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ABSTRACT

Noting that one model for providing programs and individualized support to at-risk students is the oral communication laboratory, this paper describes the research and development of pilot programs within the laboratory setting for students at-risk at a four-year academic institution. The paper begins with a brief review of literature, a description of the communication laboratory at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, how the lab was funded, and the approach taken to assessing the communication needs of students at risk. The results of that needs assessment are outlined in the paper, and a description of Individual Assistance Programs (IAPs) developed by Communication Department faculty and staff in response to the needs survey is presented. Next, the paper reports the results of pre- and post-assessment of at-risk students who completed a basic public speaking course and compares the results of students not at risk. The paper presents single case scenarios of at-risk students who have used the lab and the IAPs, as well as the results of students' evaluations of laboratory programs. The paper concludes with a discussion of future directions for the University's communication laboratory as a resource for the student at risk. (Six tables of data are included; 21 references are attached.)
(Author/RS)

A Communication Laboratory as a Resource for the Student At-Risk: Research and Program Development at the Center for Excellence in Oral Communication

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Abstract

Within the communication discipline, interest in better serving the academic needs of a special population--students at-risk--is growing. At a national level, numerous convention panels have indicated concern for this particular student in terms of innovative communication programs. One model for providing programs and individualized support to such students is the oral communication laboratory. This paper describes the research and development of pilot programs within the laboratory setting for students at-risk at a four-year academic institution. The paper begins with a brief review of literature, a description of the communication laboratory at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS), how the lab was funded, and the approach taken to assessing the communication needs of students at-risk. The results of that needs assessment are outlined, and a description of Individual Assistance Programs (IAPs) developed by Communication Department faculty and staff in response to the needs survey is presented. Next, the results of pre- and post-assessment of at-risk students who have completed a basic public speaking course are reported and compared to results of students not at-risk. Single case scenarios of at-risk students who have used the lab and the IAPs are presented, as well as the results of students' evaluations of laboratory programs. The paper concludes with a discussion of future directions for the University's communication laboratory as a resource for the student at-risk.

A Communication Laboratory as a Resource for the Student At-Risk: Research and Program Development at the Center for Excellence in Oral Communication

An emerging concern of educators is the education and retention of students who, for a variety of reasons, may need some assistance to succeed within the traditional framework of our nation's colleges and universities. Typically such students are designated as at-risk. Within the communication discipline, interest in better serving the academic needs of this undergraduate population has grown. At a national level, special conferences and an increase in convention panels and papers indicate the concern of speech communication professionals in understanding the needs of and developing academic programs for these students (Beall and Ratliff, 1991).

One model for providing programs and individualized assistance to such students is the oral communication laboratory. An increasing number of two- and four-year institutions are incorporating the communication laboratory approach into their traditional academic programs and curriculum. Examples of these institutions are DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana; Golden West College in Huntington Beach, California; Radford University in Radford, Virginia; and San Jose State University in San Jose, California.

This paper describes the development of a communication laboratory and laboratory-based programs for students at-risk at a four-year institution, the University of Colorado at Colorado

Springs (UCCS). The paper begins with a brief review of literature which includes definitions and a description of students at-risk. Then a description of the communication laboratory at UCCS is provided, including how it was funded and the approach taken to assessing the communication needs of students at-risk. The results of that needs assessment are briefly outlined, and a description of Individual Assistance Programs (IAPs) developed by Communication Department faculty and staff in response to the needs survey is presented. Next, the results of pre- and post-assessment of at-risk students who have completed a basic public speaking course are presented and compared to pre- and post-scores of students not at-risk. Single case scenarios of at-risk students who have used the lab and its individual assistance programs are presented, as well as the results of students' evaluations of laboratory programs. The paper concludes with a discussion of future directions for the University's communication laboratory as a resource for the student at-risk.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is increasing national interest within the communication discipline in better understanding and developing programs for students at-risk. That interest is indicated by an increase in convention panels addressing the academic needs of this student population, the establishment by the Speech Communication Association of a "Commission on the Communication Needs of Students at-Risk," and a recently convened national conference, "Speech

Communication Professionals and the At-Risk Student" (Beall & Ratliff, 1991).

