As shown on the revised rubric, artifacts submitted for assessment of oral communication skills were rated based on several dimensions related to oral communication, including Organization, Language, Vocal Expressiveness, Supporting Material, and Objective. Assessment was rated on a 0-4 Likert-based scale in which

- 0 = Fails to meet Basic Level Performance
- 1 = Benchmark
- 2 = Developing
- 3 = Proficient
- 4 = Highly Proficient

Details on what constituted each dimension is outlined on the attached rubric.

Of the 56 OC Focus designated courses taught in the fall 2019 semester, eight were included in this assessment. A total 124 students were registered for these courses. The remainder of the courses assessed were not OC Focus designated but did include an oral communication-based assignment.

Table 1: Descriptive information of courses assessed in Fall 2019 for oral communication*

Division	Curriculum Map Level	Course	N	Modality: O or F	Representative Sampling	OC Focus Designation
MNHS	Introductory	MATH 245	5	F	Yes	N
MNHS	Reinforced	HLTH 204	5	F	Yes	N
MNHS	Mastery	MATH 444	3	F	Yes	N
MNHS	Mastery	MATH 480	3	F	Yes	N
SSCI	Introductory	ECON 130/131	11	F	Yes	N
SSCI	Reinforced	PSY 373	24	F	Yes	N
SSCI	Mastery	POLS 335	9	F	Yes	N
PUBA	Introductory	PUBA 100	9	F	No	N
PUBA	Reinforced	PUBA 414	20	F	Yes	Y
PUBA	Reinforced	PUBA 490	6	F	No	N
PUBA	Mastery	PUBA 313	18	F	No	Y
PUBA	Mastery	PUBA 486	7	F	No	N
HUM	Introductory	PHIL 100	17	F	Yes	Y
HUM		MUS 208**	8	F	Yes	N
HUM	Reinforced	HIST 231	8	F	Yes	Y
HUM		PHIL 220	20	F	Yes	Y
HUM		ENG 357	8	Online/Hybrid	Yes	Y
HUM		HPST 490/491	1	F	Yes	N
HUM	Mastery	PHIL 439	4	Online/Hybrid	Yes	N
HUM		ENG 490/491	9	F & Online/Hybrid	Yes	N
HUM		HIST 490/491	4	F & Online/Hybrid	Yes	N
EDUC	Introduction	EDEE/EDEF 200/201	16	Hybrid		Y
EDUC	Reinforced	EDEE 464	19	Hybrid		N
EDUC	Mastery	EDEE 490/492	8	F		N
CM	Introductory	CM 120	4	F	Yes	N
CM	Introductory	CM 140	4	O	Yes	N
CM	Introductory	CM 151	6	F	No	N
CM	Introductory	CM 251	8	F	No	N
CM	Reinforced	CM 320D	17	O	Yes	Y
CM	Reinforced	CM 385	1	F	Yes	N
CM	Reinforced	CM 390	12	F	Yes	N
CM	Mastery	CM 490/491	7	F	Yes	N

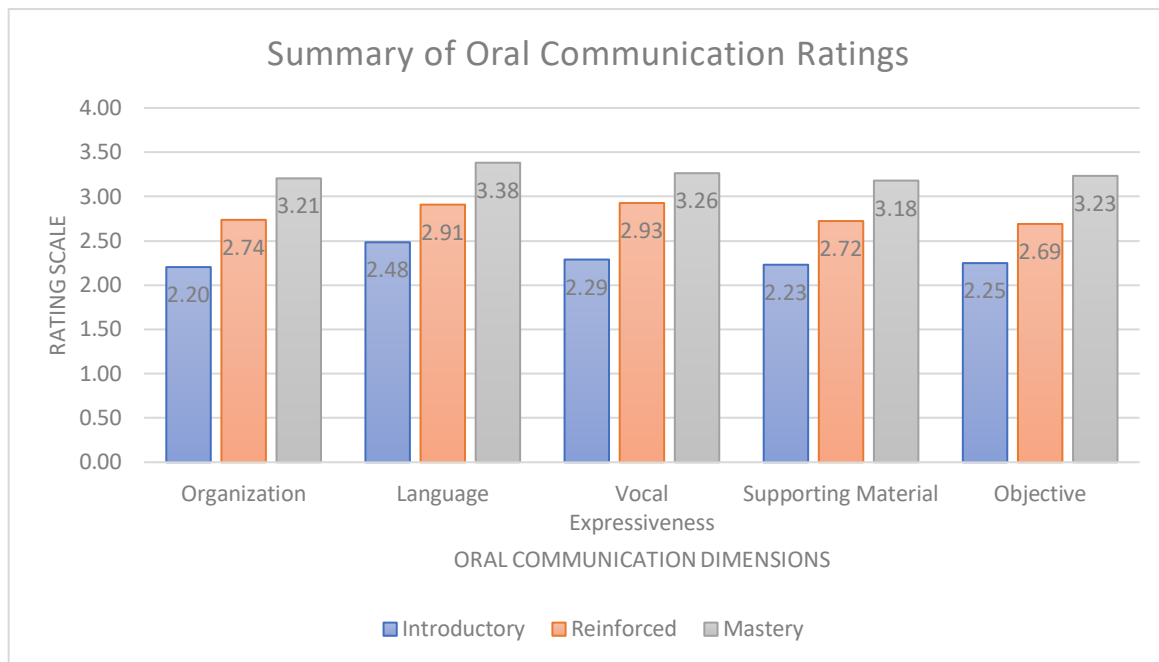
*BUSA Division information not available

