Middle Tennessee State University General Education Competencies Assessment Report 2018 -2019

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Academic Year: 2018-2019

Subject Area: Oral Communication

1. Identify the course(s) used in the assessment. Include the prefix, number, and title of each course.

It was during the Spring of 2019 semester that the course of COMM 2200 (Fundamentals of Communication) was used to assess the subject of oral communication at Middle Tennessee State University. The prefix for this assessment course is "COMM." This assessment course has the number of "2200." The title for this assessment course is "Fundamentals of Communication." The persuasive speeches of students enrolled in COMM 2200 were the focal point of this report. COMM 2200 was the only course used for assessment purposes by the Department of Communication Studies during the 2018-2019 academic year.

2. Indicate the number of students who were assessed. Was sampling used? If yes, briefly describe the method of selecting student work and the percentage of students whose work was assessed.

The total number of speeches that were assessed during the Spring of 2019 semester was 282 ($N = 282$). A total of 120 speeches from female students (50.8%) were assessed in on-ground sections of COMM 2200 while a total of 116 speeches from male students (49.2%) were assessed in on-ground sections of COMM 2200. The sample included 111 Freshmen (47.0%), 82 Sophomores (34.8%), 29 Juniors (12.3%), and 14 Seniors (5.9%). Demographic data was not obtained from the online sections that were evaluated in this assessment due to FERPA concerns and logistical issues. The mean age for the participants was 20.24 years old.

The 2019 assessment of COMM 2200 used sampling. It was during the Spring of 2019 semester that a stratified sampling procedure was utilized to assess oral communication. The stratified sampling procedure was comprised of five steps. First, all of the sections of COMM 2200 that were offered during the Spring of 2019 semester were categorized by the strata of time of day (i.e., morning classes which had a start time between 8:00AM-11:30AM, afternoon classes which had a start time between 12:40PM-4:20PM, evening classes which had a start time of 6:00PM, and online classes which were coded as an unspecified start time). Second, a random selection of 25% of the classes from the first strata (e.g., morning classes which had a start time between 8:00AM-11:30AM) was completed. Third, a random selection of 25% of the classes from the second strata (e.g., afternoon classes which had a start time between 12:40PM-4:20PM) was completed. Fourth, a random selection of 25% of the classes from the third strata (e.g., evening classes which start at 6:00PM) was completed. Fifth, a random selection of 25% of the classes from the fourth strata (e.g., online/hybrid classes with an unspecified start time) was completed. A total of 18 different sections of COMM 2200 were thereby included. Fifteen of these sections were on-ground while three of these sections were online/hybrid. It should be noted that total number of sections (and percentage of sections) that were included in the final sample were based on the recommendations of Faye Johnson. The end result was that 18 sections of COMM 2200 were included in the final sample.

Student work was selected for inclusion if her/his section of public speaking was selected via the aforementioned stratified sampling procedure. Student work for this project was assessed by three evaluators who reported (or e-reported) to 18 sections of COMM 2200 in order to complete a discrete on-ground assessment of persuasive speeches live in class. The online sections of COMM 2200 that were selected for inclusion were evaluated via video recording. (Dual enrollment sections of COMM 2200 were also included in the pool but none of those sections

were randomly selected). The trained evaluators were comprised of two full-time temporary instructors of COMM 2200 and one adjunct instructor of COMM 2200 for the 2018-2019 academic year. It was during February of 2019 that the three evaluators were trained on assessment. The training involved witnessing the stratified sampling procedure, assigning the evaluators to specific sections based on their availability, reviewing the rubric for assessment, and rating sample speeches from a departmental dropbox. It is important to note that three new evaluators served on this project in 2019.

It was in the 2019 assessment that approximately 95% of the total student work was assessed amongst the 18 sections of COMM 2200 that were evaluated live in class (or via a video recording for the selected online sections). Most of the sections (12 out of 15) that were evaluated live in class had 100% of the total speeches assessed by the evaluators. It was in the other three sections that were not fully assessed that a handful of speeches were evaluated. Scheduling conflicts prevented the evaluators from assessing 100% of the total speeches on-ground. These unforeseen issues and conflicts resulted in less than 100% of all student work being assessed within the 15 sections of COMM 2200 that were evaluated live in class. Every speech was evaluated in the online sections of COMM 2200 that were selected for inclusion in this project. Collectively, the majority of the student work (approximately 95%) within these 18 sections were analyzed in the 2019 assessment of COMM 2200.

3. Do the procedures described in Items 1 and 2 represent any significant change from the pilot assessment? If so, describe the changes and rationale.

The answer to this question is yes. The first significant change that was made in the 2019 assessment was that online sections of COMM 2200 and dual enrollment sections of COMM 2200 were included in the pool. These sections were not in the 2018 pool. The rationale for this change was that the Department of Communication Studies was instructed to include these sections in order to comply with accreditation policy.

The second significant change that was previously noted was that three new evaluators served in the 2019 assessment. One of the evaluators from 2018 declined to serve as an evaluator because she recently had a baby. A second evaluator from 2018 was no longer employed at Middle Tennessee State University in the Spring of 2019. The third evaluator from 2018 did not volunteer to evaluate. There is no rationale to note for this change. The change related to evaluator turnover is a function of limited interest in this type of work and because the compensation for said work is not competitive.

The third significant change was the addition of three new outcomes to our assessment. The newly introduced sixth outcome looked at the closing segment of the speech. The newly introduced seventh outcome centered on the eye contact of the speaker. The newly introduced eighth outcome analyzed the use of physical behaviors during a speech. These outcomes were added to give a more complete picture of student competence while giving a persuasive speech.

4. Per the evaluation rubric utilized at your institution, adapt the table below to record the results of the assessments of each learning outcome in the subject area discussed in the report. Below is an example of a table for oral communication. Revise the table to reflect the descriptors used at your institution. If you rephrased a TBR goal statement, type your institution's version below the corresponding TBR goal and within the same cell. If you addressed additional outcomes not included in the TBR list, create rows for them at the bottom of the table.

(See Table 1 on the Following Page)

Table 1. Oral Communication Competencies for 2019

ORAL PRESENTATION Rubric	Severely Deficient (1/A)	Inadequate (2/B)	Fair (3/C)	Good (4/D)	Excellent (5/E)
Outcome One: Within the opening segment of the speech the speaker meets the four criteria for an effective opening [1. the introduction gains the audience's attention; 2. the thesis / purpose statement is clear and concise, 3. the speaker addresses his/her credibility on the subject, and 4. the speaker clearly relates the topic to the members of the audience]; the opening segment is adequately developed.	Within the opening segment the speaker fails to meet all four criteria and/or the opening segment is missing.	Within the opening segment the speaker only meets two of the four criteria and/or the opening segment is severely under developed.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets three of the four criteria; and the opening segment lacks some development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all four criteria; the opening section may contain minor flaws in development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all four criteria; the opening segment is fully developed.
Outcome One (2018) $M = 3.64$ ($N = 323$) (2019) $M = 4.09$ ($N = 281$)	9 (2.8%) 2 (0.72%)	63 (19.5%) 14 (4.98%)	69 (21.4%) 48 (17.08%)	77 (23.8%) 107 (38.08%)	105 (32.5%) 110 (39.14%)
Outcome Two: The speaker uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the persuasive presentation, which may include one of the four patterns addressed in the Lucas text: problem-solution, problem-cause-solution, comparative advantages, or Monroe's Motivated Sequence.	The speech is clearly not persuasive and/or fails to effectively use a persuasive organizational pattern that is appropriate for the topic, and audience.	The speech is somewhat persuasive and/or the organizational pattern and expression of arguments are severely deficient [the organizational pattern is unclear and/or incomplete].	The speech is persuasive; the speaker uses an appropriate persuasive organizational pattern with some errors or omissions, and some arguments may be deficient	The speaker uses an appropriate persuasive organizational pattern. The organizational pattern is complete, and the speaker leaves the audience with a clear persuasive message or call to action.	The speech is clearly persuasive and the speaker presents an exceptionally clear and compelling argument or case. The organizational pattern is complete and the speaker leaves the audience with an undeniable message or call to action.
Outcome Two (2018) $M = 3.57$ ($N = 322$) (2019) $M = 4.25$ ($N = 276$)	19 (5.9%) 0 (0.00%)	45 (14.0%) 13 (4.71%)	75 (23.2%) 31 (11.23%)	101 (31.4%) 106 (38.41%)	82 (25.5%) 126 (45.65%)
Outcome Three: The speaker provides supporting material (*examples, statistics* and *testimony*) appropriate for a persuasive presentation; the quality and variety of support clearly enhances the credibility of the speech.	The speaker uses no supporting material.	The speaker's use of support material is lacking in variety, and/or is lacking in quality.	The speaker's use of support material is adequate but is somewhat deficient; may be lacking in quality or variety.	The speaker uses supporting material that is appropriate in quality and variety.	The speaker's use of support material is exceptional; utilizes all three kinds of support material. The quality and variety of support clearly enhances credibility of the speech.
Outcome Three (2018) $M = 3.63$ ($N = 323$)	6 (1.9%)	59 (18.3%)	80 (24.8%)	82 (25.3%)	96 (29.7%)

