

A Professional Approach

to

Reducing Stress Involved in Course Report Writing

Mohammad Adil

4. Activities/Assessment Methods

Activities/Planned Assessment Methods	Were They Implemented?		Difficulties Experienced (if any) in Implementation	Suggested Action
	Yes	No		

5. Verification of Credibility of Students' Results

Method(s) of Verification	Conclusions



Course Report

1. Course Learning Outcomes Assessment Results

Course learning Outcomes (CLOs)	PLOs Code	Assessment Methods	Assessment Results		Comment on Assessment Results
			Target Level: Criterion for Success	Actual Level	
1 Knowledge and Understanding:					
1.1					
1.2					
1.3					
1.4					
2 Skills:					
2.1					
2.2					
2.3					
2.4					
3 Values:					
3.1					
3.2					
3.3					
3.4					

2. Recommendations

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Warm-up 1: What do you think he should have done to avoid his stress? Think for 5 minutes and make notes.



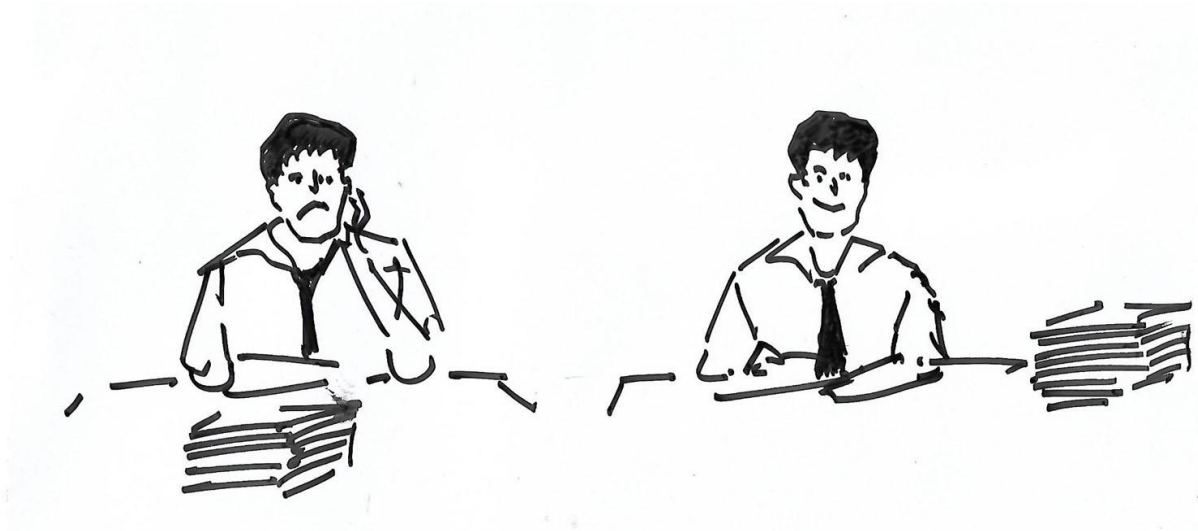
After you finish, see the [commentary](#).

Warm-up 1: Commentary

The best thing he could have done is plan ahead of time. He should have made a task-alignment plan long before the final examination. This could have reduced his stress a great extent.

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Warm-up 2: Compare these two instructors. Take 2 minutes to think and make comments.



After you finish, see the [commentary](#).

Warm-up 2: Commentary

The one sitting on our left is stressed-out and not very professional, but may be sincere, honest and dedicated. He thinks that course report writing is an important job. Probably, this idea is stressing him out.

What about the one on our right? There can be two reasons why he is so happy. First, he may be very professional and organized. Second, he may think this CR task is not very important. He keeps on downplaying this course report job saying, “No one will read this. This is nonsense! I did it!”. So he did it leaving most of the boxes blank. He just filled in the form with marks, grades, names, section etc.

Whether someone will read this or not is none of my business. The most important thing is – We have to do the job properly. The one sitting on our right does not realize the fact that his CR will someday return to him causing a sleepless night.

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What to do?

- ▶ Be **proactive**.
- ▶ Work **ahead of time** and start planning at the beginning of or in the middle of the semester (Or, at least two or three weeks ahead of the final exam).

