FALL 2019 Survey of COM2 and COM3 Instructors
Focus: Oral and digital communication activities

In Fall 2019, all COM2 and COM3 instructors were sent a request to participate in a brief survey about their teaching, assigning, and evaluation of oral and digital communication activities for one of their courses. 70 instructors responded to the request; aggregate responses as well as open-ended responses are reported below.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

In your own professional work, what kinds of digital communication skills do you think are most important for you to do your job successfully? List the top THREE skills. (number indicates number of responses mentioning this skill, out of 70 surveys)	
Use/facilitate/meet with distance conferencing software*	48
Search online databases*	34
Collaboratively compose/revise/edit*	21
Create graphics*	16
Create/present information digitally (including PowerPoint/videos)	15
Use general (Word) or specific (LaTeX) word processing applications	10
Use Canvas/other platforms to create/deliver content/instruction	10
Conduct research online (not necessarily through library databases)	4
Email	4
Use/navigate professional social media/Maintain web presence	4
Mentioned once: Coordinate coursework with outside organizations, create applications/surveys for research, distribute information digitally, use citation management software, learn and teach software for professionals in my discipline, work across multiple platforms, organize conferences, complete online trainings	
* indicates an activity that was suggested in the original wording of the question	

| From the following list (adapted from a University of Washington report), which of the following digital communication activities do students participate in as a part of your COM course? (%)	
Using a word processor to create documents	97.5
Using a presentation application to present information to others	90.0
Using digital search applications and strategies	81.4
Understanding issues of citation, copyright, ethics, and permanence in digital spaces	67.1
Using digital data/reference/citation management applications and strategies	64.3
Collaborating effectively, including strategies for sharing information in digital spaces	61.4
Understanding the various advantages/disadvantages of text-based versus more audio- or visually-based ways of communicating information	55.7
Effectively adapting communication efforts to meet online norms/expectations (e.g., conventions for emailing, webconferencing)	54.3
Using applications to create field-/discipline-appropriate analysis/graphics/visualizations	48.6
Accessing professional and/or civic networks, communities, and resources	45.7
Understanding technology's impacts on/interrelationship with environment or society	38.6
Using a web conferencing/screen-sharing application for online interaction	34.3
Designing websites or content for online platforms (videos, podcasts, etc.)	28.6
Understanding issues of digital privacy and security	28.6
Understanding/using online job application strategies	27.1
Using spreadsheet or statistical applications to manipulate, analyze, or present data	27.1
Using digital applications to support/extend thinking (e.g., Wordle, Mindmap, MS SmartArt)	24.3
Learning/applying coding languages to support academic/professional work	10.0