(2019) *M* = 4.26 (*N* = 282)	6 (2.13%)	13 (4.61%)	22 (7.80%)	103 (36.52%)	138 (48.94%)
Outcome Four: The speaker uses language appropriate to the audience and occasion. Additionally, the vocalics are suitable to the audience and occasion. Voice is conversational, is loud enough to be easily heard, and is energetic to maintain audience interest.	The speaker uses unclear language and/or uses jargon and/or slang that is inappropriate for a formal occasion and for the audience; the language is sexist, racist, non-inclusive, etc. Grammar and pronunciation are incorrect and/or distracting. The speaker fails to meet all vocalics factors.	The speaker uses unclear language and/or uses jargon and/or slang that is inappropriate for a formal occasion and/or distracts from the presentation. The language attempts to be persuasive but sounds more informative. Grammar, syntax, and diction are not effective. The speaker fails to meet two of the three vocalics factors.	The speaker uses language that is reasonably clear and appropriate for a formal occasion. The speaker uses an occasional slang expression or jargon, but such language is not distracting. The language is persuasive to an extent but borders on informative. Grammar, syntax, and diction are effective. The speaker meets all but one of the vocalics factors.	The speaker uses language that is clear, vivid, and appropriate. The presentation is devoid of inappropriate slang or jargon. Language is persuasive throughout the entire speech. Grammar, syntax, and diction are used to emphasize points. The speaker meets all three vocalics factors.	The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate. Language is persuasive throughout the entire speech. Grammar, syntax, and diction are used to emphasize points. The speaker uses rhythmic devices such as parallelism and/or repetition etc., to create an especially compelling and clear message. The speaker makes exceptional use of all vocalics factors.
Outcome Four (2018) *M* = 3.93 (*N* = 323) (2019) *M* = 4.12 (*N* = 282)	3 (0.9%) 0 (0.0%)	24 (7.4%) 9 (3.19%)	71 (22.0%) 61 (21.63%)	121 (37.5%) 97 (34.40%)	104 (32.2%) 115 (40.78%)
Outcome Five: The speaker demonstrates the ability to effectively utilize and document a variety of multiple, credible sources.	The speaker fails to include any source documentation in the presentation.	The speaker incorporates a few sources in the presentation, but the documentation is deficient [three or fewer sources cited]. Some sources do not appear credible and/or a variety of sources are not used.	The speaker incorporates a minimum of four sources in the presentation and the sources appear to be credible, but the documentation is deficient. Source credibility is not always established and/or a variety of sources are not used.	The speaker incorporates a minimum of five sources in the presentation; the sources appear to be credible, a variety of sources are utilized, and the source documentation is not deficient.	The speaker incorporates six or more sources in the presentation; the sources are clearly credible, a variety of sources are utilized, and the source documentation is not deficient.
Outcome Five (2018) *M* = 3.43 (*N* = 323) (2019) *M* = 4.02 (*N* = 281)	43 (13.3%) 13 (4.63%)	74 (22.9%) 25 (8.90%)	24 (7.40%) 21 (7.58%)	66 (20.4%) 102 (36.19%)	116 (35.9%) 120 (42.70%)

ORAL PRESENTATION Rubric	Severely Deficient (1/A)	Inadequate (2/B)	Fair (3/C)	Good (4/D)	Excellent (5/E)
Outcome Six: Within the closing segment of the speech, the speaker meets the three criteria for an effective ending [1. the speaker signals the end of the speech; 2. the thesis / purpose statement is clearly restated, 3. The speaker ends with a memorable message]; the closing segment is adequately developed.	Within the closing segment the speaker fails to meet all three criteria and/or the closing segment is missing.	Within the closing segment the speaker only meets one of the three criteria and/or the closing segment is severely under developed.	Within the closing segment the speaker meets two of the three criteria; and the closing segment lacks some development.	Within the closing segment the speaker meets all three criteria; the closing section may contain minor flaws in development.	Within the closing segment the speaker meets all three criteria; the opening segment is exceptionally developed.
Outcome Six (2018) *N/A* (2019) $M = 3.96$ ($N = 282$)	20 (7.09%)	9 (3.19%)	45 (15.96%)	96 (34.04%)	112 (39.72%)
Outcome Seven: The speaker maintains appropriate eye contact with the entire audience throughout the presentation.	The speaker fails to establish any eye contact with the audience; reads the presentation.	The speaker establishes minimal eye contact with the audience; eye contact is limited to one focal point.	The speaker establishes some eye contact with the audience; eye contact is limited to one or two focal points.	The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience; focal points are varied.	The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience, the focal points are varied and the speaker is intentional in establishing eye contact with the entire audience.
Outcome Seven (2018) *N/A* (2019) $M = 3.79$ ($N = 282$)	13 (4.61%)	28 (9.93%)	60 (21.28%)	83 (29.43%)	98 (34.75%)
Outcome Eight: The speaker uses physical behaviors (body movement, gestures and posture) that support the verbal message and enhance the speaker's appearance of confidence and competence.	The speaker uses almost no gestures and/or body movement during the presentation to support the verbal message. The speaker's posture significantly detracts from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.	The speaker uses very limited gestures and/or body movement during the presentation and/or the gestures do not support the verbal message. The speaker's posture detracts somewhat from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.	The speaker utilizes some body movement gestures to support the verbal message. The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a somewhat confident and competent speaker.	The speaker uses both body movement and gestures during the presentation to enhance the verbal message. The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.	The speaker uses both body movement and gestures during the presentation. The movement and gesture add significantly to the clarity and impact of the message and enhances the verbal message. The speaker uses posture that supports the verbal message and the speaker appears to be a strong, confident and competent speaker.
Outcome Eight (2018) *N/A* (2019) $M = 4.14$ ($N = 281$)	3 (1.07%)	14 (4.98%)	67 (23.85%)	55 (19.57%)	142 (50.53%)

*For the purpose of comparison, data from 2018 are presented in blue. Data from 2019 are presented in red.

5. Summarize your impressions of the results reported in item 4. Based upon your interpretation of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of the learning outcomes?

Data from the 2019 assessment which were reported in item 4 yielded a number of different interpretations and conclusions. The section that follows provides a breakdown for each outcome and concludes with overall interpretations and conclusions.

- **Outcome I**: The first outcome concentrated on the opening segment of a speech. Results indicated that 94.30% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher for the first outcome. More specifically, the findings revealed that 17.08% of students ($N = 48$) were evaluated as fair, 38.08% of students ($N = 107$) were evaluated as good, and 39.14% of students ($N = 110$) were evaluated as excellent. It was at the other end of the spectrum that 5.70% of students were evaluated as inadequate or severely deficient. An inadequate assessment was applied by evaluators to 4.98% of the student ($N = 14$) speeches and an assessment of severely deficient was applied by evaluators to 0.72% of the student ($N = 2$) speeches.