**Artifacts collected but not reviewed

Results

Based on this assessment, UHWO students demonstrated acceptable and expected oral communication skills at the I, R, and M curriculum levels. Importantly, across the institution, ratings generally improved as students progressed through the degree (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Summary of Oral Communication Ratings



Average Oral Communication Ratings by Dimension Demonstrating Progress Within Curriculum Levels

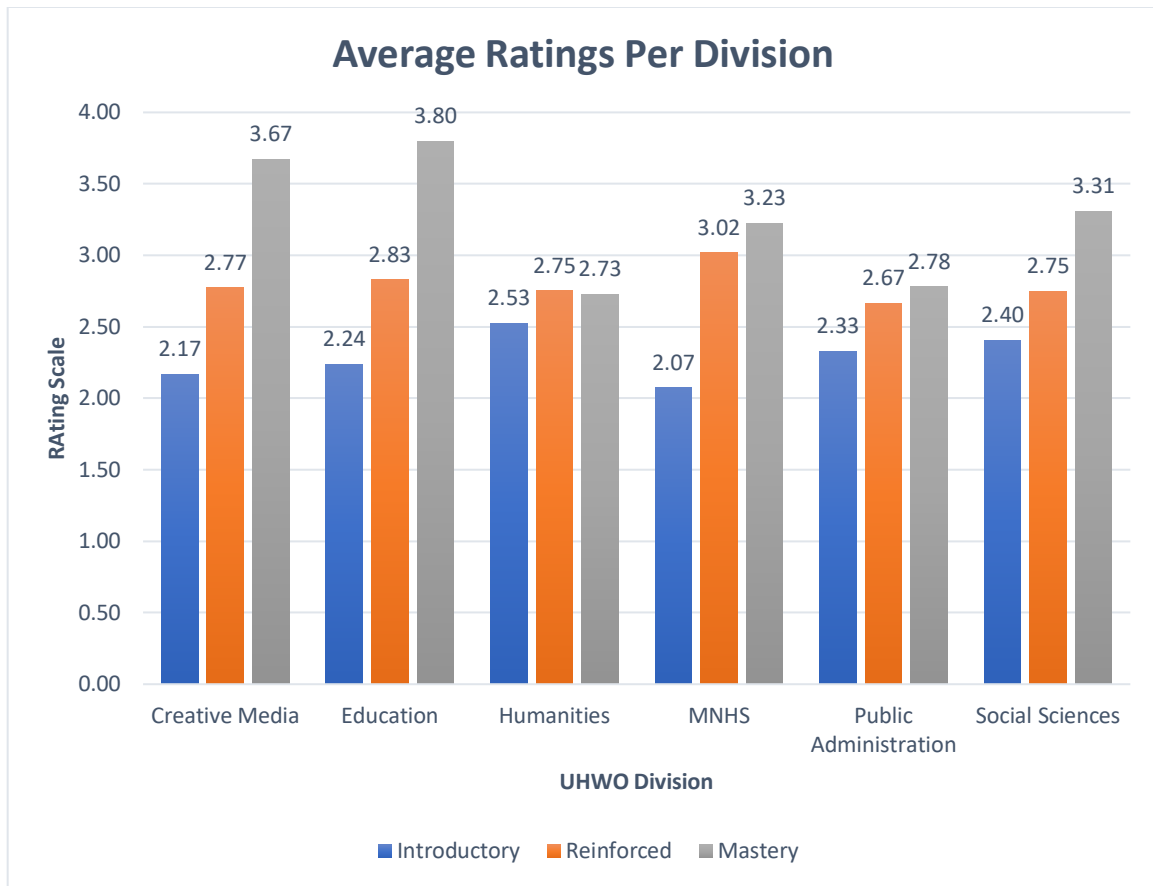
At the institutional level, for each Oral Communication dimension, average ratings by dimension showed increased proficiency as students progressed through each curriculum level of I, R, and M. Across all dimensions, students only demonstrated Proficient levels of oral communication in the courses designated Mastery.

Overall, students in I courses were rated above 2.0 (Developing) for each dimension of oral communication skills. Students within R courses, demonstrated only mild improvement in oral communication skills, with average scores reflecting no advancement to the next level of proficiency from those in I courses. Student artifacts in M courses received average ratings above 3.0, representing Proficient oral communication skills. Averaged ratings did not achieve Highly Proficient levels within the entire oral communication assessment review for any Division samples.

At both the Introductory and Mastery level, average ratings were highest for the Language dimension, while students were rated best at Vocal Expressiveness within Reinforced level courses.

