

# How to Create Oral Presentation Assessments

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## HOW TO CREATE ORAL PRESENTATION ASSESSMENTS

Oral presentations are a valuable assessment method that can be used in a variety of course formats. They support the development of oral communication skills sought by employers, reinforce research and critical thinking, and foster creativity in your course.

Oral assessments may also benefit students who speak English as an additional language by offering an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of course content in ways that are not dependent on writing skills.

For support with accommodations, please contact the Student Accessibility Coordinator, Lynn Andrews, at [Andrewsl2@assiniboine.net](mailto:Andrewsl2@assiniboine.net).

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

Oral presentations can be delivered in a variety of formats to support learner variability and promote equitable access. Students may present live in person, live online using platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, or submit a recorded video for asynchronous evaluation. Offering multiple options aligns with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by providing flexibility in how students demonstrate their learning. Recorded submissions, for example, may reduce barriers for students with scheduling constraints, social anxiety, or other mental health considerations. Using a clear, well-structured rubric further supports UDL by making expectations transparent and providing consistent feedback across formats.

## PROVIDE FOCUSED ASSESSMENTS

Offer a clear and specific framework for the oral presentation. Focused assessments help students prepare effectively and make it easier for their peers to actively listen and engage. For example:

**Unfocused** – “Give a speech on a business topic we haven’t covered in class.”

**Focused** – “Prepare a 5- to 7-minute informative presentation on a customer service training issue for employees in a medical-related company.”

**Unfocused** – “Give a speech where you take a stand on a current event.”

**Focused** – “Prepare a 3- to 5-minute persuasive presentation that convinces your audience to take action on an issue relevant to the management of a mid-sized city.”

Encourage students to submit a one-sentence summary of their oral presentation in advance. This helps them clarify the focus of their presentation and communicate their purpose clearly.

## ENCOURAGE CLEAR STRUCTURE

Encourage students to organize their presentations using a clear and straightforward structure to enhance clarity and audience engagement. A recommended format includes:

- **Introduction** – Clearly state the topic and outline the main points that will be covered. This prepares the audience for what to expect and sets the purpose of the presentation.
- **Body** – Present the main ideas in a logical sequence, supported by relevant examples, evidence, or explanations. This is the core of the presentation where students develop their arguments or share information.
- **Conclusion** – Summarize the key messages and reinforce the main takeaways. This helps the audience retain important information and provides a clear ending to the presentation.

Using this structure helps students communicate their ideas effectively and keeps their presentations focused and organised.

## KEEP PRESENTATIONS CONCISE

Set a short time limit for oral presentations—typically between 3 and 10 minutes. If students cannot clearly communicate their ideas within this range, they may need help refining or organizing their content. Time limits encourage prioritization and focus and reflect real-world presentation expectations.

## ALLOW NOTES, DISCOURAGE MANUSCRIPTS

Encourage the use of brief notes with key words and phrases only. Full scripts often result in students reading aloud, which reduces eye contact and engagement. Students should aim for a conversational, professional tone. Written language often sounds unnatural when spoken and can be harder for an audience to follow.

## USE A RUBRIC FOR CONSISTENT AND TRANSPARENT EVALUATION

Here is an example rubric that can be adapted to fit your course and learning outcomes.

Criteria	Excelling	Meeting Expectations	Developing	Points
<b>Content &amp; Structure</b> (15 pts)	Presentation clearly and insightfully presents topic, purpose, and main ideas; well-organized with strong logical flow and relevant supporting details throughout.	Presentation adequately covers topic, purpose, and main ideas; organization is clear with mostly logical flow and relevant details.	Presentation lacks clarity or focus on topic; organization is weak or inconsistent; supporting details are minimal or irrelevant.	/15
<b>Reflection &amp; Learning</b> (5 pts)	Provides thoughtful and specific reflection on learning, including clear strengths and areas for improvement.	Provides general reflection on learning with some identification of strengths or areas to improve.	Reflection is limited, vague, or missing key elements of learning and improvement.	/5
<b>Delivery &amp; Preparedness</b> (5 pts)	Speaks confidently with clear articulation, good pace, tone, and audience engagement; well-prepared and adheres to time limit.	Delivery is generally clear and prepared, with minor issues in pace, tone, or timing; maintains some audience engagement.	Delivery is unclear or hesitant; shows lack of preparation or significant issues with timing or engagement.	/5

Total: /25



### Notes:

- Consider sharing the rubric with students in advance to increase transparency and support self-assessment.
- You may adapt the criteria to suit your discipline or learning outcomes (e.g., incorporating visual aids, technical terminology, or field-specific competencies).

## REFERENCES

Phoenix College. (n.d.). *Assigning an oral presentation: The whys and hows for faculty*. Maricopa Community Colleges. <https://learn.maricopa.edu/courses/files/download>





*Assiniboine College is privileged to provide learning opportunities on the lands of the Dakota Oyate, Nakoda Oyate, Ininiwak, Nehethowak, Nehiyawak, Anishinewuk, Denesuline, Anishinaabeg, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.*