"Students at risk," "academically disadvantaged," "academically unprepared," and "high-risk" are but a few of the many descriptors of students who, for personal and/or academic reasons, are experiencing frustration and difficulty in maintaining passing grades in their courses of study. As educational institutions have turned their attention to this segment of the student population, various definitions have emerged. For example, the at-risk student, as designated by the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, is a "a student in need of academic support, such support including, but not limited to: administration of diagnostic and assessment instruments, faculty and peer tutoring, laboratory/learning center assistance, and counseling" (Morreale, Hackman & Gomez, 1991, p. 4). At-risk students are identified by the University's computerized "early warning system," which includes students who (a) do not meet the Colorado Commission on Higher Education admissions requirements; (b) have a cumulative or semester GPA below 2.0, five or more cumulative incompletes or drops; or (c) have two or more incompletes or drops per semester (Morreale, Hackman & Gomez, 1991).

Typically, research related to students at-risk has focused on characteristics and behaviors of these students as well as methods of treatment. The following characteristics have been identified: lower than average achievement (McCroskey & Andersen, 1976; Roueche & Snow, 1977); frequently dropping out of school

(Jaschik, 1985; McCroskey & Payne, 1986); expectations that he/she will fail coupled with a habit of failure (Denmark & Trachtman, 1973); low confidence in self as well as personal academic ability (McCroskey, Daly, & Sorensen, 1976); and low academic motivation (DeBoer, 1983; Hurt, Preiss, & Davis, 1976). Consequently, students at-risk arrive at college "academically, economically, and psychologically unprepared for the rigorous work that is expected of them" (Francis, McDaniel, & Doyle, 1987, p. 151). Behaviors which categorize high-risk students are poor grades, absenteeism, truancy, retention in grade, tardiness, excessive working hours in after-school jobs, low aspirations, personal and family problems, and being perceived as a disciplinary problem (SUNY, 1990). Empirical research concerning methods of treatment for at-risk students in post-secondary institutions has focused on group counseling, integration of specific techniques within regular coursework, and the use of the communication laboratory as an intervention vehicle for at-risk students. For example, Francis and colleagues (1987) found that freshmen who received training in interpersonal communication skills by group counseling instructors earned significantly higher adjusted grade point averages than those who received only academic group counseling. Additionally, the self-esteem of trained students improved. Watson (1982) focused on communication apprehension for students with lower than average academic scores. In his study, significant reduction in apprehension was achieved through appropriate development and training incorporated into coursework. That development and

training included systematic desensitization, cognitive modification, and skill-oriented goal setting. McKiernan (1984) argued for the use of the speaking lab to assist the at-risk student. According to McKiernan's study, the lab acted as a training center and provided a heightened ability for interaction with other existing programs on campus, developing alliances among all groups involved in identifying and helping high-risk students.

Overall, it is evident that there is an emergent scholarly interest and concern regarding communication-related problems of at-risk students in post-secondary educational institutions. The approach described in the present paper represents an attempt to better understand and meet the needs of at-risk students.

THE COMMUNICATION LABORATORY

The communication laboratory at UCCS, or Individualized Assistance Laboratory (IAL), is designed to provide individualized assistance and support to all undergraduates in the development of their oral communication competency. Funding for the physical facility and staffing/personnel for the IAL was provided by a two-and-a-half million dollar Title III Strengthening Institutions grant (Morreale, Hackman, Shockley-Zalabak, & Gomez, 1991). That grant established a campus-wide project consisting of a learning center and five academic centers for students focusing on oral communication, written communication, mathematics, natural sciences, and foreign language and culture. The academic programs of the Center for Excellence in Oral Communication, which includes the Center's Individualized Assistance Laboratory, have been

developed under the auspices and direction of the faculty of the UCCS Communication Department.

