

Competency: To communicate effectively in oral and written English (**Oral Communications**).

Competency Description: Northwestern has a broadly based core curriculum that is central to the University's mission and consistent with the Louisiana Board of Regents requirements for general education. The competency "to communicate effectively in oral and written English" requires undergraduate students seeking a bachelor's degree to take three (3) hours of communication, usually accomplished by taking COMM 1010: Oral Communication.

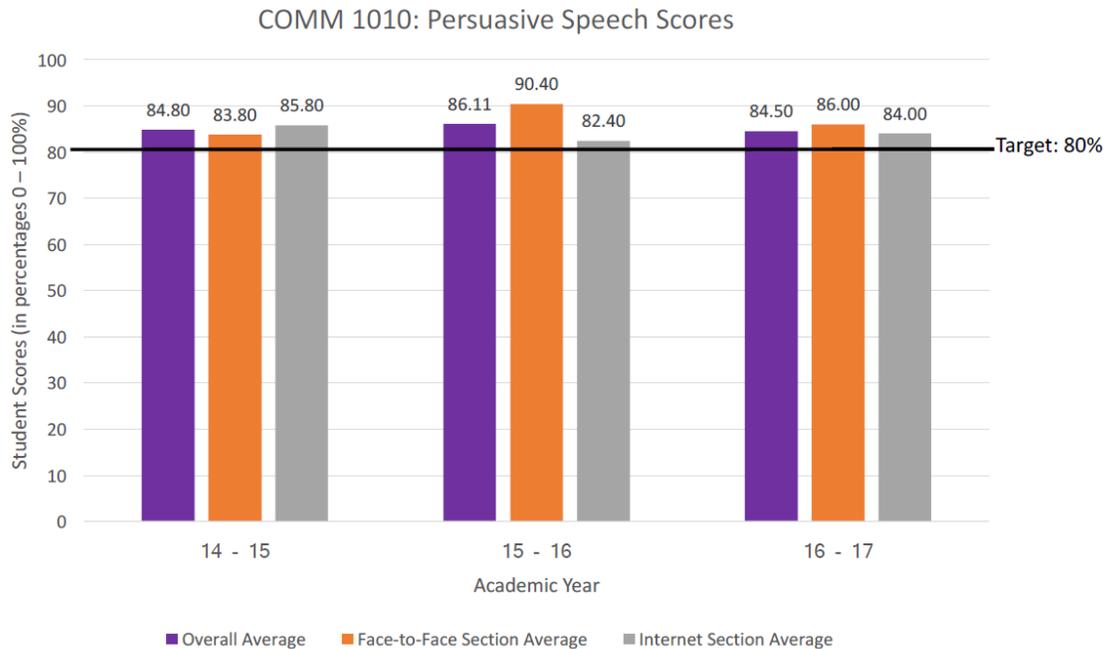
Student Learning Outcome: Students completing COMM 1010 will be able to speak clearly and correctly and incorporate basic principles of effective oral presentations.

Measure (including methodology and target): This competency is measured using an assessment of their presentation skills. Students must develop, organize, and present a persuasive speech. The resulting presentation is graded based on a rubric that evaluates students on criteria for effective public speaking: Thesis Statement, Attention Getter, Connection with Audience, Subject Knowledge/Credibility, Organization, Language/Fluency, Presentation Aid, Eye Contact, Body Language, and Voice.

Acceptable target is a score of 40/50 on the rubric. The goal is that 80% of participating students will meet this goal.

Ideal target is a score of 50/50 on the rubric. The goal is that 100% of participating students will meet this goal.

Findings:



Based on data derived from these assessments, students from all three annual years (2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17) exceeded acceptable target and continue to strive to achieve ideal target.

Analysis:

AY 14-15:

Based on percentage of total possible points for the Persuasive Speech, the following overall averages were achieved by students:

Fall 2014

Traditional Classroom sections (10): 88%

Internet sections (10) 88%

Spring 2015

Traditional classroom sections (10): 79.6%

Internet sections (11) : 83.6%

Note: Data representing average results of each individual rubric category were unavailable for the 2014-15 academic year.

For the 2014-15 school year, the overall average result for this assessment was 84.8%.