ORAL COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

For which of the following do you provide …	…instruction?	…feedback?
Effectively using visual aids (e.g., slides, handouts, etc.)	94	86
Selecting appropriate structure/organizational patterns for oral communication	83	80
Attending to features of non-verbal delivery (e.g., eye contact, gestures, posture)	81	76
Engaging with/responding to the audience during oral communication activities	76	70
Analyzing the audience (e.g., values, beliefs, knowledge) during preparatory stages	74	46
Attending to features of verbal delivery (e.g., tone, volume, rate, pronunciation)	73	79
Ethically citing evidence/references in oral communication contexts	73	60
Listening actively (as an audience member/discussion participant)	67	46
Effectively presenting as a group	51	51
Speaking effectively in digital/distance settings	49	44
Revising based on feedback	77	
Using strategies to reduce public speaking anxiety	43	
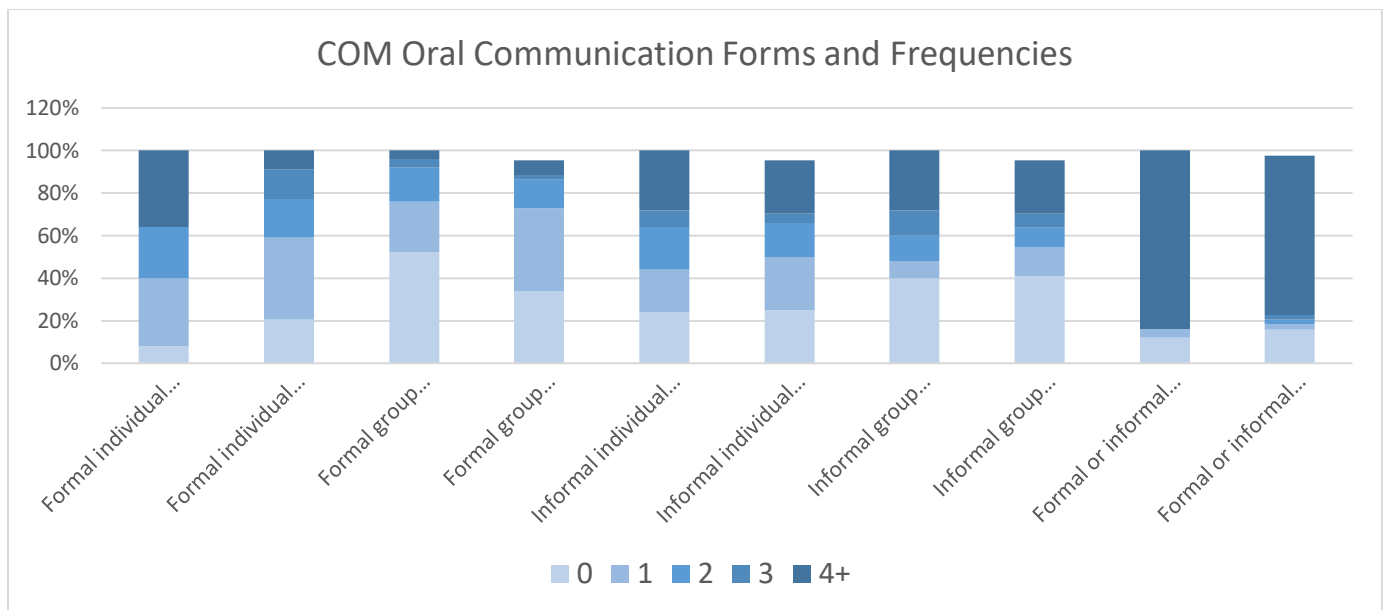
The table above indicates how often faculty said they assign/make use of each of the forms of communication listed along the x-axis. In simple terms, the more dark blue, the more often this communication form was being used by instructors. (To clarify, the legend refers to *how often* instructors assigned this activity, not *how many instructors* assigned it. Thus, based on this graph, a person could say, "40% of COM2 instructors said they assigned 0 informal group presentations
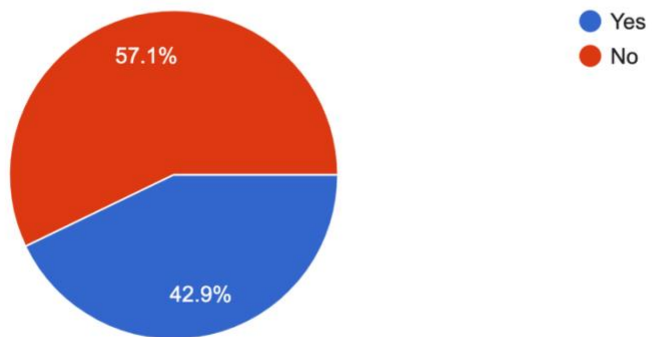
Approximately what percentage of your course grade is based on oral communication activity?

70 responses

- Less than 10%
- 10% to 20%
- 20% to 30%
- 30% to 40%
- 40% to 50%
- More than 50%

15.7%
11.4%
31.4%
7.1%
28.6%
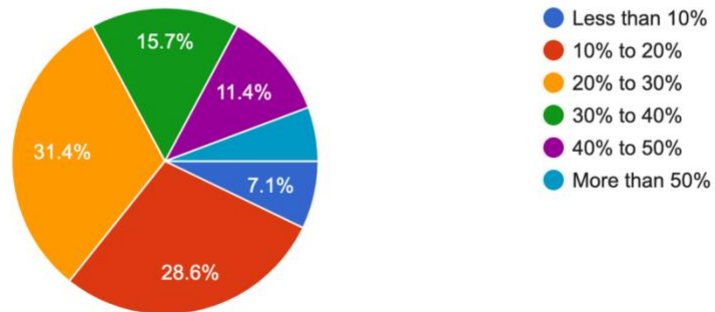
Do you assign recorded (asynchronous) presentations or responses in your course?