  - The results from Outcome I are very good. A statistically significant upward trend was observed on Outcome I in 2019 relative to the data that emerged on Outcome I in 2018 (t (602) = 5.274, $p < .001$). For example, it was in the 2018 assessment that 77.7% of the assessed speeches were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher whereas it was in the 2019 assessment that 94.3% of the assessed speeches were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. These results are encouraging. The most logical interpretation of these data is that our students are performing at a level that is slightly above the good category in the introduction of her/his persuasive speech. Seeing an increase in this category is a positive sign. However, that interpretation needs to be appropriately tempered as the increase was rather robust. It is unlikely that students improved the opening segment of her/his speech to this level in 2019 relative to 2018. A closer look at the data for the first outcome shows that mean scores increased from 3.59 in 2017, to 3.64 in 2018, and now to 4.10 in 2019. This sharp increase is likely due to the third evaluator being too lenient with her assessment of Outcome I during this academic year.

- **Outcome II:** The second outcome concentrated on using an organizational pattern that was persuasive in nature. Results indicated that 95.29% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher for the second outcome. That is, the findings from this analysis illustrated that 11.23% of students ($N = 31$) were evaluated as fair, while 38.41% of students ($N = 106$) were evaluated as good, and 45.65% of students ($N = 126$) were evaluated as excellent. In contrast, a total of 4.71% of students were evaluated as inadequate or severely deficient. The breakdown reveals that evaluators assigned the label of inadequate for Outcome II to 4.71% of the student ($N = 13$) speeches and an assessment of severely deficient was assigned by evaluators to 0.0% of the student ($N = 0$) speeches.

  - The results from Outcome II are outstanding. A statistical difference was observed on Outcome II in the 2019 assessment relative to the results for Outcome II in the 2018 assessment (t (597) = 8.094, $p < .001$). A closer examination of the data from the previous assessment for Outcome II demonstrated that 80.1% of students were evaluated as fair or higher in 2018 while the data from the current assessment for Outcome II demonstrated that 95.29% of students were evaluated as fair or higher in 2019. The current analysis also revealed that the 2019 overall mean score for this outcome ($M = 4.25$) was higher than the 2018 overall mean score for this outcome ($M = 3.57$). This noticeable increase in the overall mean score for Outcome II in 2019 can be interpreted as a function of amending and placing more specific language into this outcome which presently states "may include one of the four patterns addressed in the Lucas text: problem-solution, problem-cause-solution, comparative advantages, or Monroe's

Motivated Sequence." This specific language alteration to the second outcome provided students, instructors, and evaluators more clarity on what needed to occur for a grade of fair or higher to be awarded. In other words, scores increased because clearer expectations were put in place. In addition, having a third evaluator who gave an assessment record high mean score of 4.64 on this outcome also induced a positive spike in the data for this particular outcome.

- **Outcome III:** The third outcome for this study looked at the use of appropriate supporting materials. The findings for the third outcome indicated that 93.26% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. A further breakdown revealed that 7.80% of students ($N = 22$) were evaluated as fair, while 36.52% of the students ($N = 103$) were evaluated as good, and 48.94% of students ($N = 138$) were evaluated as excellent. Additional data for the third outcome found that 4.61% of students ($N = 13$) were evaluated as inadequate. A total of 2.13% of students ($N = 6$) were evaluated as severely deficient.

  - The findings from Outcome III are also good but also need to be tempered. The overall differences on Outcome III for 2018 when compared to Outcome III for 2017 were statistically significant (t (603) = 7.302, $p < .001$). A narrower result for the 2018 data on the third outcome found that 79.8% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher whereas the 2019 data for the third outcome found that 93.26% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. Interestingly, the percentage of students who were evaluated as excellent increased to 48.94% in 2019 whereas the percentage of students who were evaluated as excellent was 29.7% in 2018. There are two interpretations for this increase. First, evaluator three gave a mean score of 4.63 ($sd = 0.62$) on this outcome which was ridiculously higher than the mean score of 4.02 ($sd = 0.93$) which the other two evaluators assigned to this outcome. Second, an information literacy librarian (Jason Vance) came to speak to COMM 2200 instructors about improving scores on this outcome during the Spring of 2019 semester. Moreover, improving scores on outcome 3 and outcome 5 (which also centered on supporting materials) were again points of emphasis during the 2018-2019 year and likely contributed to the increase on these supporting materials outcomes. Taken together, having a librarian discuss these outcomes with instructors of COMM 2200 coupled with an evaluator who assessed on the high end led to this statistically significant increase for Outcome III.

- **Outcome IV:** The fourth outcome for this study looked at language features such as appropriate grammar, diction, and syntax. It was on the fourth outcome that the emergent data indicated that 96.81% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. The specifics for the fourth outcome illustrated that 21.63% of students ($N = 61$) were evaluated as fair, while 34.40% of the students ($N = 97$) were evaluated as good, and 40.78% of students ($N = 115$) were evaluated as excellent. The findings also revealed that 3.19% of students were evaluated as inadequate or lower. Specifically, 3.19% of students ($N = 9$) were evaluated as inadequate and 0.0% of students ($N = 0$) were evaluated as severely deficient.

  - The results from Outcome IV are not surprising. Findings that were statistically significant were found when the 2019 data were compared against the 2018 data for the fourth outcome (t (603) = 2.712, $p = .007$). Further comparisons between the 2018 assessment data for the fourth outcome and the 2019 assessment data for the fourth outcome highlight a slight increase in that 91.7% of students were evaluated as fair or higher during the 2018 assessment whereas 96.81% of students were evaluated as fair or higher during the 2019 assessment. As stated previously, the high scores that continue to be procured on this outcome are likely tied to the notion that this outcome is the least rigorous of all of the outcomes. An interpretation of the finding is that utilizing polite and

normal everyday language that is not offensive is sufficient enough to secure an evaluation of fair on this particular outcome. A rating of severely deficient is only applicable to students who make a conscious effort to utilize inappropriate or offensive language which rarely occurs in assessment. All things considered, the evaluated students performed very well on this outcome.

- **Outcome V:** The fifth outcome for the oral communication assessment focused on gathering and using multiple sources. Results indicated that 86.47% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. A further rundown for the fifth outcome revealed that 7.58% of students ($N = 21$) were evaluated as fair, while 36.19% of students ($N = 102$) were evaluated as good, and 42.70% of students ($N = 120$) were evaluated as excellent. At the same time, the evaluators found that 13.53% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 8.90% of students ($N = 25$) as inadequate and evaluated 4.63% of students ($N = 13$) as severely deficient.

  o The findings on Outcome V show a positive trend in the data. It was in the present analysis that comparing the observed data on the fifth outcome in 2019 against the observed data on the fifth outcome in 2018 revealed a statistical difference existed between these two years (t (603) = 5.419, $p < .001$). A closer inspection of the 2018 data for the fifth outcome revealed that 63.3% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher whereas the 2019 data for the fifth outcome revealed that 86.47% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. As alluded to previously, having a reference librarian who specializes in information literacy speak during a Spring of 2019 meeting for COMM 2200 instructors benefitted scores on this outcome. Instructors of COMM 2200 were encouraged to use librarian led instruction sessions more this year than in the previous three years. Most instructors of COMM 2200 made use of the COMM 22000 resources packet of the James E. Walker Library or elected to have one of their class sessions be led by a librarian of the James E. Walker Library. This increase on the fifth outcome appears to reflects a real trend in the data (as the mean score for the more rigorous evaluators in the 2019 assessment was a 3.85). In short, the observed increase for the fifth outcome indicates that a robust number of students are doing excellent in terms of using an appropriate number of credible sources.