Demonstrated improvement in oral communication skills across curriculum level was also seen in five of the six divisions assessed (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Average Oral Communication Ratings Per Division



Average Oral Communication Ratings Shows Improvement Across Most Division

For each division, students had average ratings at the Developing level for all Introductory courses. Based on the assessment of submitted artifacts, students in Creative Media and Education exhibited the greatest improvement across the curriculum levels, rating the highest ability in oral communication skills at the Mastery level, despite rating at the lower end of the spectrum at the Introductory level. Student artifacts within the Education division were rated highest in Oral Communication skills by the end of the degree while students within the Humanities division were rated the lowest, as represented by the average rating of the Mastery level courses.

Discussion

The results of the AY 2019-2020 assessment indicate that the majority of UH West O'ahu students demonstrate Proficient oral communication skills by the time of graduation. As seen in Figure 1, average ratings by dimension showed increases across each curriculum level of I, R, and M, with ratings improving from Developing to Proficient in oral communication skills by the time students graduate. In general, this can be perceived as a success – students enter the university exhibiting lower levels of oral communication skills and, as they were provided opportunities to practice oral communication skills throughout their educational journey, oral

communication skills improved. It is important to note that UH West O'ahu has not yet established benchmarks related to what is considered acceptable and successful, so this interpretation of these results can be considered subjective. Additionally, a deeper investigation into average ratings by division reveals that improvement in oral communication skills in two divisions masks an apparent decline and/or limited improvement by students in other divisions (Figure 2).

Artifacts in courses identified as M on curriculum maps for oral communication skills received an average rating above 3.0 (identified on the rubric as Proficient) for students in every division except for Humanities and Public Administration. Additionally, demonstrated progress in the development and mastery of oral communication skills was identified in all divisions except Humanities, most notably in the Education Division. A possible explanation may be that artifact sampling sizes varied considerably across divisions, and small sample size may have contributed to variability between divisions. The PUBA division submitted a total of 60 artifacts, the Humanities division submitted 79; in contrast, the Education division submitted only 43. Another example of the discrepancy between artifact submission via divisions can be demonstrated comparing the Humanities and Education divisions again: the Education Division submitted artifacts for only one course at the Reinforced level, while Humanities submitted artifacts from four. The broader artifact sampling submitted by Humanities and PUBA may be a better indicator of student progress, while results from other divisions may be less reliable or skewed because of smaller sample size.

Other factors that could have affected variation in average ratings include OC Focus designation and division specific discipline. As an example, the Humanities division appeared to have reduced performance over time. However, student artifacts submitted for the I and R level courses were from OC Focus designated courses whereas the artifacts from M level courses were without OC Focus designation. Ratings of each distinct dimension of oral communications skills were also broken down for each individual division (Appendix B), and those figures show that Humanities has the highest average ratings for every dimension for I level courses (the OC Focus courses). In contrast, average ratings per each dimension for Humanities M level courses (non OC Focus courses) were lowest or second lowest compared to the other divisions. The next highest average ratings at the I level was the Education division, which also included student artifacts from an OC Focus designated course. Finally, individual disciplines may foster increased practice in oral communication skills simply based on expectations for career competency. Interestingly, oral communication artifacts of student teachers completing their teaching practicum (EDEE 490/492) rated highest amongst all artifacts assessed, exhibiting oral communication skills near Highly Proficient (avg 3.83 for each dimension except Supporting Material). Student-teachers within this practicum course are at the end of their undergraduate career and are expected to be ready to enter the workforce with appropriate oral communications skills to conduct a classroom learning experience.

As mentioned above, ratings of each distinct dimension of oral communications skills were also broken down for each individual division and included in Appendix B. This data can support analysis of comparisons across divisions, but would prove most useful on the divisional level, thus a broader discussion and comparison of results is not included in this report. In conclusion,

results from the AY 2019-2020 assessment of oral communication can be used to compare student success within divisions and across degrees to determine how learning outcomes can best be scaffolded to promote student success. In general, student artifacts indicate increased student proficiency in oral communication skills over the degree program. Comparison of results, however, can be difficult due to variation in sample size, OC Focus designation, and curriculum level submissions from each division.

Limitations

Artifact submission across divisions was not standardized and not all UHWO divisions submitted artifacts, so a complete picture of student success related to Oral Communication cannot be drawn. Within assessment best practices, 30% representative sampling is considered appropriate when assessing a specific skill, but that recommended minimum artifact benchmark was not achieved this academic year. Also, less than 20% of artifacts submitted were from courses designated with an OC focus. Dissimilarity in instruction specific to the development of oral communication skills exists between courses with an OC focus and those without, as courses with an OC focus are required to adhere to the hallmarks set forth by the General Education Committee. Comparison of student achievement of the OC GELO in OC Focus and non-OC Focus courses thus remains difficult. Unfortunately, not all submissions were of similar quality and this variation could have contributed to discrepancies in and/or difficulty in completion of ratings.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this analysis, several recommendations can be put forward:

1. If the GELO being assessed is related to a specific diversification or focus designation, attempt to assess at least 30% of the courses offered.
2. To determine if students have successfully met learning outcomes associated with oral communication, it is recommended to establish a benchmark for which the institution and the General Education Committee determines to be acceptable for attainment of an assessed component of the GELO being reviewed. As an example, for OC assessment, 80% of students within each degree program rated as Proficient by the time of graduation might indicate successful attainment of the OC GELO.
3. Create a curriculum map that aligns GELOs and DLOs, indicating OC Focus designated courses at the I, R, and M curriculum level. Institutionally, consistent and accessible curriculum maps for each division are still being developed; lacking the information on a division level makes production of a reliable curriculum map for OC Focus courses difficult.
4. Encourage faculty who include oral communication skills within their course to submit a proposal for the course to be designated as an OC Focus course.
5. Include OC Focus course in all curriculum levels (I, R, and M) and across lower division and upper division courses to aid in scaffolded student learning.
6. Provide standardized templates to each division to provide ease of collection and submission of assessment artifacts.
7. Encourage standardized student and faculty surveys embedded within each course with an OC designation each semester to gather feedback on student learning outcomes related to OC hallmarks from the perspective of the students and the faculty

8. To get more faculty and student buy-in to the assessment process, include wording within the UHWO catalogue and online assessment/General Education materials that clearly explains what the Oral Communication skills are, how they are embedded within the campus degree programs and why they are considered an essential part of graduation requirements.

Appendix A

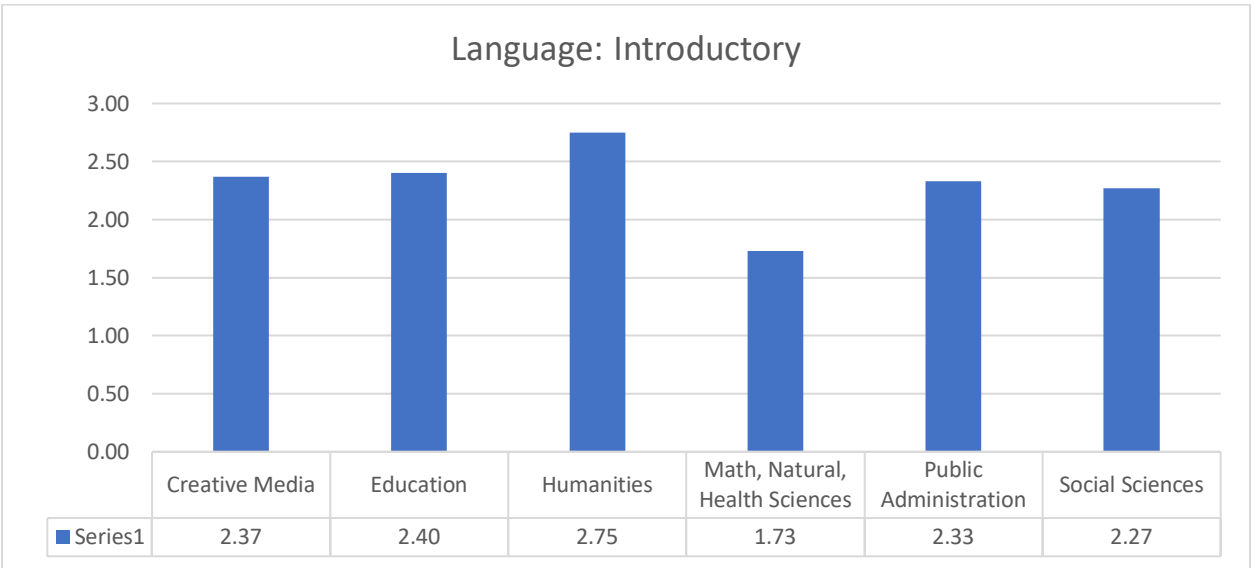
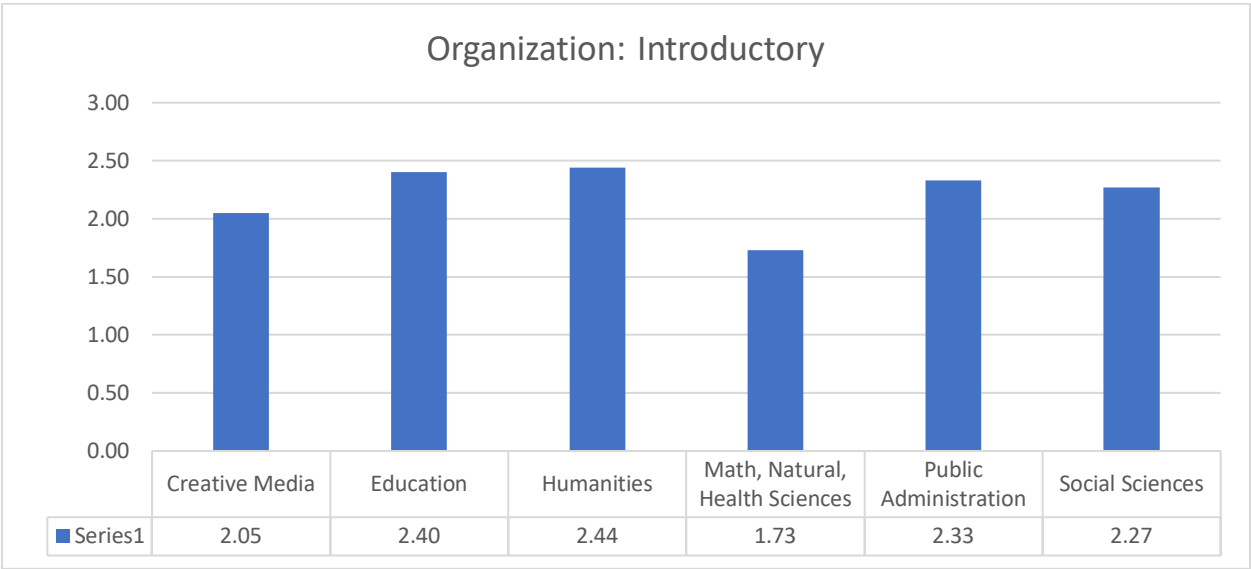
Oral Communication VALUE Rubric used by UHWO Assessment working group

