Assessment and Recognition

Written and Oral Literacy Facilitation · Campus Writing and Speaking Program, NC State
Kirsti Cole & Roy Schwartzman, Co-Directors

This document covers two related functions in Stage 3 of WOLF engagement: assessment, which is how departments collect and use evidence about student writing and speaking development, and recognition, which is how CWSP formally acknowledges the work faculty are doing — work that rarely appears in official workload documentation. Both matter to the program's sustainability.

Part 1 — Assessment

Assessment in WOLF serves one purpose: generating evidence to help the department understand how well the WSCP is working and where it needs refinement. It is not a compliance exercise. The most useful assessment is embedded in what faculty are already doing — not added on top of it.

Assessment approaches

Rubric-scored writing and speaking samples

The most direct evidence. Select a representative assignment at each curriculum level, score it against CWSP rubrics, and aggregate scores across the department. CWSP provides rubric templates adaptable for research papers, case studies, technical reports, oral presentations, group work, and professional communication. Contact CWSP to request rubrics aligned to your specific assignment types.

Needs assessment surveys

Brief surveys — faculty and student versions — collect perceptions of current writing and speaking instruction and identify where gaps are felt most acutely. Keep surveys short (10–12 questions) and anonymous. Google Forms exports directly to Google Sheets for analysis.

Sample faculty questions: Which courses in your teaching include a significant writing or speaking component? What do you find most difficult about teaching writing and speaking in your discipline? Where do you think students arrive least prepared?

Sample student questions: In which courses have you received substantial feedback on your writing or speaking this semester? What communication skill do you feel least confident about in your discipline? Where do you wish you had more instruction?

DASA assessment data

NC State's DASA Assessment Office holds existing data on course-level outcomes, student performance trends, and program assessment across the university. This data provides a baseline that can contextualize what your department is seeing in its own rubric scores and surveys.

To request data: contact the DASA Assessment Office directly and specify that you are seeking writing and speaking outcomes data for WSCP development under the WOLF Program. Reference the General Education Competencies Assessment Plan if relevant to your program's accreditation context. CWSP can facilitate this contact and help interpret the data once received.

Using assessment data

Assessment data is useful only if it circulates back to the faculty who are doing the teaching. Build a regular review point into the department's calendar — a one-hour annual conversation in which rubric scores and survey results are shared, patterns are identified, and the WSCP is adjusted accordingly. CWSP will participate in that conversation and help interpret what the data shows.

Assessment data collected through the WOLF program also contributes to the CWSP research archive, which tracks disciplinary patterns in writing and speaking instruction across NC State and peer institutions over time. No department or individual faculty member is identified in that archive.

CWSP Certification

Certification is awarded when a department has completed Stage 3: the WSCP is implemented, at least one cycle of assessment data has been collected and reviewed, and final documentation has been submitted to CWSP. Certification is not a one-time award — it is renewed through continued engagement and periodic WSCP review, typically every three to five years.

Final documentation for certification includes:

— Completed WSCP (signed by department chair or director)

— Curriculum map showing writing and speaking integration across levels

— Representative student work samples with rubric scores

— Summary of assessment findings and any WSCP revisions made in response

— Faculty engagement record (workshops attended, consultations completed)

Part 2 — Recognition

Writing and speaking instruction is among the most invisible labor in a department. Faculty spend hours on feedback that does not appear in any workload document; graduate students teach composition and public speaking without credit toward professional credentials; staff coordinate communication instruction that goes unnamed in any program description. CWSP's recognition program makes that work legible — formally, on departmental letterhead, for

inclusion in annual reviews and promotion files.

The liaison can nominate any faculty member, graduate student, or staff member whose contribution to writing and speaking instruction warrants acknowledgment. CWSP drafts and signs the letter. Copies go to the department chair and dean's office.

Recognition letter templates

TEMPLATE A

Communication Champion — Faculty

[Department Letterhead]
[Date]

Dear [Faculty Name],

The Campus Writing and Speaking Program recognizes you as a Communication Champion for your contributions to student communication development at NC State University.

Your work in [course(s)/program] demonstrates sustained commitment to integrating communication instruction within your discipline. We specifically acknowledge:

[Specific contribution — e.g., "Designing and iterating a multi-draft research writing sequence in [Course Name] that gives students structured feedback at each stage"]
[Specific contribution — e.g., "Developing oral defense protocols that require students to communicate technical findings to non-specialist audiences"]
[Specific contribution]

This work, though often omitted from official workload calculations, is essential for preparing students to communicate complex ideas effectively in academic and professional contexts.