The physical facilities and equipment for the Individualized Assistance Laboratory are designed to provide user-friendly, but high quality, technical feedback as well as privacy of interaction. Five video viewing areas and three small presentation/rehearsal areas are available. The IAL is surrounded by two video classrooms equipped with an instructor's console, built-in camera and playback monitor, and a fixed microphone. Graduate teaching assistants and student laboratory assistants are trained to operate equipment in the laboratory and classrooms.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT OF LABORATORY PROGRAMS

Before beginning to develop academic programs and other activities for the Center and its laboratory, faculty identified the most problematic communication concerns of students at-risk as a part of a process to understand the broader undergraduate population. (Morreale, Hackman, & Gomez, in press). Once those communication concerns and problems were identified, then appropriate support programs and activities could be developed to address those issues. The needs assessment effort undertaken at UCCS involved a survey of faculty and student support staff as well as undergraduate students in need of academic support. Using a stratified sampling procedure, 32 faculty and support staff completed a survey instrument in hour-long, individual interviews. Additionally, based on research that has found developmental (at-risk) students in significant numbers in minority populations

(Plisko & Stern, 1985), a random sample of minority and non-minority students was generated. Focus groups and personal interviews were used to gather student data from 59 students (19 minority, 40 non-minority). Data from the surveys were subjected to thematic analysis and coded using a constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Quantitative data from the faculty/support staff survey indicated the following competencies of students were most in need of academic support: expressing and organizing of ideas and messages, and expressing and defending points-of-view. These quantitative findings supported qualitative analysis of the survey data in which faculty and staff described the ideal student as one who is capable of organized expression, good presentation skills, classroom assertiveness, requesting help, appropriate language usage, and synthesizing information.

Data from the student focus groups and interview processes indicated that non-minority and minority students identified presentation skills as their most problematic communication concern. Non-minority and minority students independently identified the same seven communication situations as problematic: presentation skills, communication with professors, interpersonal problem solving, communication with the system and administration, lack of assertiveness, lack of self-esteem, and communication with others unlike self.

The results of the needs survey and data analyses were scrutinized by Communication Department faculty and used to develop

pilot academic curricula, assessment programs, and other laboratory-based activities for students at-risk and for the broader undergraduate population. All of the activities for students provided by the Center and its laboratory have been developed based upon a four-dimensional theoretical model of communication competency that subsumes knowledge/cognition, affect/motivation, skills/behaviors, and the ethical dimensions of competence (Shockley-Zalabak, 1991). These programs and activities focus on excellence in achievement and on retention of students at-risk by developing and enhancing the oral communication competencies of all students.

Six Individualized Assistance Programs, available in the laboratory setting, specifically relate to the identified communication concerns and problems of students: public/ presentational speaking, communication apprehension, problem solving and conflict management, listening, assertiveness, and interviewing. In addition, an IAP is currently being developed to address the communication concerns of students from various cultures.

Each IAP is designed to be completed in one hour and contains instructional videos and handouts (cognitive and ethical development), assessment instruments (affective component), and experiential exercises (skills/behavioral component). IAPs can be administered by a trained communication graduate teaching assistant to any undergraduate in need of individual assistance regarding a communication problem or situation. Undergraduate students are

referred by faculty or student support staff, or are self-referred for assistance to the laboratory.

Participation in an IAP activity typically has been a not-for-credit undertaking for the student. However, a laboratory-based credit course has been designed that addresses the communication problems of the students at-risk and makes extensive use of the lab and its IAPs. At the beginning of the one-credit course, the student is assessed in terms of communication concerns. Specific problems are identified. Then the student is directed to the IAPs and/or workshops that address those concerns or problems. An exit assessment acts as the student's final examination for the one-credit course.

EVALUATING THE LABORATORY AND ITS PROGRAMS

The following quantitative and qualitative results suggest that the Individual Assistance Laboratory and its academic programs and activities are beneficial to and being used by the undergraduate population of the University, including students who may be at-risk. First, quantitative results summarizing pre- and post-assessment for students at-risk as compared to students not at-risk are presented. Then, qualitative data describing the influence of the laboratory and its programs on individual at-risk students are reported. Finally, students' evaluative data concerning laboratory programs are outlined.

Pre- and Post-Assessment of At-Risk Students

Preliminary statistics have been generated concerning pre-post assessment of all students in a laboratory-based public

speaking course, including students at-risk. Tables 1-5 report pre- and post-scores of students enrolled in that course on Rubin's Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (1982), McCroskey's Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (1970), and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Instrument (1965). These data were obtained during required hour-long individual entrance and exit interviews.