Acceptable Target: Score of 80% overall (target met).

Ideal Target: Score of 100% overall (approaching target).

AY 15-16:

For Fall 2015, McGraw Hill provided 2,990 individual results across all but two of the COMM 1010 sections for the Persuasive Speech Rubric. Two instructors did not use the rubric on CONNECT.

Overall, students attained a 4.26/5 or 85.2%

By rubric category, students on average attained:

- 4.61/5 or 92.2% for Attention Getter
- 4.10/5 or 82% for Body Language
- 4.36/5 or 87.2% for Connection with Audience
- 4.01/5 or 80.2% for Eye Contact
- 4.08/5 or 81.6% for Language Fluency
- 4.37/5 or 87.4% for Organization
- 3.84/5 or 76.8% for Presentation Aids
- 4.49/5 or 89.8% for Subject Knowledge/Credibility
- 4.52/5 or 90.4% for Thesis Statement
- 4.21/5 or 84.2% for Voice

For Spring 2016, McGraw Hill provided results for 20 COMM 1010 sections for the Persuasive Speech Rubric.

Overall, students attained a 4.33/5 or 86.6%

By rubric category, students on average attained:

- 4.56/5 or 91.2% for Attention Getter
- 4.11/5 or 82.2% for Body Language
- 4.51/5 or 90.2% for Connection with Audience
- 4.17/5 or 83.4% for Eye Contact
- 4.40/5 or 88% for Language Fluency
- 4.47/5 or 89.4% for Organization
- 3.6/5 or 72% for Presentation Aids
- 4.63/5 or 92.6% for Subject Knowledge/Credibility
- 4.41/5 or 88.2% for Thesis Statement
- 4.42/5 or 88.4% for Voice

For the 2015-16 school year, the overall average result for this assessment was 86.1%.

Acceptable Target: Score of 80% overall (target met).

Ideal Target: Score of 100% overall (approaching target).

AY16-17:

For Fall 2016, McGraw Hill provided data results from the rubric results on CONNECT for 24 sections. Data for one section did not transfer, so the results are not included in overall findings.

Overall, students attained a 4.25/5 or 85%. Averages for Internet and classroom sections were within .05% of each other, an indicator for parity across all sections.

By rubric category, students on average attained:

- 4.26/5 or 85.2% for Attention Getter
- 4.18/5 or 83.6% for Body Language
- 4.27/5 or 85.4% for Connection with Audience
- 4.16/5 or 83.2% for Eye Contact
- 4.21/5 or 84.2% for Language Fluency
- 4.07/5 or 81.4% for Organization
- 3.77/5 or 75.4% for Presentation Aids
- 4.20/5 or 84% for Subject Knowledge/Credibility
- 4.27/5 or 85.4% for Thesis Statement
- 4.19/5 or 83.8% for Voice

For Spring 2017, McGraw Hill provided data for 18 sections. Overall, students attained a 4.2/5 or 84%. Averages for Internet and classroom sections were within .25% of each other, indicating parity across all sections.

By rubric category, students on average attained:

- 4.43/5 or 88.6% for Attention Getter
- 4.18/5 or 83.6% for Body Language
- 4.56/5 or 91.2% for Connection with Audience
- 4.31/5 or 86.2% for Eye Contact
- 4.39/5 or 87.8% for Language Fluency
- 4.08/5 or 81.6% for Organization
- 3.27/5 or 65.4% for Presentation Aids
- 4.34/5 or 86.8% for Subject Knowledge/Credibility
- 4.03/5 or 80.6% for Thesis Statement
- 4.43/5 or 88.6% for Voice

For the 2016-17 school year, the overall average result for this assessment was 84.5%.

Acceptable Target: Score of 80% overall (target met).

Ideal Target: Score of 100% overall (approaching target).

Decision/Recommendation:

The Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts recommends the following:

- Remind and encourage all faculty to use the standardized rubric and to record scores on Connect for data retrieval.
 - Encourage faculty discussion about scoring to help with consistency in expected student standards.
 - Ensure adjuncts are included in discussions or have separate individual sessions with the department head and/or course steward to assist them in understanding departmental goals and standards.
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Competency: To communicate effectively in oral and written English (**Written English**)

Competency Description: In English courses, the focus for this competency is on the student's ability to communicate effectively in college-level *written* English, on two different writing assignments. The assignments are given in the course, ENGL 1020: Composition and Rhetoric II, the second semester course in the first-year writing sequence for freshmen students.