We encourage you to include this recognition in your annual faculty review and to share your practices through CWSP workshops or resources.

Sincerely,

Kirsti Cole and Roy Schwartzman
Co-Directors, Campus Writing and Speaking Program, NC State University

cc: [Department Chair], [Dean's Office]

TEMPLATE B

Hidden Infrastructure Award — Graduate Students and Staff

[CWSP Letterhead]
[Date]

Dear [Name],

The Campus Writing and Speaking Program recognizes your contribution to writing and speaking education at NC State through the Hidden Infrastructure Award — acknowledgment of the work that sustains our communication education ecosystem without appearing in the official record.

Your work as [role] in [department/program] has directly supported students' development as communicators. Specifically:

[Specific contribution]

[Specific contribution]

We encourage you to include this recognition in your professional portfolio, graduate review, or employment record.

Sincerely,

Kirsti Cole and Roy Schwartzman
Co-Directors, Campus Writing and Speaking Program, NC State University

cc: [Advisor / Supervisor], [Department Chair]

TEMPLATE C

CWSP Certification — Department

[CWSP Letterhead]
[Date]

Dear [Department Chair],

It is our pleasure to certify that the [Department Name] at NC State University has successfully completed the WOLF Program and earned Campus Writing and Speaking Program certification.

Over the course of [timeframe], the department developed and implemented a Writing and Speaking Curriculum Plan that systematically integrates discipline-specific communication instruction from introductory through capstone courses. Faculty across the department participated in the process, and assessment data demonstrates meaningful student development in writing and speaking across the curriculum.

We commend [Department Name] — and particularly [Liaison Name], who coordinated the department's engagement — for this achievement. The WSCP you have developed is a model of how disciplinary expertise and pedagogical commitment work together to prepare students for the communication demands of their fields.

CWSP certification is valid for [3/5] years and is renewed through continued program engagement and periodic WSCP review. We look forward to our ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

Kirsti Cole and Roy Schwartzman
Co-Directors, Campus Writing and Speaking Program, NC State University

cc: Dean's Office, Provost's Office

Sample Rubrics

WOLF 04 — Supplementary Tab · Writing and Oral Communication Assessment

Campus Writing and Speaking Program, NC State · Kirsti Cole & Roy Schwartzman

These rubrics are designed as starting points, not finished instruments. They reflect the core dimensions of writing and oral communication that appear across disciplines — but the descriptors in each cell should be adapted to reflect what your discipline expects at each level. CWSP can help you revise these for your specific courses and assessment context.

For alignment with WSCP learning outcomes, see Part 4 of the WSCP Working Template (WOLF 03). Both rubrics use a four-level scale that maps to most grading contexts; the scale labels (Exemplary / Proficient / Developing / Beginning) can be replaced with numeric or letter grades as needed.

Writing Rubric — Adaptable by Discipline

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Argument and Purpose	Thesis or central claim is clear, specific, and positions the writer within the disciplinary conversation. Purpose is evident and sustained throughout.	Thesis is present and identifiable. Purpose is mostly clear, with minor inconsistencies in how it is maintained.	Thesis is present but underdeveloped or vague. Purpose shifts or is unclear in sections of the piece.	Thesis is absent or does not make a claim. Purpose is unclear throughout.
Use of Evidence	Evidence is specific,	Evidence supports the	Evidence is present but	Evidence is absent,

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
	relevant, and integrated smoothly. Sources are engaged critically, not merely cited. Documentation follows disciplinary conventions correctly.	argument with minor gaps. Sources are mostly integrated; documentation is mostly correct.	may not clearly support the argument, or relies on summary rather than analysis. Documentation has notable errors.	inadequate, or does not connect to the argument. Documentation is missing or incorrect.
Organization and Structure	Structure serves the argument; sections are clearly organized and transitions are purposeful. Follows the conventions of the assigned genre.	Organization is mostly clear; transitions are present. Genre conventions are followed with minor lapses.	Organization is inconsistent; some sections are hard to follow. Transitions are weak or missing in places. Genre conventions are incompletely applied.	Organization is unclear throughout. Genre conventions are not followed. The reader cannot follow the writer's logic.
Disciplinary Style and Voice	Tone, diction, and level of formality are appropriate to the discipline and audience. Writer demonstrates a recognizable and consistent	Style is mostly appropriate. Minor lapses in tone or register do not significantly impede the reader.	Style is uneven; voice shifts across the piece. Tone or diction choices are sometimes inappropriate for the disciplinary	Style is consistently inappropriate for the discipline. No evident awareness of audience or disciplinary norms.