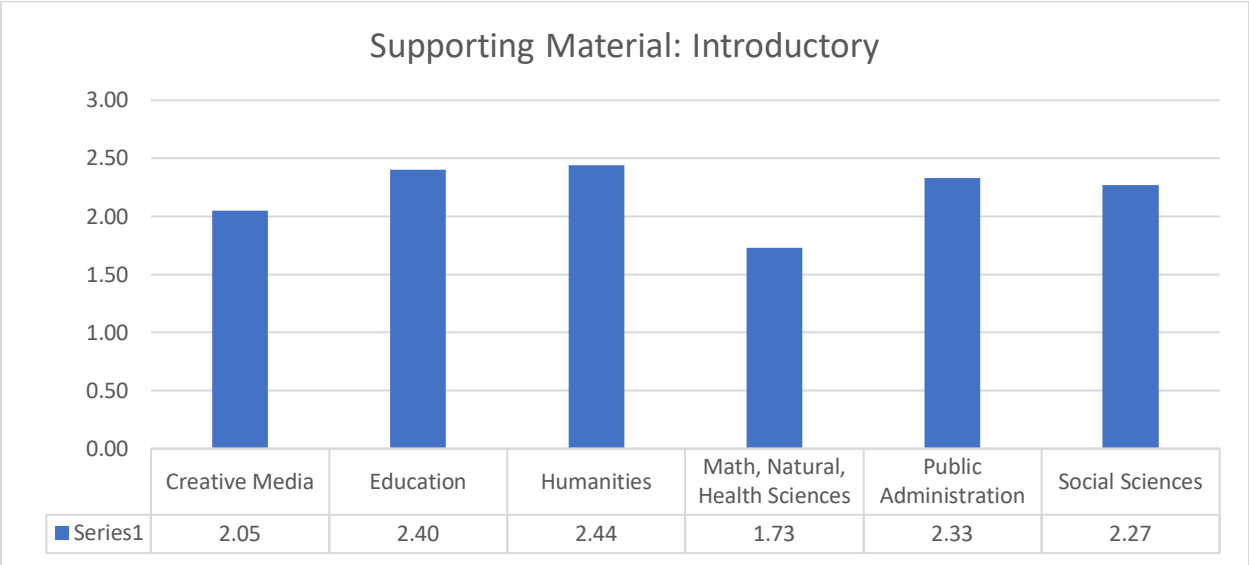
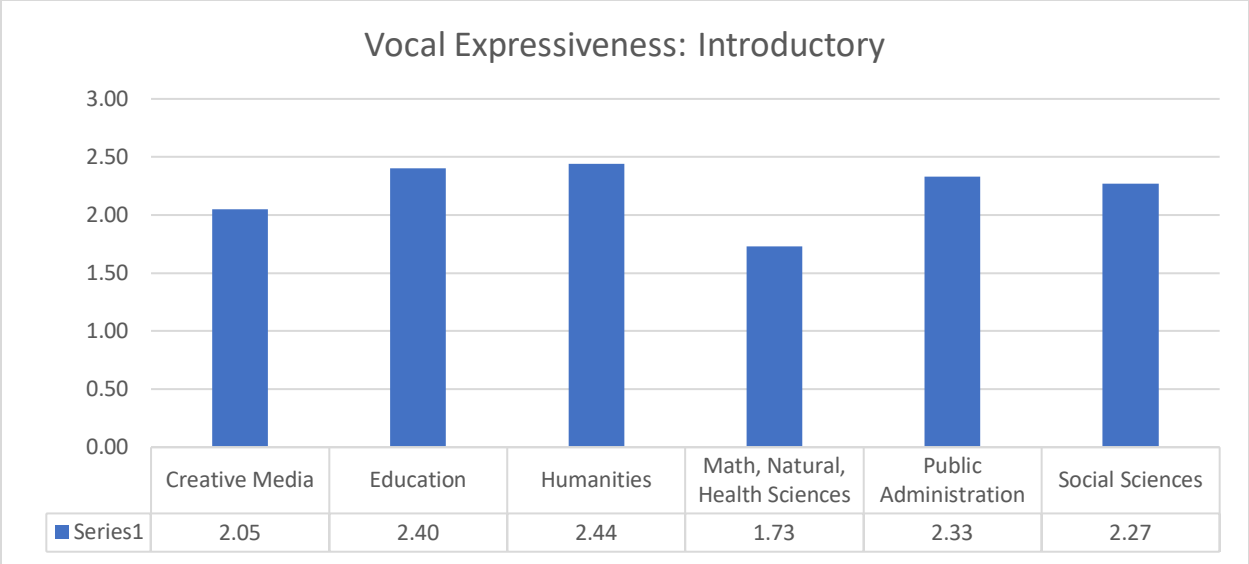
	Highly Proficient 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Benchmark 1	Fails to Meet Basic Level Performance 0
Organization	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content 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 Expressions	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.	