Assignment 1—Timed Essay

Student Learning Outcome: 80% of ENGL 1020 students who complete the timed essay measure will achieve or exceed Level 3 on the Timed Essay Rubric.

Measure: The timed essay assignment, administered during Final Examination Week via the ENGL 1020 Assessment, requires the student to read a short essay and write a response, within two hours, to one of two writing prompts. The resulting student essay is evaluated based on the Timed Essay Rubric (see below).

Student essays are evaluated based on the following Timed Essay Rubric, on which a score of 3 is "acceptable" and a score of 5 is "ideal."

5 – argues a clearly-stated thesis (topic and purpose) that is fully developed through logical reasoning and relevant details and examples; illustrates audience awareness through appropriate structure (essay and paragraph), tone, and style; includes only superficial grammatical and mechanical errors that do not impact the essay's readability

4 – argues a discernible thesis (topic and purpose) that is well developed through logical reasoning and relevant details and examples; illustrates audience awareness through generally appropriate structure (essay and paragraph), tone, and style; includes some grammatical and mechanical errors but they do not seriously impact the essay's readability

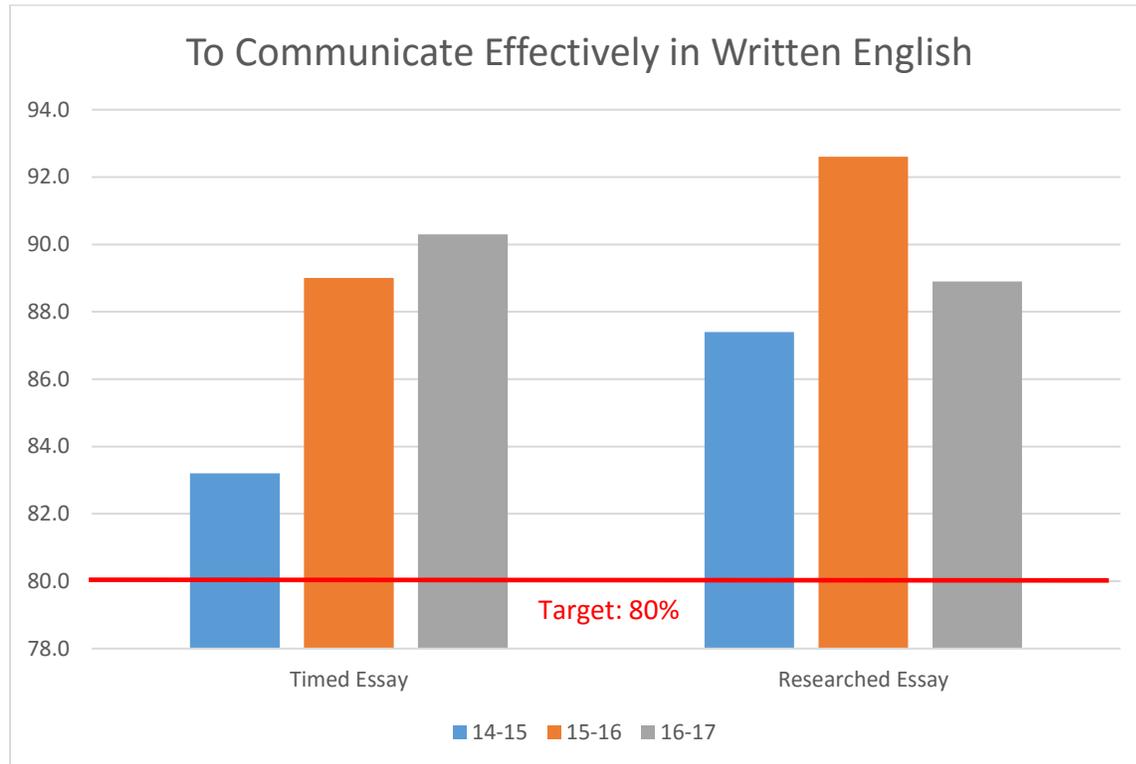
3 – argues a discernible controlling idea that is generally developed with reasons, details, and examples; illustrates general audience awareness through some attention to structure (essay and paragraph), tone, and style; may include grammatical and mechanical errors that occasionally disrupt the essay's readability