- **Outcome VI:** The sixth outcome for the oral communication assessment focused on the closing segment of a speech. This was the first year that this particular outcome was added to our evaluation. Results indicated that 89.72% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. A further rundown for the sixth outcome revealed that 15.96% of students ($N = 45$) were evaluated as fair, while 34.04% of students ($N = 96$) were evaluated as good, and 39.72% of students ($N = 112$) were evaluated as excellent. At the same time, the evaluators found that 10.28% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 3.19% of speeches ($N = 9$) as inadequate and evaluated 7.09% of speeches ($N = 20$) as severely deficient.

  o The findings on Outcome VI are positive as well. However, there is no formal point of comparison for the sixth outcome since the 2018-2019 academic year was the first year in which this outcome was incorporated into our evaluative rubric. The revelation that 89.72% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher would probably not be of surprise to the communication instructors who teach multiple section of COMM 2200 in any given semester. The first two items noted in this outcome center on (a) the speaker signaling the end of her speech (e.g., saying "in conclusion") and (b) a restatement of ideas or summary. It could be argued that most novice speakers (regardless of whether they have completed a class on public speaking) know to say "in conclusion," "in closing," "to conclude," and the like as a means to telegraph that her/his speech is about to end. Similarly, an average amount of novice speakers are cognizant that a conclusion should feature some type of a summary. Students being formally educated on

what should be done in a speech conclusion coupled with students observing the speeches of their fellow classmates (before being evaluated for this assessment) makes it not surprising that almost 90.0% of students were graded at a level of fair or higher.

- **Outcome VII:** The fifth outcome for the oral communication assessment concentrated on appropriate eye contact. Results indicated that 85.46% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. More specifically, the findings for the seventh outcome indicated that 21.28% of students ($N = 60$) were evaluated as fair, while 29.43% of students ($N = 83$) were evaluated as good, and 34.75% of students ($N = 98$) were evaluated as excellent. In contrast, the 2019 evaluators found that 14.54% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 9.93% of students ($N = 28$) as inadequate and evaluated 4.61% of students ($N = 13$) as severely deficient.

    o The findings on Outcome VII are okay despite there being no true point of comparison. It should however be noted that the mean score on this outcome was the lowest of the eight outcomes that were evaluated in the 2019 assessment of oral communication. This is probably the most difficult and subjective outcome for our evaluators to assess. Centering in on the eyes of a speaker to look for multiple focal points while concurrently noting other observations is a challenging endeavor for our evaluators. There is a tendency to judge eye contact based on the length of eye contact and judge less on the ability of the speaker to make eye contact with various parts of the room (even though both elements are noted in our rubric). The duality of this outcome was emphasized during the training of evaluators but it needs to be re-emphasized again in this coming year (despite the mean score on this outcome being at a grade that was above fair). One simple reason why the score on this outcome was the lowest is because increased familiarity with speech content allows for better eye contact. Students have to give four speeches to fulfill the minimum requirements for COMM 2200. The persuasive speech is usually the last (or second to last) speech in most sections of COMM 2200. It is often the longest speech in terms of the minimum speaking time. It is not atypical for students to give a 6-8 informative speech at the beginning of March and then give a 6-8 minute persuasive speech at the end of March. This leaves a limited amount of time for students to research, effectively organize, and present from one speech to the next. It is conceivable that some students place more emphasis on securing the structural components of a speech (since that needs to be completed first) and place less emphasis on rehearsing the content beforehand (which allows for students to hold more eye contact) because they have a limited window of time to work in between speeches. This is the nature of public speaking being taught in a 16-week window. Yet, teaching students on how to more effectively maintain appropriate eye contact will need to be a point of emphasis for the 2019-2020 academic year.

- **Outcome VIII:** The eighth outcome for the oral communication assessment broadly looked at nonverbal communication during a persuasive speech. Results indicated that 93.95% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. Findings for the eighth outcome revealed that 23.85% of students ($N = 67$) were evaluated as fair, while 19.57% of students ($N = 55$) were evaluated as good, and 50.53% of students ($N = 142$) were evaluated as excellent. At the same time, the evaluators found that 6.05% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 4.98% of students ($N = 14$) as inadequate and evaluated 1.07% of students ($N = 3$) as severely deficient.

    o The findings on Outcome VIII are also pretty good. The 2018-2019 academic year was also the first year that this particular outcome was included in the oral communication rubric. It is encouraging to see a mean score of 4.14 on this outcome since body movements and gestures are not a major focus in the COMM 2200 course textbook

relative to some of the other concepts that have been highlighted in this report. The 4.14 mean score is perhaps indicative of our instructors effectively lecturing on the use of effective physical behaviors (e.g., posture, hand movements) in class. The rubric is currently written in a capacity that places good posture at a premium. Having good posture was perhaps over weighted based on the current description while more of the discussion for this rubric should look at other physical gestures. Nevertheless, the findings on this eighth outcome were above satisfactory.

Overall Interpretation and Analysis

The overall analysis of the emergent data for the 2019 oral communication competency assessment is very good. Increases from the previous year were observed on all five of the assessment outcomes. Furthermore, the mean scores for the 3 new outcomes were all above the mid-point. Please find the following paragraphs appropriately discuss overall and broader interpretations of the emergent data.

There are three overall interpretations on why the 2019 oral communication outcome data improved and they need to be noted in context. First, one reason why the overall data improved in 2019 relative to 2018 is because evaluator three had a mean evaluation of 4.53 across all eight outcomes (whereas the mean evaluation was 3.79 across all eight outcomes for the other two evaluators). Evaluator three also assessed the most speeches ($N = 102$) followed by the 94 speeches that were assessed by evaluator one and the 85 speeches that were assessed by evaluator two. The excessively high evaluations that were given by evaluator three skewed the data upward. Indeed, it is conceivable that the students assessed by evaluator three just performed better than the student speeches which were assessed by the other two evaluators. However, that is not likely to be the case in this particular scenario. The mean evaluation of 4.53 by evaluator three for the 2019 assessment is the highest cumulative mean score given by any evaluator over the last three assessments of COMM 2200 which spanned from the 2016-2017 academic year through the 2018-2019 academic year. The excessively high evaluations could be a function of poor training, a general disinterest by this evaluator, or a socio-cultural pressure to favorably evaluate colleagues who were of a higher job grade. It is notable to mention that evaluator three was an adjunct employee who evaluated colleagues whose job grade ranged from full time instructor to full professor. It also needs to be noted that evaluator three received the same training as every other evaluator ($N = 7$) who served on this project for the last 3 years. All things considered, the most logical interpretation based on the observations of the author of this report is that the third evaluator took a cavalier approach to rigorous evaluation which caused a spike in the overall data.

A second overall interpretation as to why the assessment data increased is because a partnership was formed with the James E. Walker Library to improve information literacy efforts amongst the student population at MTSU. One outcome of this partnership was that an information literacy librarian (Jason Vance) of the James E. Walker Library spoke at the COMM 2200 meeting in January of 2019 as was previously noted. It was during this presentation that Jason highlighted new library resources that would assist students with finding credible sources for her/his speech. The overview of library supporting materials to assist students with the research component of her/his speech served as a refresher for our returning faculty. More importantly, this overview of library resources was beneficial for the three new tenure track instructors, two new full-time instructors, and two new adjunct instructors who taught the course of COMM 2200 for the first time in the Department of Communication Studies during the 2018-2019 academic year. A secondary outcome of this partnership was that instructors were encouraged to either (a) attend a librarian led instruction session at the James E. Walker Library or (b) teach supporting materials in class per the "library built instructional PowerPoint Option" of the James E. Walker Library. A total of 14 out of the 21 instructors who taught at least one section of COMM 2200 during the

Spring of 2019 semester elected to use either one (or both) of these resources. The utilization of one or both of these James E. Walker Library resources by the instructors of COMM 2200 caused an upward spike in the mean for Outcome III and Outcome V which both center on supporting materials. Collectively, a second overall interpretation of that data is that (a) having an information literacy librarian personally speak to COMM 2200 instructors benefitted student scores on the supporting materials outcomes and (b) instructors of COMM 2200 made good use of the library resource materials which helped improved scores on the supporting materials outcomes for this most recent academic year.