It means that you have to start working on the course report ahead of time. We often start working on it right after the result, which is a serious mistake and therefore results in a stressful situation.

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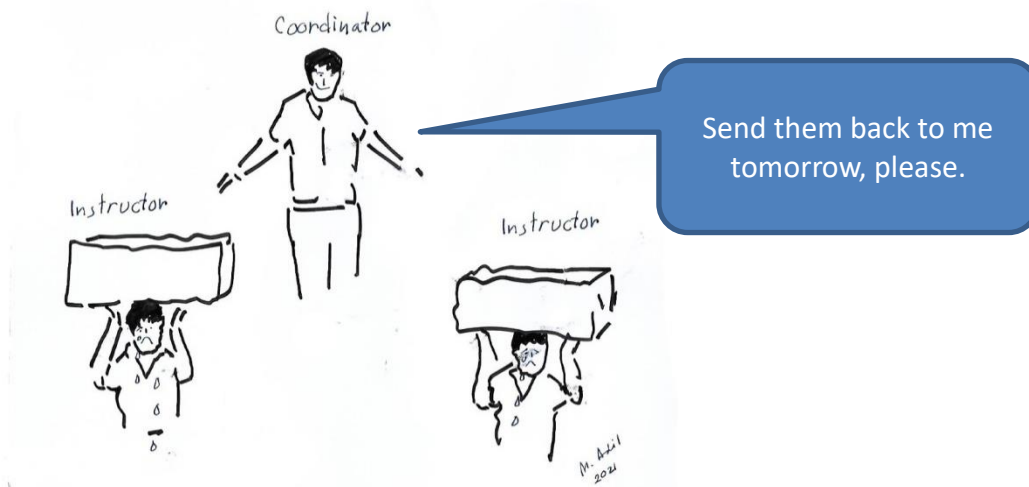
Stress caused by the people involved

The picture below metaphorically shows what the relationship between a coordinator and an instructor can be like.



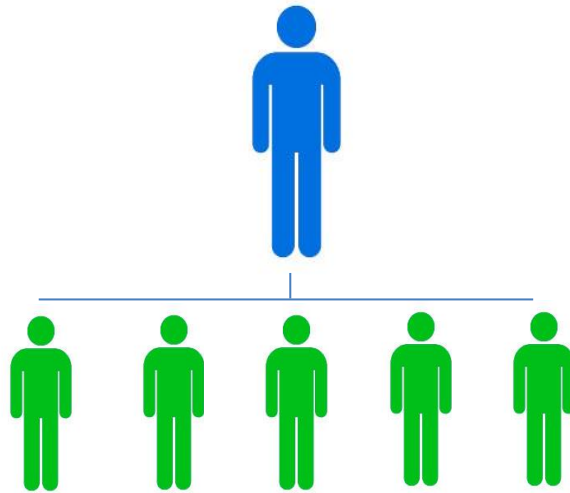
An instructor you are working with can be a troublemaker by not being available most of the time. As the coordinator, you have to chase him all the time.

However, you should not always blame an instructor. You, as a coordinator, can be oppressive as well by burdening things you perhaps could handle alone.

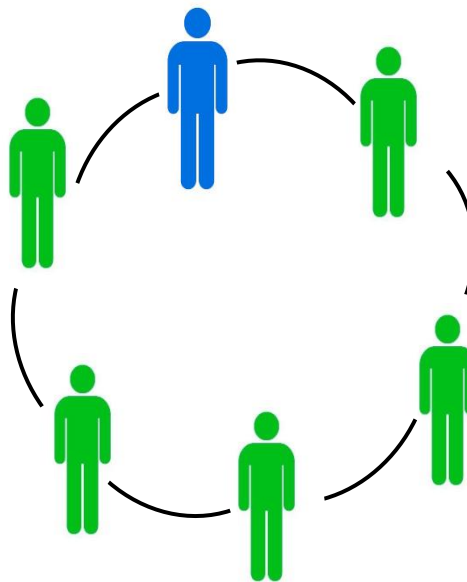


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The relationship between the coordinator and the instructors **SHOULD NOT BE** like the one below.



It **SHOULD BE** like the one below. Coordinate, cooperate, help and support etc.