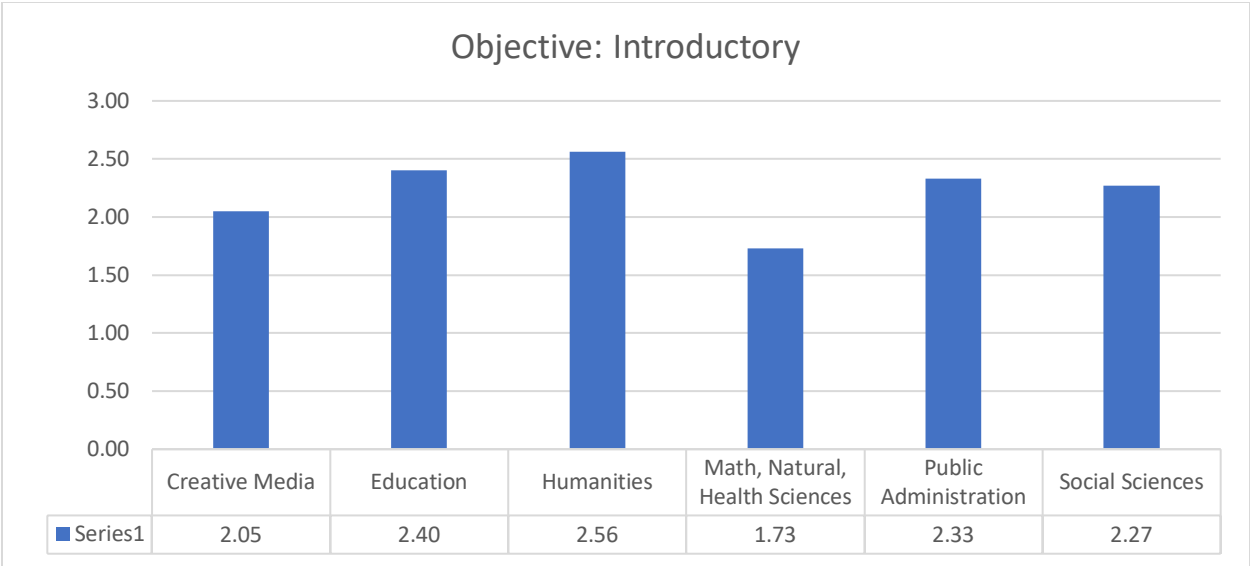
Supporting Material	A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/ 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.	

