

## **Assessing Student Communication Skill in an Advanced Business Communications Course**

### **Business Administration BA - Mihaylo College of Business and Economics**

#### **Step 1: Student Learning Outcome**

Upon completion of course BUAD 301 Advanced Business Communications, students will be able to communicate, influence, and inform using effective oral and written communication.

#### **Step 2: Methods and Measures**

A pre-test and post-test (final exam) required students to write a recommendation report using the *case-analysis method*. Each instructor developed the final-exam case for his/her class and scored the papers using prime trait analysis (rubric scoring across five criteria and process levels). Scores were then categorized as Below Average (0-59%), Good (60-79%), and Excellent (80-100%).

#### **Step 3: Criteria for Success**

None indicated.

#### **Step 4: Results**

After examining and comparing the results between 2009 and 2012, it was found that students demonstrated significant improvement in all areas. Although the change in the rubric and possible instructor bias may have resulted in what may appear to be inflated scores, the trends are clear. The criterion that was specifically focused upon—the Strategy criterion—was exceptional: “Below Average” ratings fell from 30.8% in 2009 to 11.84% in 2012. Strategy and Style have demonstrated the greatest reduction in below average scores on a year-to-year basis.

#### **Step 5: Improvement Actions**

Significant improvements in student learning across all categories (content, literacy, audience, strategy, and style) occurred and demonstrate that good improvements were made, exceeding expectations for assessment of the goal.

Based on the results, the following actions were taken before the spring 2014 assessment cycle:

1. Faculty development seminars were offered to explain formal rhetorical elements and strategies used in the textbook, and offer possible methods to teach this form of critical thinking and persuasion to students.
2. Faculty development seminars were offered that demonstrate how to incorporate writing tools (methods of analysis, development, and organization) into assignments.
3. Evaluation and standardization of the case-analysis method taught in BUAD 301 was continued.
4. In the five-step case-analysis method taught in BUAD 301, instead of requiring “Facts and Related Issues,” it was decided “Analysis of the Problem and the Assumptions” should be substituted instead.