Tables 1 and 2 present the results of pre- and post-testing of at-risk students. Table 1 indicates that students made significant improvement in all areas assessed, except reduction of communication apprehension in the group context. As expected, the

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Insert Tables 1 and 2 About Here

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most pronounced gains occurred in public speaking competency and reduction of public speaking apprehension. Statistically significant gains were also noted in overall competency (an average gain of 7.1 points) and overall reduction of communication apprehension (an average drop of 11.78 points).

Table 2 compares pre- and post-scores of at-risk students by gender. Males and females made statistically significant improvement in all areas except self-esteem. On that variable, females demonstrated significant improvement, but males did not.

Tables 3 and 4 report pre- and post-scores of students not at-risk. Like students at-risk, students not at-risk demonstrated

Insert Tables 3 and 4 About Here

significant improvement in all areas tested. Gains by both males and females were statistically significant.

Table 5 presents data comparing the scores of students at-risk and students not at-risk. Gains appeared similar for both groups.

Insert Table 5 About Here

These statistical analyses regarding students at-risk are presented simply as preliminary findings. It is acknowledged that considerable replication would be necessary before results could be considered meaningful.

Single Case Scenarios

Qualitative data also suggest that the Individual Assistance Laboratory and its programs provide an effective vehicle for developing the oral communication competencies of students at-risk. The following typical and specific situations are commonplace in the laboratory setting and represent strategic efforts toward retention of students:

1. Song K., an engineering student who said he felt inadequate and uncomfortable in the university environment, admitted that he was terrified at the thought of taking a public speaking course. Twice he had registered for public speaking, and twice he had

dropped the course. This time, however, was different. Although he received a poor grade on the first speech, Song approached the teaching assistant to talk about the poor grade within the laboratory setting. New plans were created, deadlines for advance preparation were agreed upon, and an appointment for individual coaching for the next assignment was made. Song successfully completed the course and post-assessment indicated a marked decrease in public speaking apprehension.

2. During an individual prep coaching session for a public speech, Mike S. said, "It doesn't really matter what grade I receive tomorrow. I'm thinking of not coming back next semester." Instead of simply saying "Good luck," feelings and motivations behind that statement were explored, a referral to University support services was made, and an individualized program was created and administered to address Mike's specific oral communication needs. Mike is still in school.

3. Ann M., a highly apprehensive student, typically avoided taking risks. She was given the opportunity within the laboratory setting to study assertiveness and to practice risk-taking behaviors. After receiving an incorrect grade in a science course, Ann approached the professor to discuss and correct the mistake.

4. A teacher in the lab, hearing the question, "Is advanced public speaking a hard course?" addressed the potential hidden agenda of that question by replying, "Brad, are you worrying about your level of preparation for that particular class? Let's make an appointment for you to see one of our staff members who can

assess your communication competency, make recommendations, and provide an overview of the course and its requirements."

5. Sharon F., a Chinese business student, met weekly with a teaching assistant to complete individual assistance programs in communication apprehension, interviewing, assertiveness, and conflict management. One day she excitedly returned to the lab with the following report, "You won't believe this! I went for an interview with a high-tech company yesterday. After I described my strengths, the interviewer said, 'You forgot one.' I asked her what that was and she replied, 'You certainly have the ability to communicate well. Not many candidates for this job have that ability.'"

6. During an entrance interview for a basic public speaking course, Pam W. mentioned that her high school counselor recommended that she not attend a regular university. Pam said her goal was "to prove that she could do it." She met weekly with a teaching assistant to develop her communication skills through the IAPs in combination with individual prep coaching for her public speaking assignments. At the end of the semester, Pam demonstrated more growth in communication competency than any other class member, raising her score on the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin, 1982) from 64 to 87.

All of the above examples demonstrate how individual faculty or graduate teaching assistants can respond to students' needs, spoken or unspoken, within the laboratory setting. Such support actively involves students in developing their own individual

assistance plans and may contribute to the commitment and, consequently, the success of those plans for at-risk students.