Appendix B
Detailed Breakdown of Average Ratings Per Division by Dimension

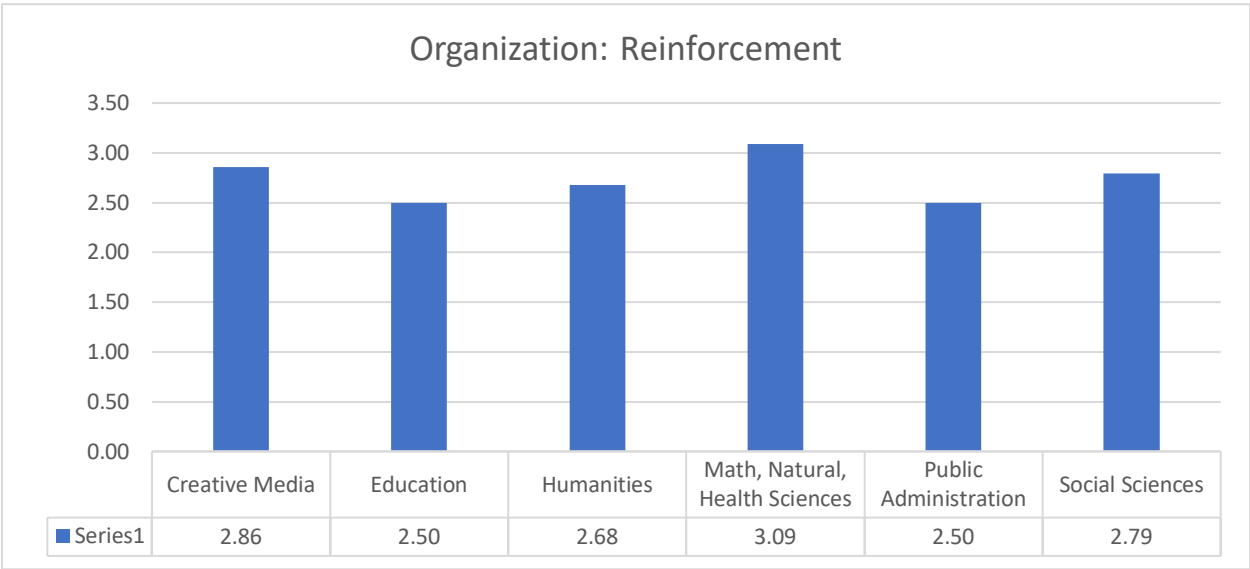
Introductory

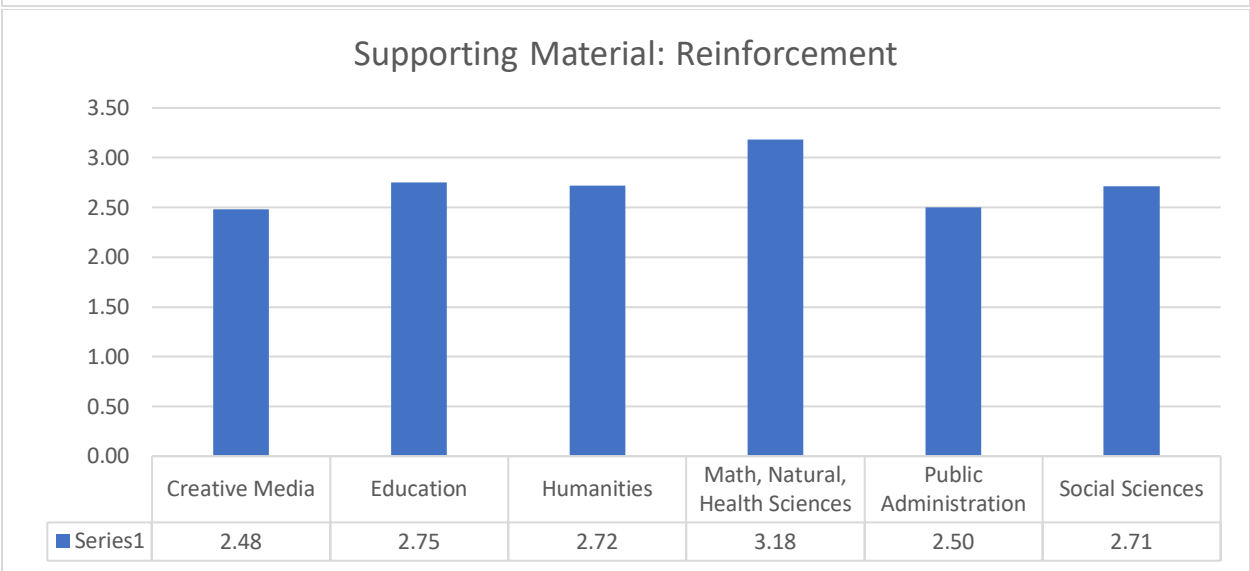
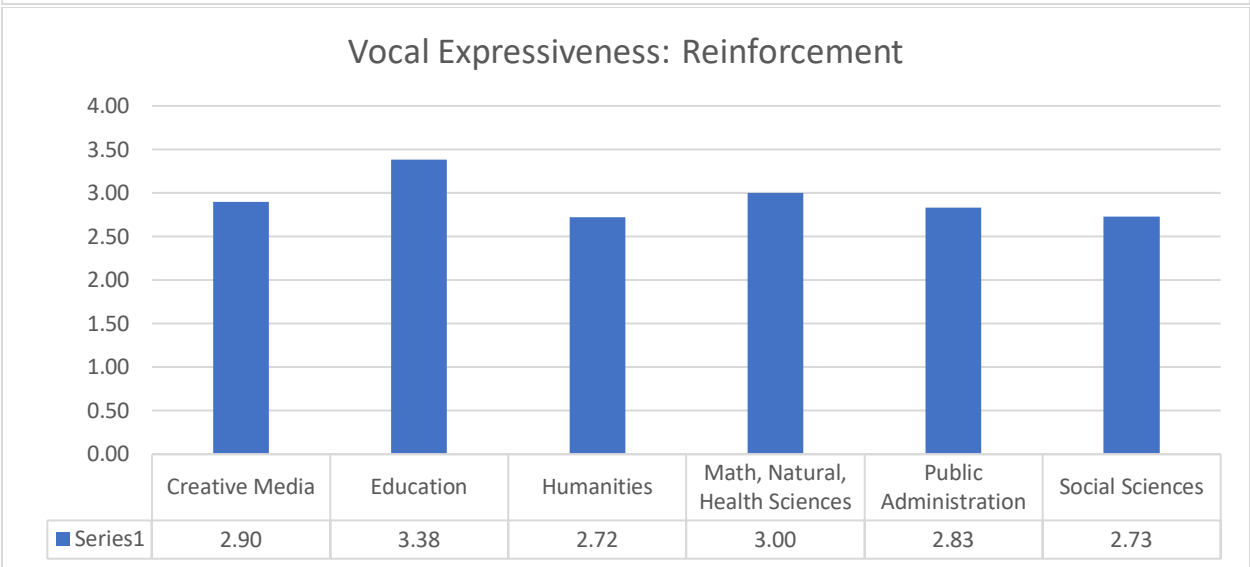
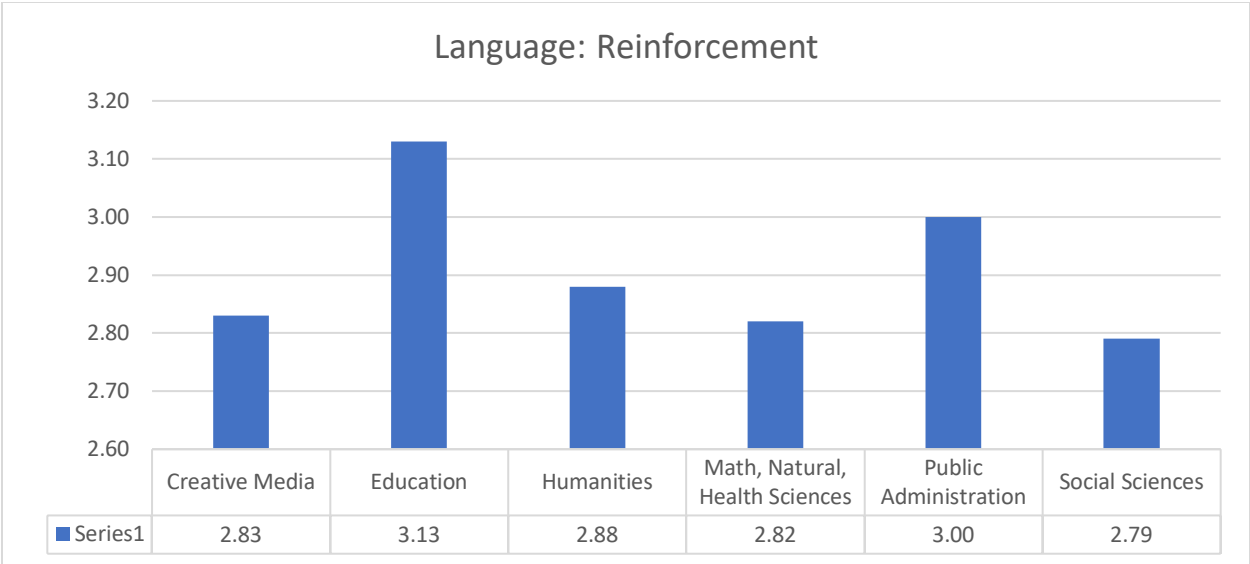


