

Students will have three formats in which they will work on their oral communication skills:

**1. *In class presentation of diagrams/graphs from the textbook or from research papers***

This will occur during the first week of the course, when we are on campus in a discussion-based format learning cardiac physiology from the textbook and beginning to read relevant research papers (see syllabus for details). Although there is ample opportunity for oral communication in our general discussions, the specific oral communication feature I wish to emphasize during this week is how to carefully and thoughtfully present a diagram or graph. Initially, students will be assigned a particular diagram/graph ahead of time. Eventually, however, I want students to learn effective communication when called on spontaneously, something that happens often in medical school and which they will encounter during their time in Atlanta.

**2. *Formal presentation of a research paper***

During our time in Atlanta, each student will give a 30-minute presentation of a research paper. The audience will be our group and our colleagues that we work with in Atlanta. Students will need to determine the essential features of the paper, organize their thoughts into a 30-minute presentation, prepare appropriate visual materials, and deliver their presentation.

**3. *Group presentation of the interim experience***

Every year, each off-campus biology interim class gives a presentation to all interested faculty and students. Groups are given 30 minutes to share their experiences with an audience of approximately 60 people. This is a different kind of oral communication challenge, because the eight students need to work together to determine how to effectively communicate their experiences to a group that is not familiar with all they have learned, seen, and done.

In all cases, I will help prepare the group for their upcoming presentations through discussions of good oral communication practices. Although I will not require students to purchase a textbook on oral communication, I will draw heavily on materials from John Hasling's The Audience, The Message, The Speaker and Communicating in Groups: Applications and Skills by Gloria Galanes, Katherine Adams, and John Brilhart. We will also follow each session by a discussion of what worked and what did not work. Especially during the first week, this will allow students to learn from early presentations and apply lessons learned to subsequent presentations. The lessons learned during the first week will hopefully also be incorporated into their formal presentation while in Atlanta. I appreciate the emphasis on listening in the guidelines for the ORC, and will discuss good listening skills with the class as well; Hasling's book has a particularly good chapter on "Listening and Reacting" that I will discuss with the class.