A third overall interpretation is that student performance on the newly introduced 2019 outcomes for oral communication competence were good. These three outcomes were not added to our rubric at the last minute but they were certainly not a point of emphasis beyond 20 minutes of surface level discussion at a meeting. It is difficult to conclusively interpret why good scores emerged on these three eclectic outcomes (i.e., concluding a speech, having good eye contact, employing nonverbal behaviors that enhance the speech). The good scores on these outcomes are at least partially tied to evaluator three assessing speeches in a less critical manner. That noted, the good scores on eye contact and effective nonverbal communication can perhaps be traced back to some of our more established instructors emphasizing the performance aspect of a speech (as our department used to be housed in the Department of Speech and Theatre). These are both speculative conclusions. More points of comparison are needed on these three new outcomes in order to offer a sounder interpretation of the emergent scores on these newly introduced outcomes.

6. Do you plan to implement strategies to correct any deficiencies that emerged from the data obtained? If yes, please explain.

The main strategy that will be incorporated will be to make a concerted effort to find a new individual to serve in the role of evaluator three. It is the opinion of the author of this report that having a better third evaluator is the most notable deficiency in the obtained data. Along a related line, the assessment of oral communication outcomes for the course of COMM 2200 would be benefitted if the same evaluators were used from year to year. This would bring a degree of consistency to the assessment process. The 2018-2019 academic year was perhaps an anomaly as there was a complete turnover of evaluators from the year prior. All in all, the main deficiency from the data was that evaluator three tended to assess scores that were disproportionately high.

Another strategy that will be incorporated in the 2019-2020 academic year will be to make eye contact a point of emphasis in the upcoming year. The mean score on this outcome of 3.79 was closer to a rating of good than fair. That is a high mean score. Nonetheless, it was the lowest rated outcome within the 2018-2019 assessment of oral communication. The outcome for appropriate eye contact is arguably the most subjective of the outcomes listed. Altering the rubric to quantify what appropriate eye contact looks like (e.g., hold eye contact for intervals of 5-8 seconds) would at least assist with standardizing this criterion and perhaps give students a more concrete and quantitatively-grounded vision of how much eye contact is appropriate. Instructors of COMM 2200 will be informed to tell their students that focal points should be varied and that they should hold eye contact for minimum intervals of 5-8 seconds in their persuasive speeches.

An additional (and recurring) strategy that would help correct deficiencies as it pertains to any outcomes which had ratings of inadequate or severely deficient in 2019 would be to establish a speaking center on campus. This has been noted in previous reports and should continue to be noted. Unfortunately, this is not likely to transpire in the foreseeable future but the notion of re-establishing a speaking center on campus is being mentioned within the current document in order to keep it on the academic radar for the larger campus community. The benefits of an on-

ground speaking center in terms of oral communication competence have been well documented in previous scholarship (see Yook & Atkins-Sayre, 2012). Tutoring students at a speaking center on campus would offer more individualized and personalized assistance to students who are struggling. A speaking center would also be a good resource for students to be tutored on how to secure the appropriate quality and quantity of sources for her or his speech. Students who are trending towards being inadequate or severely deficient for any outcome could be guided towards the speaking center early in the semester and prior to being assessed for oral communication competence. Class incentives (i.e., extra credit) for visiting the speaking center could also move the dial upward upward in terms of improving scores on the eight outcomes that are represented within the oral communication assessment.

7. Have you implemented any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from previous assessments?

The answer to this question is yes. One of the deficiencies that was noted in the 2018 general education oral communication competency assessment report was the lagging scores on Outcome III and Outcome V which both look at supporting materials. The following was noted in the report from last year via the statement "a reference librarian will be scheduled to attend a meeting for COMM 2200 instructors in the Spring of 2019 semester in order to keep our educators familiar with library resources and supporting materials. Potentially implementing this idea has been an ongoing topic of discussion with Jason Vance who oversees information literacy at the James Walker Library." This plan was implemented and increases were observed on both Outcome III and Outcome V.

The second deficiency that was corrected based on previous assessments was to alter the rubric that is being used to assess oral communication outcomes. As noted in the previous report: "the rubric that was utilized in the 2018 assessment was based on TBR requirements. These old TBR requirements are not favorably written when it comes to effectively measuring competence in oral communication. For example, the 2018 assessment rubric does not feature an outcome that focuses on the concluding elements of a speech (e.g., the speaker prepared the audience for the end of the speech, the speaker effectively summarized her or his main points, the speaker provided closure, etc.). This is problematic. As the divorce from TBR continues to become finalized, it would make sense to add a sixth outcome that concentrates on how effectively (or ineffectively) a speaker ends her or his speech." This plan for altering the assessment rubric was also implemented. New outcomes that are specific to public speaking were included in the 2019 assessment. In summation, the findings from the 2019 oral communication competency assessment report (a) suggest greater care needs to be exhibited in evaluator selection and (b) illustrate that MTSU students are performing well on all eight outcomes that examine oral communication competence.

References

Frey, L., Botan, C., & Kreps, G. (2000). *Investigating communication: An introduction to research methods* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Yook, E, & Atkins-Sayre, W. (2012). *Communication centers and oral communication programs in higher education: Advantages, challenges, and new directions*. Lexington Books, Lanham, MD.

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes
Subject Area: Mathematics
Academic Year: 2018-2019

1. Identify the course(s) used in the assessment. Include the prefix, number, and title of each course.

    ● MATH 1710 – College Algebra

    ● MATH 1710K – College Algebra

2. Indicate the number of students who were assessed.   Was sampling used? If yes, briefly describe the method of selecting student work and the percentage of students whose work was assessed.

    ● A total of 1882 students were assessed in the academic year (1,353 in fall 2018 and 529 in spring 2019). Results of all students who took the departmental final examination were used in the assessment.

3. Do the procedures described in Items 1 and 2 represent any significant change from previous assessments? If so, describe the changes and rationale.

    ● Reports for academic years 2015-2017 did not include distance and dual enrollment sections. Academic year 2017-2019 shows results for both distance and dual enrollment as well as results that include distance and dual enrollment sections. The procedures used are the same as used in the 2015 – 2017 reports. Each of the five learning outcomes for mathematics is associated with a specific set of questions on the final examination— 40 questions for learning outcome 1; 16 questions for each of learning outcomes 2, 3, and 4; and 12 questions for learning outcome 5.

The same set of questions was used to assess both Learning Outcome 2 (real-life problems) and Learning Outcome 3 (meaningful connections), as the distinction between these two learning outcomes was too subtle to measure with a single examination.

A correct response rate of:

    ● At least 85% is deemed superior,

    ● Between 60% and 84%, inclusive, is deemed satisfactory, and

    ● Less than 60% is deemed unsatisfactory.

Mathematics Learning Outcome to be Assessed	Test Used	Test Item Numbers
Learning Outcome 1: Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions ALL (1-40)
Learning Outcome 2: Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions (total = 16) 2,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,19,21,22,25
Learning Outcome 3: Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions (total = 16) 2,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,19,21,22,25
Learning Outcome 4: Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions (total = 16) 4,6,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,19,21,25,28,36
Learning Outcome 5: Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions (total = 12) 7,13,15,17,20,26,32,33,34,36,37,40

4. Per the evaluation rubric utilized at your institution, adapt the table below to record the results of the assessments of each learning outcome in the subject area discussed in the report. <u>Revise the table to reflect the descriptors used at your institution.</u> The table shows Mathematics Learning Outcomes that include distance and dual enrollment sections.