The communication laboratory can also serve as a tool for addressing faculty-identified needs of students at-risk. For example, three male students who earned low grades in an interpersonal communication course were referred to the lab and required to develop and complete intense individualized assistance programs guided by laboratory faculty. Each student's involvement in the laboratory was initiated by assessment of his communication competency, apprehension, and self-esteem. Based on the results of pre-assessment, laboratory staff developed programs to address each student's specific oral communication difficulties. Additionally, since learning disabilities were suspected, each student was referred to the University Learning Center for in-depth testing. Results indicated that all three students were challenged by various auditory disabilities. Accordingly, laboratory staff worked with Learning Center personnel to adapt instructional materials and methods of presentation to each student's learning style. As the semester progressed, each student received support and guidance to help him develop skills to compensate for his weaknesses in oral communication. Post-assessment showed marked improvement for each student--gains of 15 to 20 points on the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin, 1982).

The above cases demonstrate that the communication laboratory can serve as an effective intervention tool to facilitate the

academic development of at-risk students. Because of the information provided by the assessment process, the cooperation with other support services of the University, and the intense administration of individualized programs, at-risk students can receive quality support to address their specific oral communication needs.

Students' Evaluations of Laboratory Programs

At the conclusion of each academic year, a random phone survey is conducted of students who have used the laboratory and its programs. The positive results of that survey for the academic year 1991-1992 are outlined in Table 6.

Insert Table 6 About Here

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The preliminary success of the Individual Assistance Laboratory has favorably impressed the administration of the University and the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences. At present, such administrators are considering institutionalizing the Center and its laboratory-based programs. As part of that institutionalization, plans are underway to incorporate the results of the Center's assessment process of undergraduates into the University's overall accountability program.

Despite these potential future uses of the Center, its programs, and its databases, Communication Department faculty do not intend to present the laboratory and its programs as a

substitute for the traditional curriculum of the Department. Rather, such programs and activities are designed to support and augment the development of the oral communication competencies of all undergraduates, those at-risk and those not.

As the Center's and laboratory's programs expand, faculty intend to continue to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of various efforts. That monitoring process will include follow-up studies and longitudinal tracking of at-risk students who have used laboratory-based programs. That longitudinal tracking will be used to develop better understanding of students' behaviors subsequent to their utilization of the Center and its programs. Typical behaviors to be tracked over time will include, but not be limited to, future course selection and performance, grade point average, and continuation in degree programs. Based on that valuative process, the nature and the pedagogical approach to oral competency development of undergraduates will be reviewed and revised. In a supportive role to the traditional communication curriculum, additional laboratory-based programs and activities will be considered. Based on student usage patterns and evaluations, some programs may be revised or eliminated. In making those choices, the commitment of Communication faculty will continue to be that all undergraduates, those at-risk and those not, fully develop their oral communication competencies.

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Table 1: T-Tests Comparing 1990-1992 Pre- and Post-Scores for Communication Competency Assessment Instrument[3] (CCAI), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension[1] (PRCA), and Self-Esteem[2] for Students At-Risk.

Assessment Instrument	N	Mean	Std Dev	t Value	2-Tail Prob
CCAI Speaking	65			-7.57***	.000
Pre		27.14	3.71		
Post		30.61	2.93		
CCAI Interpersonal	64			-4.52***	.000
Pre		32.39	3.62		
Post		34.58	3.42		
CCAI Listening	65			-3.91***	.000
Pre		14.62	2.79		
Post		16.09	2.22		
CCAI Overall Comm	60			-7.02***	.000
Pre		73.42	7.86		
Post		80.50	6.49		
PRCA Group	67			1.37	.175
Pre		13.90	5.11		
Post		12.54	7.00		
PRCA Meeting	67			3.62**	.001
Pre		14.79	4.87		
Post		12.96	4.14		
PRCA Conversation	67			4.37***	.000
Pre		13.33	3.92		
Post		11.42	3.58		
PRCA Public Speaking	67			10.22***	.000
Pre		19.73	5.10		
Post		14.18	3.74		
PRCA Overall Comm App	66			8.14***	.000
Pre		61.92	16.37		
Post		50.14	11.59		
Self-Esteem	28			-3.27**	.003
Pre		32.75	4.58		
Post		34.82	3.10		

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Note: An increase in scores on the CCAI and the Self-Esteem is positive and shows improvement, whereas a decrease in scores on the PRCA is positive and shows improvement.

