# WRITTEN, ORAL, & VISUAL COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

This rubric was developed by an interdisciplinary team of faculty representing Texas Southmost College (TSC) through a process that examined and modified the AACU Communication Value Rubric to meet the needs of TSC's core curriculum assessments. The rubric articulates fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubric is intended for institution–level use in evaluating and discussing student learning.

**Definitions:**

1. **Written communication** is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.
2. **Oral communication** is, most generally, a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. In some disciplines, oral communication is a direct interaction between a "professional" speaker and specific audience (such as nurse to patient, in clinical or therapeutic settings), where the effect of the presentation of ideas is to foster understanding or learning.
3. **Visual communication** is a prepared, purposeful presentation and delivery of supporting visual aids, typically relative to the oral communication and intended to benefit or amplify an audience's understanding of a central message or purpose. Thus, visual communication is facilitated through such media as poster presentations, power point presentations, video presentations, among others available and appropriate to specific disciplines and classroom experiences.

**Framing Language:**

This **Written, Oral, & Visual Communication** rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of educational institutions. The following criteria are observed by TSC when using this rubric:

- The clearest finding to emerge from decades of research on writing assessment is that the best writing assessments are locally determined and sensitive to the local context and mission. Users of this rubric should, in the end, consider making adaptations and additions that clearly link the language of the rubric to individual campus contexts. This rubric focuses assessment on how specific written work samples or collections of work respond to specific contexts. The central question guiding the rubric is "How well does writing respond to the needs of audience(s) for the work?" In focusing on this question, the rubric does not attend to other aspects of writing that are equally important: issues of writing process, writing strategies, writers' fluency with different modes of textual production or publication, or writer's growing engagement with writing and disciplinarity through the process of writing.

- Oral communication takes many forms. This rubric is designed to evaluate different types of presentations (single speaker, video recorded, group presentations etc.) This rubric may serve to measure the effectiveness of oral communication. The use of this rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message or purpose is conveyed; presentations should be supported by one or more forms of appropriate documentation, secondary materials, or visual aids, and should include purposeful organization and content.

- Visual communication takes many forms. This rubric is designed to evaluate different types of presentations (single speaker, video recorded, group presentations etc.) This rubric may serve to measure the effectiveness of visual communication. The use of this rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message or purpose is conveyed; presentations should be supported by one or more forms of appropriate documentation, secondary materials, or visual aids, and should include purposeful organization and content.

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| | Exemplary 4 | Proficient 3 | Developing 2 | Beginning 1 | Non-Evident 0 |
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| **Audience, Context, and General Purpose** | Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is wholly responsive to the assigned task(s) and applied consistently through all elements of the work. Purpose is compelling, precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported. Purpose and evidence are aligned well. | Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s). Purpose is clear and consistent; purpose and evidence are appropriately aligned. | Demonstrates some attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned task(s). Purpose is understandable but is neither reinforced nor memorable; purpose and evidence are generally aligned. | Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned task(s). Purpose can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation. Alignment of purpose and evidence is not always clear. | Fails to meet minimum criteria in addressing the audience, context, and purpose for writing. Purpose is absent; the presentation does not seem to know what it is about. Unifying principles do not exist. |
| **Content Development** | Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content and ideas that illustrate the writer's command and deep understanding of the subject, skillfully shaping the whole work. | Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to accurately explore ideas within the subject and shape the whole work. | Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and accurately explore ideas through most of the work. | Uses appropriate and relevant content to accurately develop simple ideas in some parts of the work. | Fails to meet minimum criteria in addressing content development. |
| **Control of Syntax and Language Mechanics** | Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is nearly error-free. Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling; choices enhance presentation effectiveness. Language is appropriate to audience and aids the clear expression of ideas. | Uses straightforward language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity. The language in the work has few errors. Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is appropriate to audience and is useful to the expression of ideas. | Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers, although writing may include some errors. Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation and the expression of ideas. | Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage. Language choices are sometimes unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language appropriateness is inconsistent. Expression of ideas is hindered. | Fails to use language that demonstrates control of syntax and mechanics. Language choices are unclear and fail to support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language is not appropriate to audience; ideas are not expressed clearly. |
| **Organization and Presentation** | Demonstrates consistent, skillful, and thoroughly detailed attention to organization, presentation, and stylistic choices as appropriate to the assignment written, oral, and/or visual. Organizational development is clearly and consistently observable; skillfully makes content and expression of ideas in the presentation cohesive. | Demonstrates consistent and skillful organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment: written, oral, and/or visual. Organizational development and expression of ideas are clearly and consistently observable within the presentation; content is expressed reasonably well as a result. | Follows expectations for a consistent system of basic organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment: written, oral, and/or visual. Organizational development and expression of ideas are observable within the presentation. | Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation as appropriate to the assignment: written, oral, and/or visual. Organizational development and expression of ideas are occasionally observable. | Fails to meet minimum criteria in organization and presentation: written, oral, and/or visual. Organizational development and/or expression of ideas are not observable within the presentation; lack of coherence and unity exist. |
| **Delivery (Oral) & Visual Aids** | Delivery techniques make the presentation compelling; speaker appears polished and confident; speaker energy and emphases foster interpretation of ideas expressed. Dependency upon notes, if applicable, is not evident or intrusive. Non-verbal cues aid significantly. Visual aids effectively support the communication of purposes and ideas; aids are integrated into the presentation seamlessly, thus fostering a full understanding of the message's content. | Delivery techniques make the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable; speaker tends toward conversational tone, and dependency upon notes is minimally noticeable. Nonverbal cues are appropriate and useful. Visual aids generally support the communication of the student's ideas and purposes; the aids effectively amplify or resonate the presentation of ideas and foster a good understanding of the message's content. | Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable; speaker appears tentative; speaker tends to be a bit casual, as evidenced in word choices; non-verbal cues do not particularly elevate audience's level of understanding or interpretation. Visual aids support the communication of the student's ideas and purposes but are only partially useful or informative. | Delivery techniques sometimes detract from audience comprehension; speaker appears uncomfortable; speaker seems unenthusiastic, monotonic, or hesitancies suggest unpreparedness. Verbal cues include unnecessary gestures and purposeless body language. Visual aids do not particularly support the communication of the student's ideas and purpose; they are insufficient to be of much use as they do little to elevate understanding. | Delivery techniques are either distracting from understandability of the presentation or fail to be effective; the speaker is clearly uncomfortable or unprepared. Visual aids are virtually non-existent, serve no purpose, or are not credible. |
| **Sources and Evidence / Synthesis** | Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the assignment. Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and significantly enhance development; materials establish presenter's credibility/authority. Synthesis of information and central message is compelling (precisely stated, clearly evident, and strongly supported.) | Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the assignment. Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis and generally supports development; presenter's credibility/authority is clear but evidence-based support could be stronger. Synthesis of information and central message is clear, consistent, and evident with the supporting material. | Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the assignment. Supporting materials make appropriate reference to information or analysis but only partially fosters development and presentation of ideas. Presenter's credibility/authority could benefit from more careful exploration of evidence. Synthesis of information and | Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the assignment. Insufficient supporting materials provide minimal information or analysis; presenter's credibility/authority on the topic is not particularly clear. Synthesis of information and central message can somewhat be deduced but is not explicitly evident. | Fails to meet minimum criteria in demonstrating the use of sources to support ideas in the assignment. Supporting materials are virtually nonexistent, or the supporting materials are not credible. Synthesis of information and central message is not evident. |

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*RED = Language used primarily for the Oral Communication component

**PURPLE = Language used primarily for the Visual Communication component

***Black = Language used for all components