2 – argues around/toward a discernible controlling idea that may be trite or underdeveloped; meets essay-level structure expectations but may fall short in meeting audience expectations for paragraphing, tone, and/or style; may include grammatical and mechanical errors that disrupt the essay's readability

1 – does not respond to the prompt or is not at all developed; may fail to meet audience expectations for essay structure, tone, and style; may include severe grammatical and mechanical errors that make the essay nearly unreadable

0 – no response

Findings:



As the left-side portion of the chart above shows, more than 80% of the students achieved the target level of competence (Level 3 on the Timed Essay Rubric) in each of the last three academic years (2014-17). The target of 80% was *exceeded* each year.

Analysis:

AY 14-15: 83.2% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department faculty, and the high-quality work of the students. No further action was taken.

AY 15-16: 89.0% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department faculty, and the high-quality work of the students. While not related to the findings, in spring 2016 the faculty textbook committee adopted a new ENGL 1020 text for use in 2016-17.

AY 16-17: 90.3% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department faculty, the high-quality work of the students, and possibly to the new ENGL 1020 textbook. As of this writing, no further action has been taken.

Decision/Recommendation:

No changes are planned for 2017-2018 however; the department is reviewing the Timed Essay measure to ensure the level of rigor remains in concert with the student’s level of attainment.

Assignment 2—Researched Essay

Student Learning Outcome: 80% of ENGL 1020 students who complete the researched essay assignment will achieve or exceed Level 3 on the Researched Essay Rubric.

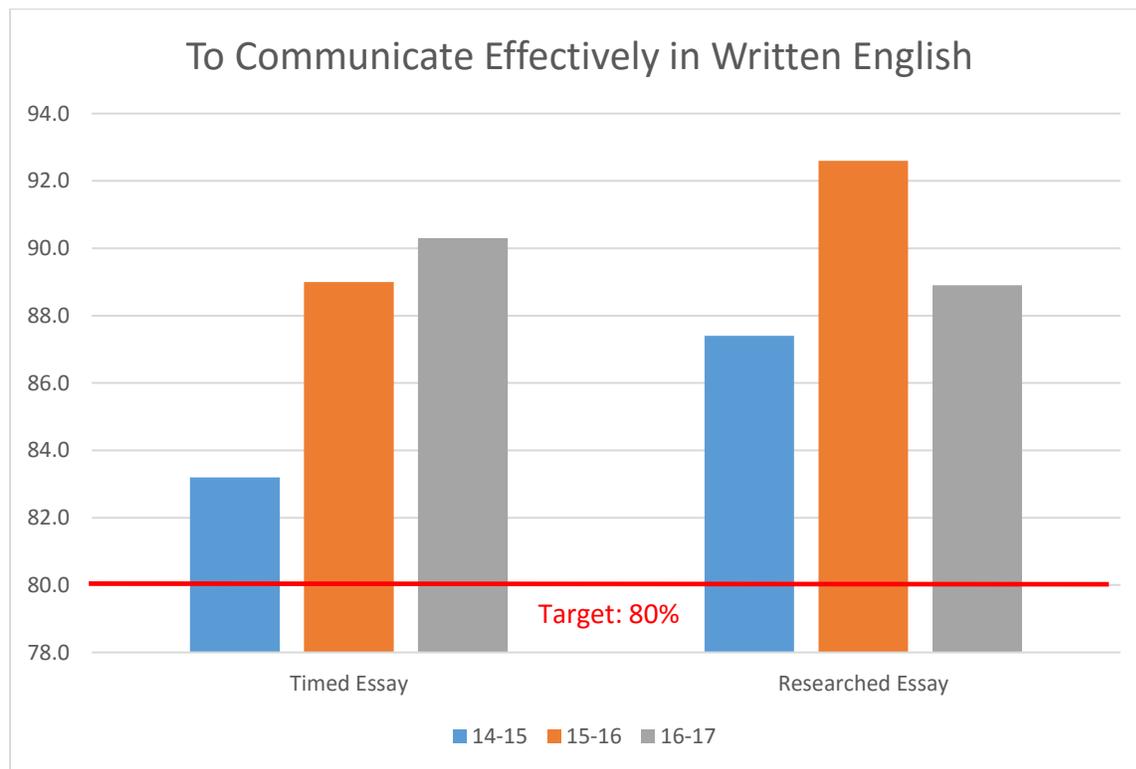
Measure: The ENGL 1020 researched essay assignment requires each student to construct an argumentative essay in Standard Written English that makes use of scholarly research. The resulting essay is evaluated based on criteria for quality writing, described in the Researched Essay Rubric:

	5	4	3	2	1
Thesis and Development	Has a lucid, significant, perceptive response to the topic, which is fully developed.	Has a lucid, significant, response to the topic, which is fully developed.	Has discernible controlling idea or thesis, which responds to the topic; generally developed.	Has discernible controlling idea or thesis, which responds, but is underdeveloped or trite.	No responsive thesis, or response is not developed at all.
Support	Concrete, relevant details and examples.	Concrete, relevant details and examples.	Some superficial generalizations, or facts with little comment.	Under-developed trite generalizations; sketchy or irrelevant facts.	Little or no support for generalizations or merely lists of examples.
Audience Awareness	Structure, supports, tone demonstrate consideration of audience and purpose.	Awareness evidenced mainly in either structure and supports or tone.	Awareness evidenced only marginally in appropriate use of structure and support or tone.	Awareness slightly evident in appropriate use of structure and support or tone.	Seems to exist for the writer only.
Paragraphing and Logical Progression	Coherent paragraphs progress through necessary, evident stages; includes transitions.	Generally coherent paragraphs progress through necessary stages; includes transitions.	Generally coherent paragraphs may be unwieldy or confusing; limited or predictable transitions.	Little or no attempt at cohesion; progression is confused or haphazard; little or no use of transitions.	Little or no cohesion; confused and haphazard progression; little or no use of transitions.
Sentence Structures and Word Choice	Varied sentence structure; word choice is precise, fresh, and economical.	Clear sentences; some stylistic variation; word choice is precise, if not economical or fresh.	Clear but sometimes loose or basic sentences; word choice is occasionally imprecise and flawed.	Little attention to sentence structure or revision; word choice is often flawed or inadequate.	Basic/choppy or rambling/incoherent sentences; little or no evidence of revision; inadequate word choice.
Grammar Errors	Absent or so limited as not to disrupt the essay’s readability in any way.	Minimal or so limited as not to disrupt the essay’s readability in any major way.	Occasionally disrupt the essay’s readability.	So pervasive as to disrupt consistently the essay’s readability.	So pervasive as to disrupt seriously and consistently the essay’s readability.

Rubric scores are averaged and reported on a scale as follows:

- 5 - Average score of 4.5-5
- 4 - Average score of 4-4.49
- 3 - Average score of 3.5-3.99
- 2 - Average score of 3-3.49
- 1 - Average score of 1-2.99
- 0 - Still enrolled but no submitted paper

Findings:



As the right-side portion of the chart above shows, more than 80% of the students achieved the target level of competence (Level 3 on the Researched Essay Rubric) in each of the last three academic years (2014-17). The target of 80% was *exceeded* each year.

Analysis:

AY 14-15: 87.4% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department faculty, and the high-quality work of the students. No further action was taken.

AY 15-16: 92.6% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department

faculty, and the high-quality work of the students. While not related to the findings, in spring 2016 the faculty textbook committee adopted a new ENGL 1020 text for use in 2016-17.

AY 16-17: 88.9% of the students met the target level of competence. We attribute this result to the design of the ENGL 1020 course curriculum, the teaching practices of our department faculty, the high-quality work of the students, and possibly the new ENGL 1020 textbook.

Decision/Recommendation:

No changes are planned for 2017-2018 however; the department is reviewing the Researched Essay measure to ensure the level of rigor remains in concert with the student's level of attainment.

The above data is from Taskstream TK20, the University's assessment management system.