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Stress related to alignment

TASK: Imagine that you have designed the following quiz. Read the CLOs and the quiz questions.

How and why do you think this quiz may **stress you out** at the end of the semester? Think for 5 minutes and make notes.

3. Course Learning Outcomes

CLOs		Aligned PLOs
1	Knowledge and Understanding: By the end of this course, students will have been able to:	
1.1	define phonetics and its branches, identify the difference between phonetics and phonology.	K2
1.2	name the organs of speech, label them in a diagram and explain speech production mechanism.	K3
1.3	explain the differences between letters and phonemic symbols, the IPA and British and American pronunciation.	K3
1.4	classify and explain the basic sound system of English and distinguish between consonants and vowels.	K1
1.5	define and describe consonants in terms of place and manner of articulation, explain states of the glottis, and review full articulatory description of consonants.	K2
1.6	define and describe vowels, states of muscles, tongue's vertical and horizontal movements, and states of lips, and classify them into simple and complex ones.	K2
2	Skills: By the end of this course, students will have been able to:	
2.1	apply their knowledge to communicate effectively pronouncing English sounds correctly.	S2
2.2	relate L1 with L2 speech sounds.	S7
2.3	recall the correct state of the glottis, place, and the manner of articulation for each consonant sound and apply deeper knowledge of	S5

Quiz 1: Circle the correct answer.

- Phonetics has **two/three/four** branches.
- Alveolar ridge is **a passive/ an active** articulator.
- /p/ is a voiceless **bilabial/alveolar/velar stop**.
- /e/ is a **short/long** vowel.
- IPA stands for **International phonetic Alphabet/International pronunciation apps**.

After you finish, see the [commentary](#).

TASK: Commentary

3. Course Learning Outcomes

	CLOs	Aligned PLOs
1	Knowledge and Understanding: By the end of this course, students will have been able to:	
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Quiz 1: Circle the correct answer.

1. Phonetics has **two/three/four** branches.
2. Alveolar ridge is a **passive/ an active** articulator.
3. /p/ is a voiceless **bilabial/alveolar/velar stop**.
4. /e/ is a **short/long** vowel.
5. IPA stands for **International phonetic Alphabet/International pronunciation apps**.

A **single task** is aligned with **too many CLOs**. This will stress you out while you are filling in the "assessment results" boxes in the CR.

What to do?

3. Course Learning Outcomes

	CLOs	Aligned PLOs
1	Knowledge and Understanding: By the end of this course, students will have been able to:	
1.1	define phonetics and its branches, identify the difference between phonetics and phonology.	K2
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2.3	recall the correct state of the glottis, place, and the manner of articulation for each consonant sound and apply deeper knowledge of	S5

OR

Quiz 1: Circle the correct answer.

1. Phonetics has _____ branches.
A. Three B. two C. four
2. Articulatory phonetics deal with...
A. How speech sounds are produced.
B. How to spell words.
C. How to pronounce correctly.
3. Acoustic phonetics is about ...
A. ...
B. ...
C. ...
4.

Quiz 1

Part 1: Circle the correct answer.

1. Phonetics has **two/three/four** branches.
2. ...
3. ...
4. ...
5. ...

Part 2: Circle the correct the answer.

6. Lower lip is an **active/passive** articulator.
7. ...
8. ...
9. ...
10. ...

Design a quiz based on **a single CLO** or a maximum of **two**. Doing this will lessen your stress.

How many quizzes or assignments per semester?

Suggested plans

Quiz/Assign 1 2.5	Quiz/Assign 2 2.5	Quiz/Assign 3 2.5	Quiz/Assign 4 2.5	Total 10	√√√
Quiz/Assign 1 2.5	Quiz/Assign 2 2.5	Quiz/Assign 3 05		Total 10	√√
Quiz/Assign 1 05		Quiz/Assign 2 05		Total 10	√
Quiz/Assign1 03		Quiz/Assign 2 07		Total 10	√???
Quiz/Assign 10				Total 10	X

√√√ = Excellent

√√ = Very good

√ = Good, but difficult to cover the CLOs

√??? = acceptable, but problematic. Your calculation might be difficult (e.g. SPSS)

X = not good at all and should not be practiced

Your entire alignment plan can be like this (Phonetics).