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
	voice within disciplinary norms.		context.	
Mechanics and Conventions	Writing is largely free of grammatical and mechanical errors. Any errors present do not affect readability or credibility.	Errors are present but infrequent. Readability is not significantly affected.	Errors are frequent enough to affect readability in places. Patterns of error suggest incomplete editing or revision.	Errors are pervasive and interfere with comprehension. The piece has not been edited.

Adaptation notes: Replace "Disciplinary Style and Voice" with the genre-specific conventions of your field (e.g., for lab reports in science disciplines, this criterion might focus on precision, passive construction, and concision). The "Mechanics and Conventions" criterion may warrant higher or lower relative weight depending on your course's learning outcomes. CWSP can work with you to calibrate weighting.

Oral Presentation Rubric — Adaptable by Discipline

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Content and Argument	Central claim is clear and well-supported. Content demonstrates disciplinary understanding and is substantively appropriate to the context	Central claim is identifiable. Support is adequate; content is mostly appropriate to the disciplinary context.	Claim is unclear or unsupported. Content gaps or inaccuracies affect the presentation's credibility.	No clear claim. Content is insufficient or inaccurate. The presentation does not demonstrate disciplinary understandin

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
	and audience.			g.
Organization and Delivery Structure	Presentation has a clear opening, body, and close. Transitions between ideas are explicit and help the audience follow the argument. Time is used purposefully.	Organization is clear. Transitions are present; time management is adequate.	Organization is hard to follow in places. Transitions are weak or missing. Time management is inconsistent.	No discernible structure. The audience cannot follow the presentation's logic.
Verbal and Vocal Delivery	Pace, volume, and enunciation are appropriate and adapted to the audience. Filler language is minimal. Delivery sounds practiced and confident without being scripted.	Pace and volume are mostly adequate. Some filler language present. Delivery is generally clear.	Pace, volume, or enunciation creates difficulty for the audience. Filler language is frequent. Reading from notes reduces engagement.	Delivery is largely inaudible, rushed, or read verbatim. Audience comprehension is significantly impeded.
Audience Engagement	Speaker actively addresses the	Speaker makes adequate eye	Speaker rarely engages the audience.	No audience engagement. Speaker reads

Criterion	Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
	audience through eye contact, responsive language, or Q&A. Presentation is adapted to what the audience knows and needs.	contact. Some audience awareness is evident in language choices or responsiveness.	Presentation feels delivered at the audience rather than with them.	from notes or slides without acknowledgment of the audience.
Visual Aids and Supporting Materials	Visual aids are clear, well-designed, and add meaning rather than replicate the spoken text. Sources are attributed where applicable. Materials are professional in quality.	Visual aids are adequate and relevant. Minor design or attribution issues do not significantly affect comprehension.	Visual aids are text-heavy, cluttered, or not well aligned with the spoken content. Audiences rely on the slide to follow the presentation.	Visual aids are absent, distracting, or actively impede comprehension. Materials are not professional or are unattributed.

Adaptation notes: The "Visual Aids" criterion is not appropriate for all presentation contexts (e.g., panel discussions, clinical presentations, or oral defenses that do not use slides). Remove or replace it as needed. The "Verbal and Vocal Delivery" criterion should be adapted with care for neurodivergent students and multilingual speakers — consider weighting delivery less heavily than content in courses where communication skills are not the primary learning outcome.

Using These Rubrics with the WSCP

The most effective use of these rubrics is not as grading instruments but as shared frameworks — something students see before the assignment and faculty use consistently across sections. When rubric criteria align with the learning outcomes in the WSCP, they become evidence: data

that shows whether students are achieving the communication goals the department set out to teach.

CWSP offers norming sessions — structured discussions in which faculty apply a shared rubric to the same student work and compare their assessments — as part of Stage 3 support. Norming improves inter-rater reliability across sections and generates richer departmental assessment data.

Contact CWSP to set up a norming session for your department's writing or speaking assessment.