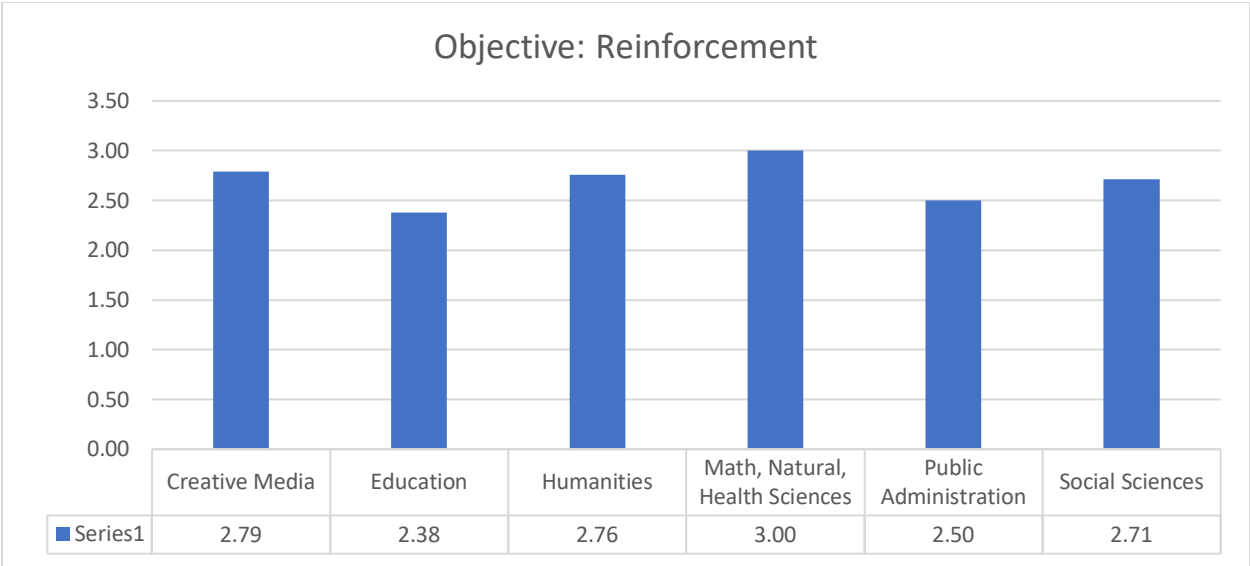




Reinforced







Mastery