Table 2: T-Tests, by GENDER, Comparing 1990-1992 Pre- and Post-Scores for Communication Competency Assessment Instrument[3] (CCAI), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension[1] (PRCA), and Self-Esteem[2] for Students At-Risk.

Assessment Instrument	N	Mean	Std Dev	t Value	2-Tail Prob
CCAI Overall					
Females	32			-6.86***	.000
Pre		72.28	7.66		
Post		81.41	4.76		
Males	28			-3.30**	.003
Pre		74.71	8.01		
Post		79.46	8.00		
PRCA Overall					
Females	35			6.03***	.000
Pre		62.54	16.37		
Post		51.00	12.32		
Males	31			5.40***	.000
Pre		61.23	16.62		
Post		49.16	10.83		
Self-Esteem Overall					
Females	16			-2.64**	.019
Pre		32.19	4.10		
Post		34.31	3.18		
Males	12			-1.89	.086
Pre		33.50	5.25		
Post		35.50	3.00		

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Note: An increase in scores on the CCAI and the Self-Esteem is positive and shows improvement, whereas a decrease in scores on the PRCA is positive and shows improvement.

Table 3: T-Tests Comparing 1990-1992 Pre- and Post-Scores for Communication Competency Assessment Instrument[3] (CCAI), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension[1] (PRCA), and Self-Esteem[2] for Students Not At-Risk.

Assessment Instrument	N	Mean	Std Dev	t Value	2-Tail Prob
CCAI Speaking	251			-14.38***	.000
Pre		27.64	4.29		
Post		31.30	3.08		
CCAI Interpersonal	248			-9.33***	.000
Pre		32.05	4.40		
Post		34.86	4.54		
CCAI Listening	248			-8.08***	.000
Pre		14.57	3.15		
Post		16.40	2.63		
CCAI Overall Comm	243			-13.12***	.000
Pre		73.57	9.39		
Post		81.81	7.91		
PRCA Group	277			6.28***	.000
Pre		14.38	4.70		
Post		12.69	4.88		
PRCA Meeting	277			7.91***	.000
Pre		16.01	5.15		
Post		13.90	4.43		
PRCA Conversation	277			8.29***	.000
Pre		14.06	4.24		
Post		12.02	4.37		
PRCA Public Speaking	277			17.44***	.000
Pre		20.41	5.20		
Post		15.65	4.58		
PRCA Overall Comm App	277			14.70***	.000
Pre		65.02	15.54		
Post		54.12	13.91		
Self-Esteem	116			-6.23***	.000
Pre		32.03	4.93		
Post		34.23	4.20		

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Note: An increase in scores on the CCAI and the Self-Esteem is positive and shows improvement, whereas a decrease in scores on the PRCA is positive and shows improvement.

Table 4: T-Tests, by GENDER, Comparing 1990-1992 Pre- and Post-Scores for Communication Competency Assessment Instrument[3] (CCAI), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension[1] (PRCA), and Self-Esteem[2] for Students Not At-Risk.

Assessment Instrument	N	Mean	Std Dev	t Value	2-Tail Prob
CCAI Overall					
Females	154			-10.72***	.000
Pre		73.18	9.19		
Post		81.59	8.59		
Males	89			-7.54***	.000
Pre		74.26	9.73		
Post		82.18	6.60		
PRCA Overall					
Females	180			12.39***	.000
Pre		66.18	16.06		
Post		54.50	14.21		
Males	97			7.98***	.000
Pre		62.88	14.34		
Post		53.40	13.38		
Self-Esteem Overall					
Females	71			-5.69***	.000
Pre		31.30	5.07		
Post		33.93	4.48		
Males	45			-2.84**	.007
Pre		33.18	4.52		
Post		34.71	3.71		

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Note: An increase in scores on the CCAI and the Self-Esteem is positive and shows improvement, whereas a decrease in scores on the PRCA is positive and shows improvement.