Mathematics Learning Outcomes, Academic Year 2018-19 **N = 1,882**					
Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed		Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
		# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.		n=376 (20.0%)	n=1078 (57.3%)	n=1454 (77.3%)	n=428 (22.7%)
2. Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.		n=418 (22.2%)	n=1081 (57.4%)	n=1499 (79.6%)	n=383 (20.4%)
3. Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.		n=418 (22.2%)	n=1081 (57.4%)	n=1499 (79.6%)	n=383 (20.4%)
4. Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.		n=588 (31.3%)	n=1009 (53.6%)	n=1597 (84.9%)	n=285 (15.1%)
5. Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.		n=717 (38.1%)	n=930 (49.4%)	n=1647 (87.5%)	n=235 (12.5%)

5. Summarize your impressions of the results reported in item 4. Based upon your interpretation of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of the learning outcomes?

Table 1 below shows results of AY 2018-2019 for percentages of unsatisfactory responses on each of the five mathematics learning outcomes compared to data from three previous academic years where distance and dual enrollment sections are included.

Mathematics Learning Outcomes	% Unsatisfactory AY 2015-2016	% Unsatisfactory AY 2016-2017	% Unsatisfactory AY 2017-2018	% Unsatisfactory AY 2018-2019
Outcome 1	28.9	26.5	19.7	22.7
Outcome 2	34.6	35.4	20.6	20.4
Outcome 3	34.6	35.4	20.6	20.4
Outcome 4	31.3	26.7	14.5	15.1
Outcome 5	18.6	17.5	10.4	12.5

Analyzing the data, we found a slight improvement in the percentage of students performing at the unsatisfactory rate for Learning Outcomes 2 and 3 over the Academic Year 2017 – 2018. These two outcomes have in the past showed the highest unsatisfactory rates. The remaining three outcomes, 1, 4 and 5, show a slight increase in the number of students performing at the unsatisfactory rate. Overall, we are seeing a continued improvement in the percentage of students performing at the unsatisfactory rate for all Learning Outcomes over the past two years.

Some possible explanations include increased tutoring opportunities, a revision of the previous final exam to address faulty questions, a change in the ACT scores of students enrolling in the course, and the implications of including distance and dual enrollment data.

Students are placed in K-sections (prescribed enhanced sections) based on a Math ACT score of 17 or 18, and students are placed in non-K-sections with a Math ACT score of 19 or better. This assessment combines the results of all students (both K- and non-K-sections), so that the average math ACT score of the student population in MATH 1710 is certainly less than the ACT Test Benchmark of 22 set as the benchmark for "a high probability of success" in College Algebra (http://www.act.org/research). Less than one-quarter of College Algebra students present an ACT Math score as high as 22.

Extra support for students enrolled in K-sections includes the tenured and tenure-track faculty from University Studies who consistently teach the majority of the K-sections of MATH 1710. These students also receive extra time each week for classroom instruction, as well as the use of online programs to supplement with helping students to be more consistent in completing homework assignments. These efforts have been successful as

indicated by studies consistently showing no significant difference in the final examination results when K- and non-K-sections are compared.

6. Do you plan to implement strategies to correct any deficiencies that emerged from the data obtained? If yes, please explain.

Several strategies have been taken to provide a more consistent program for general education courses—

- The Committee created common departmental syllabi and common course schedules listing topics to cover for all instructors of MATH 1710 (also for MATH 1010, MATH 1530, MATH 1630, & MATH 1810).

- All faculty members are instructed to keep accurate attendance records on each student to document D-F-W grades and to encourage students to attend classes.

- Faculty members are instructed to utilize the University's Academic Alert System early and throughout the semester to notify students who are in academic jeopardy.

- Students are encouraged to use all available resources to receive tutoring and help with classwork. The syllabus includes link to Tutoring Center in James Walker Library.

- The department's MS GTAs are currently supervised by Dr. Rebecca Calahan. In supervising the teaching assistants, Dr. Calahan provides teaching mentoring, help with instructional practices, scheduling of workloads, and oversight of University and Departmental requirements in the programs of the graduate students.

- Fewer than one-quarter of College Algebra students present an ACT Math score as high as 22, the ACT College Readiness Benchmark for a 75% chance of passing College Algebra with a *C* or better.

- In the Department of Mathematical Sciences, College Algebra is taught almost entirely by full-time temporary instructors, adjunct instructors, and GTAs.

  - ❖ In F2018, 54 sections were taught (24 K-sections and 30 non K-sections). One of the 24 K-sections was distance. One of the 30 non K-sections was distance and 5 were dual enrollment. The K-sections were taught by 10 different instructors with 3 of them tenured. The non K-sections were taught by 18 different instructors with only 1 by a tenured MTSU faculty.

  - ❖ In S2019, 30 sections were taught (17 K sections and 13 non K sections). One of the 17 K-sections was distance. two of the 13 non K-sections were distance and 2 were dual enrollment. The K-sections were taught by 9 different instructors with 2 of them tenured. The non K-sections were taught by 8 different instructors with only no tenured MTSU faculty.

- Because of an inherently higher turn-over rate for adjunct and temporary, the Department continues to request more tenure-track faculty lines to meet the needs of the student population enrolling in MATH 1710 to satisfy general education requirements.

7. Did you implement any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from previous assessments? If yes, please explain.

- In order to insure greater uniformity in syllabi, grading, and learning expectations, all instructors are now required to have common information on syllabi and to use the same grading scale ranges.

- A significant and continuing goal of the Department is to develop course communities, also called professional communities, of faculty for its Gen Ed courses. MATH 1530 and MATH 1810 are examples of courses that have formed these communities where faculty teaching the courses meet on a regular basis to share and plan for ways to improve student learning in these courses.

- The Department of Mathematical Sciences and the Department of University Studies both continue to provide free tutoring to students in all General Education Mathematics courses. In support of the University's Quest for Student Success, last spring the General Education tutoring operation for MATH 1010, 1410, 1420, 1530, 1630, and 1710 was relocated to the Walker Library, extending tutoring services into the evening and weekend hours. The Mathematics Department continues to offer tutoring in Calculus and Pre-calculus in KOM. The University Studies Department offers tutoring for MATH 1010-K, 1710-K, and 1530-K in the KOM building.

  University Studies offers a program called Academic Intervention in Mathematics (AIM) to promote success for those highly at-risk students who are repeating prescribed General Education mathematics courses. AIM targets students who have failed the course in which they are enrolled. These at-risk students are identified for each instructor at the beginning of the semester. The instructor meets with each student periodically to advise, to encourage, to teach study skills, and to individualize other interventions. Interventions may include assignments of time to be spent in the math lab, notebook checks, or written assignments. Simply meeting with students to show concern for them and to build relationships with them is a proven retention tool. Students are encouraged to meet with instructors during office hours. Instructors also use phone calls, emails, and Advisor Alerts to contact students who are not attending class. It is obvious that this type of intervention would be helpful to other students, so instructors intervene when any student is not progressing well. Any intervention that is designed for repeating students is also available to non-repeaters. For students who have missed a class or for tutors who might need to review some course topic(s), videos from the online 1710K are made available for viewing with all students and all faculty given access.

- In order to identify actions and strategies to improve student achievement, assessment results are provided and shared with faculty in Mathematical Sciences, faculty in University Studies, and members of the Mathematics General Education Committee.

Greetings All,

The table below shows results of AY 2018-2019 for percentages of unsatisfactory responses on each of the five General Education Learning Outcomes compared to data from three previous academic years:

TBR Mathematics Learning Outcomes	% Unsatisfactory AY 2015-2016	% Unsatisfactory AY 2016-2017	% Unsatisfactory AY 2017-2018	% Unsatisfactory AY 2018-2019
Outcome 1	28.9%	26.5	19.7	22.7
Outcome 2	34.6%	35.4	20.6	20.4
Outcome 3	34.6%	35.4	20.6	20.4
Outcome 4	31.3%	26.7	14.5	15.1
Outcome 5	18.6%	17.5	10.4	12.5

A correct response rate of less than 60% is deemed unsatisfactory. Learning Outcome1 has the highest unsatisfactory response rate. All questions on the course review address this learning outcome.