70 responses

- Yes
- No

57.1%
42.9%

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

In terms of your approach to promoting students' oral and digital communication skills, what are you most proud of?

- That's a tough question. I'm not sure there is a particular aspect to the course that I am particularly "proud" of in regard to my (or the course's) promotion of that. However, I am pleased with the students' multi-media introductions and journal entries. Almost w/o exception they flow smoothly and seem to be able to keep their nerves at bay. When I think about my early recorded monologues I can't imagine they were that smooth and focused. They're not perfect and some are better than others, but generally they stay on topic and do not fumble their words much at all.
- Making them design and teach an entire class period twice throughout the semester. They get a lot out of it, and so do I!
- Peer teaching and video editing
- students get some exposure to different modalities and media forms-- while it's easy to assume, I think, that students use these tools all the time, many don't do so reflectively. Even simple interactions can foster thinking about the stakes, so we try to think about remediation, affordances, etc., throughout the course. in terms of presentation, I like to mix informal and formal presentations-- the former for regular practice, the latter for polish.
- Guiding students through process of creating and executing an oral presentation that requires application of key course material.
- This course is teaching students to finish a research project. They formulate their research questions and methods. In the end of semester, they do a formal big public presentation and write a final research paper. The presentations and papers have been very good.
- My efforts to educate myself in digital literacies and to pass that info along to my students. And the depth of feedback I give on iterative writing assignments so students can improve their skills.
- One thing I am hoping to do for the students is to provide an introduction to some of the methods for creating oral presentations, and to give them experience with talking in front of their peers in a friendly environment, and I think some of the students have gained a level of comfort with communicating in front of an audience through a short, low-stress presentation.
- **Almost all of the students are submitting problem solutions using the discipline-standard mathematical typesetting software, LaTeX. Most of the students have become sophisticated users. This skill, which requires effort to acquire, has become essential to scientific communication in mathematically oriented fields.**
- **Facilitating an online learning environment that includes assignments requiring synchronous communication**
- My students engage in authentic community-based research and thus they have to communicate with their partners in through both oral and digital communications. For example, this semester, the students are communicating regularly with Riverton City officials, the Inberg-Miller engineers, Riverton Junior High students & teachers. They have to communicate microbiology with this diverse audience and, at the same time, communicate with subject-matter experts. They are working collaboratively with Noah Hull (Head microbiologist at Wyoming Department of Health) and the Wyoming State Vet lab as well as Wyoming Analytical Labs.
- **Students being able to peer edit and provide useful feedback to the student writer**

- Both courses emphasize working and communicating with peers in the class to create a peer atmosphere. This includes giving presentations in both courses and peer editing.
- Getting them engaged in scaffolding reading and writing for their future students with effective strategies.
- I am most proud that the skills learned in my classroom are applicable far beyond the test they are taking or the speech they are giving. They are learning by doing and creating skill sets that will set them apart in their first interviews post-graduation.
- **This is an online class, the first time I've taught a COM2 online, and the students have learned to create a video through VidGrid based on literary analysis and present that video to the class.**
- Students prepare multimedia presentations and deliver them before an audience.
- **Their progression from standard Powerpoint-y presentations to an unscripted sales interaction with a business professional.**
- Helping students research in their discourse community and translate it into social discourse in their writing
- Having them get exposure to Zoom.
- I am most proud of the drafting process when the students are working on their digital/oral presentations for this course. Presenting is very important as a professional in art-related fields, so there are countless lecture/discussions from many professors in and outside of the department that the students have to evaluate. The students have to research into and attend our visiting artist lectures so that they can craft a powerpoint lecture of their work and influences and present it to their peers who then evaluate their work.
- Periodic/ongoing, in-class, informal and explicit conversations about strategies, tools, and rhetorical choices in both texts we're encountering (as oral/digital comm artifacts) as well as oral and digital work the students themselves produce, with the goal of encouraging critical reading and encouraging student metacognition and reflective practice
- Progress from the first speech to the last in students with a large amount of communication apprehension.
- **The overlap in practices that prepare students for communications outcomes.** By this I mean that students have two distinct assignments that reinforce their practice of public communication of academic content. The first is an individual experience in preparing a media "newscast" of a current event and the second is a small group presentation in the Conference function of the course. I am proud that students grow more confident with selecting, organizing, and presenting on topics regarding African Traditional Religions that in all cases are very new to the students.
- My students have done numerous oral presentations/teaching in the content area of mathematics and I have been working on using appropriate mathematical terminology in these presentations. We communicate digitally and students provide advanced organizers to each other in digital formats. My students learn digital graphical literacy with DESMOS and other mathematics software (Geometers' Sketchpad, Geogebra, etc). They give oral presentations of these with students being active in learning--much discussion occurs.
- **the submission and review process for their major report.**
- **I blend both by having students develop podcasts in the form of public apologies. I think this approach helps students push the boundaries of how they define both public speaking and digital communication.**