Table 5: 1990-1992 Pre- and Post-test Results for Students At-Risk and Not At-Risk for Communication Competency Assessment Instrument[3] (CCAI), Personal Report of Communication Apprehension[1] (PRCA), and Self-Esteem[2].

	At-Risk		Not At-Risk		RANGES OF SCORES		
Assessment Instrument	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	St Dev	Low	Nrm	High
CCAI:							
Speaking					7	NA	35
Pre	27.1	3.71	27.6	4.29			
Post	30.6	2.93	31.3	3.08			
Interpersona:					8	NA	40
Pre	32.4	3.62	32.0	4.40			
Post	34.6	3.42	34.9	4.54			
Listening					4	NA	20
Pre	14.6	2.79	14.6	3.15			
Post	16.1	2.22	16.4	2.63			
Overall Comm					19	NA	95
Pre	73.4	7.86	73.6	9.39			
Post	80.5	6.49	81.8	7.91			
PRCA:							
Group					6	20	30
Pre	13.9	5.11	14.4	4.70			
Post	12.5	7.00	12.7	4.88			
Meeting					6	20	30
Pre	14.8	4.87	16.0	5.15			
Post	13.0	4.14	13.9	4.43			
Conversation					6	20	30
Pre	13.3	3.92	14.1	4.24			
Post	11.4	3.58	12.0	4.37			
Public Speaking					6	20	30
Pre	19.7	5.10	20.4	5.20			
Post	14.2	3.74	15.6	4.58			
Overall Comm Ap					24	66	120
Pre	61.9	16.37	65.0	15.54			
Post	50.1	11.59	54.1	13.91			
Self-Esteem:					10	30	40
Pre	32.8	4.58	32.0	4.93			
Post	34.8	3.10	34.2	4.20			

Note: An increase in scores on the CCAI and the Self-Esteem is positive and shows improvement, whereas a decrease in scores on the PRCA is positive and shows improvement.

Table 6:

RESULTS OF RANDOM PHONE SURVEY OF UNDERGRADUATES USING THE CENTER LABORATORY BETWEEN AUGUST 1991 AND MAY 1992.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT COLORADO SPRINGS
CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

PART ONE:
Instructor's ratings:

The instructors were rated on a scale of 1-10. A score of 10 was considered excellent, a score of 1 was considered poor.

CHARACTERISTIC	MEAN EVALUATION SCORE
Knowledge	9.09
Organization	8.66
Clarity	8.90
Patience	9.66
Enthusiasm	9.23
Rapport	9.28
Teaching Effectiveness	8.14

PART TWO:
All of the individuals who visited the center would recommend the center to a friend, and several have done so.

PART THREE:
Of the individuals interviewed, the likeliness of returning to the center for additional help was rated in the following manner:

(Rated on scale of 1-10 - 10 being very likely, 1 being not likely)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
N=0	N=1	N=0	N=0	N=1	N=0	N=4	N=2	N=2	N=12

PART FOUR:
Improvements for the center were as follows:

Seven persons felt the center should be larger in size.

Six persons felt the center should have better advertisement.

Six persons had no response.

One person felt the upcoming freshmen should be made aware of the center.

One person felt that there was a lack of clarity on the T.A.'s grading policy, and questioned the objectivity/subjectivity of the T.A.

One person felt the people working in the center were loud and distracting causing the individual to lose concentration.

PART FIVE:
When asked why the individuals visited the center, the responses were as follows:

Fifteen visited due to a requirement.

Two persons visited to improve their interviewing skills.

Four persons visited to deal with communication apprehension, and to better their speeches for another class.

One person visited to learn the "do's and don'ts" of public speaking.

PART SIX:
Of the individuals interviewed, each was asked to rate their experience on visiting the center.

(Rated on a scale of 1-10 - 10 being excellent, 1 being poor.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
N=0	N=0	N=1	N=0	N=1	N=1	N=1	N=5	N=7	N=4

One person had no response.

N=22

References

[1] McCroskey, J. C. (1970). Measure of communication-bound anxiety. Speech Monographs, 37, 269-277.

[2] Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[3] Rubin, R. B. (1982). Communication competency assessment instrument. Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association.