Here is a link to the course review https://mtsu.edu/math/1710-Course-Review-F18.pdf

Mathematics Learning Outcome to be Assessed
Learning Outcome 1: *Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.*
Learning Outcome 2: *Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.*
Learning Outcome 3: *Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.*
Learning Outcome 4: *Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.*
Learning Outcome 5: *Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.*

Please let me know if you have ideas on how we can improve on this Learning Outcome.

MTSU Department of English
General Education Writing Outcomes Assessment

ENGL 1010 Outcomes Assessment Report
AY 2018-2019

Assessment Coordinator: Aleka Blackwell, aleka.blackwell@mtsu.edu

This report presents the results of Outcomes Assessment performed in AY 2018-2019 and AY 2019-2020 for ENGL 1010 Literacy for Life. The results are based on an evaluation of a portfolio of writing samples completed by a sample of 110 students enrolled in ENGL 1010 in Fall 2018 and a sample of 114 students enrolled in ENGL 1010 in Fall 2019. The writing samples were evaluated in terms of 11 outcomes on a scale of 1-5 by two trained readers whose scores were averaged.

****

NOTES:

1. Students were randomly selected from a variety of sections of ENGL 1010 taught by 57 different faculty members in fall 2019 and 59 different faculty members in fall 2018.

2. Three or more writing samples were collected from each student as there is no single end-of-semester comparable writing task that all students complete in ENGL 1010. Readers were instructed to examine the submissions for evidence of performance for each outcome/course objective listed and to score it based on the highest level of achievement reflected in at least one of the writing samples.

3. **Scoring Scale Descriptors** (readers chose their preferred descriptor)

Undeveloped *Insufficient* (1)	Developing *Beginning* (2)	Competent *Satisfactory* (3)	Mature *Strong* (4)	Exemplary *Very Strong* (5)

4. The 2019 readers were Eric Carpenter, Pam Davis, Martha Hixon, Robert Lawrence, Alyson Lynn, Bronson Mahrt, Cindy McCain, Shelia McGhee, Adam McInturff, Aaron Shapiro, Savanna Teague, Matt Zumwalt. The 2018 readers were Pam Davis, Laney Jolley, Jennifer Kates, Alyson Lynn, Shelia McGhee, Adam McInturff, Candie Moonshower, Zabby Myers, Bob Petersen, Aaron Shapiro, Savanna Teague, Matt Zumwalt. The results were analyzed and are reported by Aleka Blackwell.

5. Significant differences are marked by asterisks. They reflect t-test comparisons between the specialized sections and the regular1010 sections. * = significant at the .05 level. ** = significant at the .01 level. *** = significant at the .001 level. **** = significant at the .0001 level.

This course objective was evaluated in terms of the three following specific areas of performance. Evaluators scored each of these 3 items based on the writing sample within the portfolio which reflected the highest level of competence achieved by the student for the particular item. The scores, therefore, reflect the upper limits of performance in each of these areas for each portfolio in the sample. Evaluators could, therefore, rely on a different submission within the portfolio when scoring items 1-3.

1. The student's writing demonstrates awareness of **purpose**. (*A central idea and a clarity of purpose are exhibited throughout the writing sample.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	N	Mean	Range	N	Mean	N
ENGL 1010	3.625	2.5 – 5	69	3.34	2 – 5	37	3.5	106
ENGL 1010 Online	5	5 – 5	3	3.85	3 – 5	15	4**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.75	3.5 – 4	6	3.69	3 – 4.5	8	3.7	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.27	2 – 4	15	3.4	2.5 – 4.5	20	3.4	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3.5	NA	1	3.5	1.5 – 4	5	3.5	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.375	2.5 – 4.5	4	3	NA	1	3.3	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.33	2.5 – 4	12	3.1	2 - 5	26	3.2**	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.875	2.5 – 3.25	2	2.9	2
Full Sample	**3.57**	**2 – 5**	**110**	**3.38**	**1.5 – 5**	**114**	**3.47**	**232**

2. The student's writing demonstrates awareness of **audience**. (*The writer appeals to a particular audience by choosing and maintaining a voice which reflects an understanding of the needs and/or biases of that specific audience.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	N	Mean	Range	N	Mean	N
ENGL 1010	3.36	2 – 4.5	69	3	1.5 – 5	37	3.25	106
ENGL 1010 Online	5	5 – 5	3	3.6	3 – 4.5	15	3.8**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.75	3.5 – 4	6	3.44	3 – 4	8	3.6	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.07	2 – 3.5	15	3	2 – 4	20	3.1	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	2.5	NA	1	3.3	1.5 – 4	5	3.3	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.125	2.5 – 4	4	3.5	NA	1	3.1	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.25	2 – 4	12	2.94	1.5 – 4	26	3	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.38	2 – 2.75	2	2.4	2
Full Sample	**3.57**	**2 – 5**	**110**	**3.38**	**1.5 – 5**	**114**	**3.23**	**232**

3. The student's writing reflects awareness of **rhetorical choices**. (*The writer employs modes of persuasion and/or rhetorical devices appropriate to the rhetorical situation.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.28	2 – 5	69	3	1.5 – 4	37	3.15	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.83	4.5 – 5	3	3.52	2.5 – 4	15	3.7**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.83	3.5 – 4.5	6	3.19	2.5 – 4	8	3.5	14
ENGL 1010 K	2.97	1.5 – 3.5	15	2.94	2 – 4	20	3	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3	NA	1	3.3	1.5 – 4	5	3.3	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.125	2 – 4	4	4	NA	1	3.25	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.17	2.5 – 4	12	2.89	1.5 - 5	26	3	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.5	2 – 2.75	2	2.5	2
Full Sample	**3.29**	**1.5 – 5**	**110**	**3.06**	**1.5 – 5**	**114**	**3.14**	**232**

B. Develop genre awareness and practice genre analysis.

Evaluators scored this course objective based on the whole portfolio. The scores represent the extent to which the portfolios in the sample reflect an understanding of genre-specific conventions for at least two genres.

4. The student's portfolio demonstrates **genre awareness**. (*The student analyzes and/or attempts to write in a variety of genres.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.45	2 – 5	69	3.15	1.5 – 4.5	37	3.3	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.83	4.5 – 5	3	3.58	2 – 4.5	15	3.8*	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.83	3 – 4.5	6	2.75	2 – 4	8	3.2	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.1	1 – 4	15	3.3	2.25 – 4.5	20	3.2	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3	NA	1	3.1	1.5 – 4	5	3.1	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.125	2.5 – 4.5	4	3	NA	1	3.1	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.04	2.5 – 4	12	2.865	1.5 – 4.5	26	2.9**	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.875	2.25 – 3.5	2	2.9	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.13**	**1.5 – 4.5**	**114**	**3.24**	**232**

C. Conduct primary research.

Evaluators scored this course objective based on the whole portfolio.

5. The student conducts and incorporates **primary research**. (*The score reflects a student's ability to conduct relevant primary research and to incorporate primary research in his/her writing. Primary research is information collected by the student by means of interviews, observations, surveys, analyses of trends, etc.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.42	2 – 5	69	3.05	1.5 – 4	37	3.3	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.83	4.5 – 5	3	3.52	1 – 5	15	3.7*	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.75	3 – 4.5	6	3.38	2.5 – 4	8	3.5	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.33	1 – 4	15	3.27	1.5 – 4.5	20	3.25	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3.5	NA	1	2.5	1 – 3	5	2.5	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.375	2 – 4.5	4	3	NA	1	3.3	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.29	2.5 – 4	12	2.41	1 – 5	26	2.7***	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.25	2 – 2.5	2	2.25	2
Full Sample	**3.45**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**2.99**	**1 – 5**	**114**	**3.2**	**232**

D. Make appropriate decisions about form and presentation.

Evaluators scored this course objective based on the whole portfolio.