- Their ability to hold conversations about complex issues through art and literature with each other in class (I blend into the background often).
- helping them find their voice
- **The student conference at the end where all students present a "scholarly" paper demonstrating they can apply the theories and methods they have learned to analyze a religious activity or phenomenon.**
- Class discussion and having students work in teams to create a video that makes a rhetorical argument
- Slowly building students' confidence throughout the semester to use video to communicate their ideas and research.
- I'm most proud of the "graduate" style structure I've taken with the piece. Rather than rely primarily on a traditional survey textbook/lecture/exam format, we spend most of our time reading primary sources and scholarly essays/books. This format requires students to engage deeply with material in order to be ready for the in-depth classroom discussion/debate about the topics. The students are empowered as historians rather than as consumers of history--and so they grow adept at taking source material/issues and applying them (through discussion and digital journaling) to issues facing the field today.
- The themes of the projects are relevant to the Medical Laboratory Science profession and practice. Technology-enabled forms of communication are made accessible to students. Students are engaged in the rubric-based assessment of group and individual outcomes.
- Helping students understand how to do a good presentation and how to create effective powerpoint slides.
- **Since this is an online class, the oral component manifested in video presentations and video responses through VidGrid. I'm proud that the students are able to create their own webpage for a potential article adaptation (or translation) that they would hypothetically publish. They are taking creative control in ways that have surprised me/impressed me, especially with the science focus that this assignment calls for.**
- My flexibility in terms of giving students an opportunity to decide how they will demonstrate these skills (e.g., I try to give them multiple "practice" opportunities in terms of oral communication, so that those who are more comfortable with informal discussion benefit--but so do those who feel more comfortable with a lot of preparation for formal presentations).
- A group web development project that students present orally.
- Encouraging students to speak in Spanish
- That I have met all 7 of the SLOs with course assignments and interactions.
- I am most proud of the final two assignments in my class: a video oral presentation project and a "reface the textbook" assignment.
- Their ability to upload an audio or video recording of their response to weekly discussion questions, then to comment in writing to the recorded responses of others during discussion.
- Developing it as an assignment that promotes evidence-based practice
- Aligning student skills with industry norms.
- Using a variety of assignments to improve students' oral and digital communication skills.
- Students creating infographics and presenting their topics

- The students, who take the assignments seriously and follow the instructions, make good to excellent improvements in their oral and digital communication skills. This means I must be doing something right.
- CEO project and 80 mini cases
- Closing the loop on student feedback that they desire more mock communication and OSCE (objective structured clinical examination) opportunities. This feedback was incorporated into our curricular revision. This semester, students have had the opportunity to participate in an interprofessional mock simulation scenario focused on inpatient communication. They have also completed OSCEs in which they are required to verbally counsel a standardized patient on smoking cessation.
- The Teacher Work Sample Project, where students accomplish COM3 goals in a practical way.
- Integrating subject matter from the discipline of communication studies with oral, written and digital communication. Subject matter from the discipline is included into a resume and cover letter assignment, mock job interview assignment, LinkedIn profile assignment, sales presentation and group presentation. In addition, the class has a substantial project (career research interview) focusing on research and communication. Students conduct research on a professional career, contact a professional working in that career, and conduct a one-on-one interview with the professional based on principles taught in class lectures. Students present their findings in a final paper and professionally developed classroom presentation. The presentation includes developing a written speech outline (with accepted conventions of spelling, grammar, organizational structure, and punctuation), analyzing and interacting with the classroom audience.