6. Student's writing reflects assignment-appropriate **formatting** and **presentation**.

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.44	2 – 5	69	3.16	1 – 4.5	37	3.3	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.5	4 – 5	3	3.63	2 – 5	15	3.8*	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.25	1 – 4	6	3.69	2.5 – 4.5	8	3.5	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.17	2 – 4	15	3.35	2.25 – 4.5	20	3.2	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3.5	NA	1	3.6	2 – 4.5	5	3.6	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.25	3 – 4	4	3	NA	1	3.25	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.46	2.5 – 4	12	2.84	1.5 – 4	26	3*	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.5	2 – 3	2	2.5	2
Full Sample	**3.45**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.23**	**1 – 5**	**114**	**3.28**	**232**

E. General Writing Skills.

When scoring the following items, evaluators were asked to weigh the writing sample submitted closest to the end of the semester more heavily in their scoring.

7. Student's writing demonstrates control of **paragraph structure**. (*The student's writing reflects paragraph unity and coherence.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.4	2 – 5	69	3.13	1.5 – 5	37	3.3	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.83	4.5 – 5	3	3.65	2.75 – 5	15	3.85**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	4	3.5 – 5	6	3.25	2.5 – 4	8	3.6	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.27	1.5 – 4	15	3.15	2.5 – 4	20	3.2	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	2.5	NA	1	3.1	1.5 – 4	5	3.1	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.625	2.5 – 5	4	3	NA	1	3.3	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	2.875	2 – 3.5	12	3	1.5 – 5	26	2.96**	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.5	2.5 – 2.5	2	2.5	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.17**	**1.5 – 5**	**114**	**3.265**	**232**

8. Student's writing demonstrates control of **document-level structure**. (*The student's writing reflects an effective organization, including introductions and conclusions, appropriate to the genre and rhetorical situation.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.4	2 – 4.5	69	3.25	1.5 – 4.5	37	3.3	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.67	4 – 5	3	3.6	2.5 – 5	15	3.8**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.58	3 – 4	6	3.53	3.5 – 4	8	3.55	14
ENGL 1010 K	3	2 – 4	15	3.2	2.5 – 4	20	3.1*	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3	NA	1	3.3	2 – 4	5	3.3	6
ENGL 1010 L	3	2.5 – 4	4	3	NA	1	3	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.21	2.5 – 4	12	3.1	1.5 – 5	26	3.1*	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.5	2.5 – 2.5	2	2.5	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.17**	**1.5 – 5**	**114**	**3.28**	**232**

9. Student's writing demonstrates control of **Standard American English structure and usage**. (*The student's writing reflects effective use of SAE, both in terms of sentence structure and in terms of diction.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.43	1.5 – 5	69	3.2	2 – 4.5	37	3.35	106
ENGL 1010 Online	4.67	4.5 – 5	3	3.6	2.5 – 4.5	15	3.8**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	4	3.5 – 4.5	6	3.5	3 – 4	8	3.7*	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.17	2 – 4	15	2.89	1.5 – 4	20	3**	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3.5	NA	1	3.5	2 – 4	5	3.5	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.625	3 – 4.5	4	3	NA	1	3.5	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.21	2.5 – 4	12	3.2	2 – 4	26	3.15*	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.625	2 – 3.25	2	2.6	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.22**	**1.5 – 4.5**	**114**	**3.31**	**232**

10. Student's writing reflects command of appropriate **writing conventions**.
(*The student's writing reflects knowledge of punctuation rules and attention to spelling and capitalization.*)

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.4	1.5 – 5	69	3.1	2 – 4.5	37	3.28	106
ENGL 1010 Online	5	5 – 5	3	3.6	2 – 4.5	15	3.85**	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.75	3 – 4.5	6	3.625	3 – 4.5	8	3.7*	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.1	1.5 – 4	15	3	1.5 – 4.5	20	3*	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3	NA	1	3	1.5 – 4	5	3	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.625	3 – 4	4	3	NA	1	3.4	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	3.17	2.5 – 4	12	3	1.5 – 4	26	3.05*	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.625	2 – 3.25	2	2.6	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**3.22**	**1.5 – 4.5**	**114**	**3.25**	**232**

F. Overall Student Progress

11. Overall impression of **<u>student progress</u>**

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = no progress; 5 = substantial progress), how much progress in the student's writing ability is reflected by the portfolio (i.e., when comparing the writing in the first vs. the last writing assignment submitted)?

Section Type	Fall 2018			Fall 2019			Combined	
	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	Range	*N*	Mean	*N*
ENGL 1010	3.26	2 – 4.5	69	2.74	1.5 – 4	37	3.04	106
ENGL 1010 Online	3.67	3 – 4	3	3.2	1.5 – 4.5	15	3.25	18
ENGL 1010 Honors	3.42	3 – 4	6	2.875	1.5 – 3.5	8	3.1	14
ENGL 1010 K	3.27	2 – 4	15	2.7	1.5 – 4	20	2.88	39
ENGL 1010 K Online	3.5	NA	1	3.3	1.5 – 4	5	3.3	6
ENGL 1010 L	3.25	3 – 3.5	4	2	NA	1	3.1	5
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment	2.75	2 – 3.5	12	2.4	1 – 4.25	26	2.5****	42
ENGL 1010 Dual Enrollment Honors	NA	NA	0	2.25	2 – 2.5	2	2.25	2
Full Sample	**3.4**	**1 – 5**	**110**	**2.7**	**1 – 4.5**	**114**	**2.94**	**232**

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Academic Year: 2018-2019

Subject Area: Critical Thinking

1. **Identify the Performance-Funding test of general education used by your institution.**
   California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)

2. **If you used sampling as permitted by THEC, describe the method used.**
   Sampling was not used.

3. **Present the institutional mean scores or sub-scores on the Performance Funding instrument that your institution reviewed to assess students' comprehension and evaluation of arguments. If comparable scores for a peer group are available, also present them.**
   MTSU = 16.17; National = 15.40

4. **Summarize your impressions of the results yielded by the THEC test regarding critical thinking. Based upon your interpretations of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of critical thinking skills?**
   The CCTST requires students to draw inferences, make interpretations, analyze information, draw warranted inferences, identify claims and reasons, and evaluate the quality of arguments using brief passages, diagrams, and charts. The 2018-2019 score for MTSU students (16.17) rose for the first time in five years and is above the 2018-2019 national average (15.40). Comparatively, MTSU scores are still below their 2014-2015 (16.7) and 2013-2014 (16.9) levels, but are rising.

5. **Do you plan any strategies to correct deficiencies or opportunities for improvement that emerged with respect to critical thinking? If so, describe them below.**

   MTSU's Quality Enhancement Plan (MT Engage), which was implemented in fall 2016, emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills, specifically integrative thinking and critical reflection. We will continue to encourage faculty to certify their courses as a MT Engage course.

   The Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC) continues to offer workshops that help faculty incorporate strategies for improving critical thinking. For example, the LT&ITC offered workshops on topics such as course redesign for increased student engagement, active learning, "Teaching Truth in the Era of Fake News," various workshops on course and assignment design, experiential learning and MT Engage pedagogies (including the use of ePortfolios to encourage integrative thinking and assessment), etc.

All General Education courses emphasize the development of critical thinking skills. The three required courses in the Communication category, in particular, provide incoming students with an introduction to the critical and analytical skills necessary for success in college. Small class size in these courses is essential to insure that students receive the individual attention they need to develop these skills. The General Education Committee has recommended to the Provost that class size in the courses in the Communication category not exceed the recommendations of the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Communication Association. The General Education Committee continues to recommend that class size not exceed the guidelines endorsed by professional organizations.

Critical thinking skills will continue to be emphasized in General Education and in each degree program (see Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the various majors).

Instructors of UNIV 1010 will continue to assign textbooks that contain a critical thinking component.

Tutoring in the University Writing Center emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills in the writing process. Instructors will continue to encourage students to work with the Center's trained tutors.

The University Library Research Coach service (which offers students in-depth, one-on-one sessions with a librarian) emphasizes critical thinking in finding and selecting the best books, articles, and database resources for projects, papers, and presentations. Instructors will continue to advise students to use this service.