Alignment between the CLOs and the tasks/tests

1: Knowledge		
1.1	define phonetics and its branches, identify the difference between phonetics and phonology.	QUIZ 1 (Points: 2.5) MT1
1.2	name the organs of speech, label them in a diagram and explain speech production mechanism.	
1.3	explain the differences between letters and phonemic symbols, the IPA and British and American pronunciation.	QUIZ 2 (Points: 2.5) MT1
1.4	classify and explain the basic sound system of English and distinguish between consonants and vowels.	
1.5	define and describe consonants in terms of place and manner of articulation, explain states of the glottis, and review full articulatory description of consonants.	MT1 ASSIGNMENT 1 (Points: 2.5)
1.6	define and describe vowels, states of muscles, tongue's vertical and horizontal movements, and states of lips, and classify them into simple and complex ones.	MT2
2: Skills		
2.1	apply their knowledge to communicate effectively pronouncing English sounds correctly.	ASSIGNMENT 2 (Points: 2.5)
2.2	relate L1 with L2 speech sounds.	
2.3	recall the correct state of the glottis, place, and the manner of articulation for each consonant sound and apply deeper knowledge of differentiating consonants in terms of the features above.	FINAL
2.4	recognize various types of vowels within syllables and differentiate them in terms of tongue positions.	FINAL
2.5	use phonemes correctly to transcribe words phonemically.	MT2 FINAL
3: Values		
3.1	relate their knowledge and learning experience to developing their competence in using different phonetic applications or related websites.	SURVEY (Points: 100)
3.2	reflect on their learning experience of English sounds to improve their overall understanding of English pronunciation.	
3.3	communicate effectively and appropriately by synthesizing their knowledge of English speech sounds.	
3.4	organize their learning of phonetics being an independent learner teaming up with their peers.	

Your entire alignment plan can be like this (Listening 1).

Alignment between the CLOs and the tasks/tests

1: Knowledge		
1.1	identify a variety of academic contexts and daily life situations while listening.	QUIZ 1 (Points: 2.5) MT1 (Listening)
1.2	recognize speakers and their feelings in academic and daily English conversations.	MT1 (Listening) QUIZ 2 (Points: 2.5)
1.3	describe things and places orally.	MT2 (Speaking)
1.4	recognize English sounds properly while listening.	MT1 (Listening)
2: Skills		
2.1	practice English successfully to communicate orally to describe places, make small talks, make plans etc.	FINAL (Speaking)
2.2	use English appropriately for social communications.	QUIZ 3 (Points: 05)
2.3	produce English sounds correctly and clearly while speaking.	FINAL (Speaking)
2.4	apply the learned contextual vocabulary to express themselves and comprehend various listening topics relevant to real life situations.	FINAL (Listening)
3: Values		
3.1	work effectively in groups and exercise leadership when appropriate.	SURVEY (Points: 100)
3.2	act responsibly in personal and professional relationships.	
3.3	understand academic and ethical responsibility .	

Measuring the CLOs under the three domains

Alignment between the CLOs and the tasks/tests

1: Knowledge		
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3.1	work effectively in groups and exercise leadership when appropriate.	SURVEY (Points: 100)
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3.3	understand academic and ethical responsibility .	

100 marks

Regular assessment
(Midterm/Final /Quizzes/ Assignments)

100 points

For the Course Report only.

Direct assessment that includes quizzes, assignments and regular examinations only measures the CLOs under “**Knowledge**” and “**Skills**” domains. But the “**Values**” domain is somewhat different by nature. We should keep it isolated and opt for indirect assessment. A Survey in this case can help.

It all comes down to why we should keep it isolated from our regular assessment. There is a potential problem if we do not. Imagine you want this survey to affect their grades. In that case you have to tell them the truth. Once they know this will affect their grades, the data will be erroneous or equivocal. They will check the best options. If you want to get the accurate data having the same policy (incorporating survey results with the grades) in mind, you should tell them that this is not a test, just a survey. Eventually, you are adding the points to their grades. In this case, you are betraying your students by framing them.

So, it is safer to measure the “Values” separately – just for filling in the Course Report.

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Stress related to test design

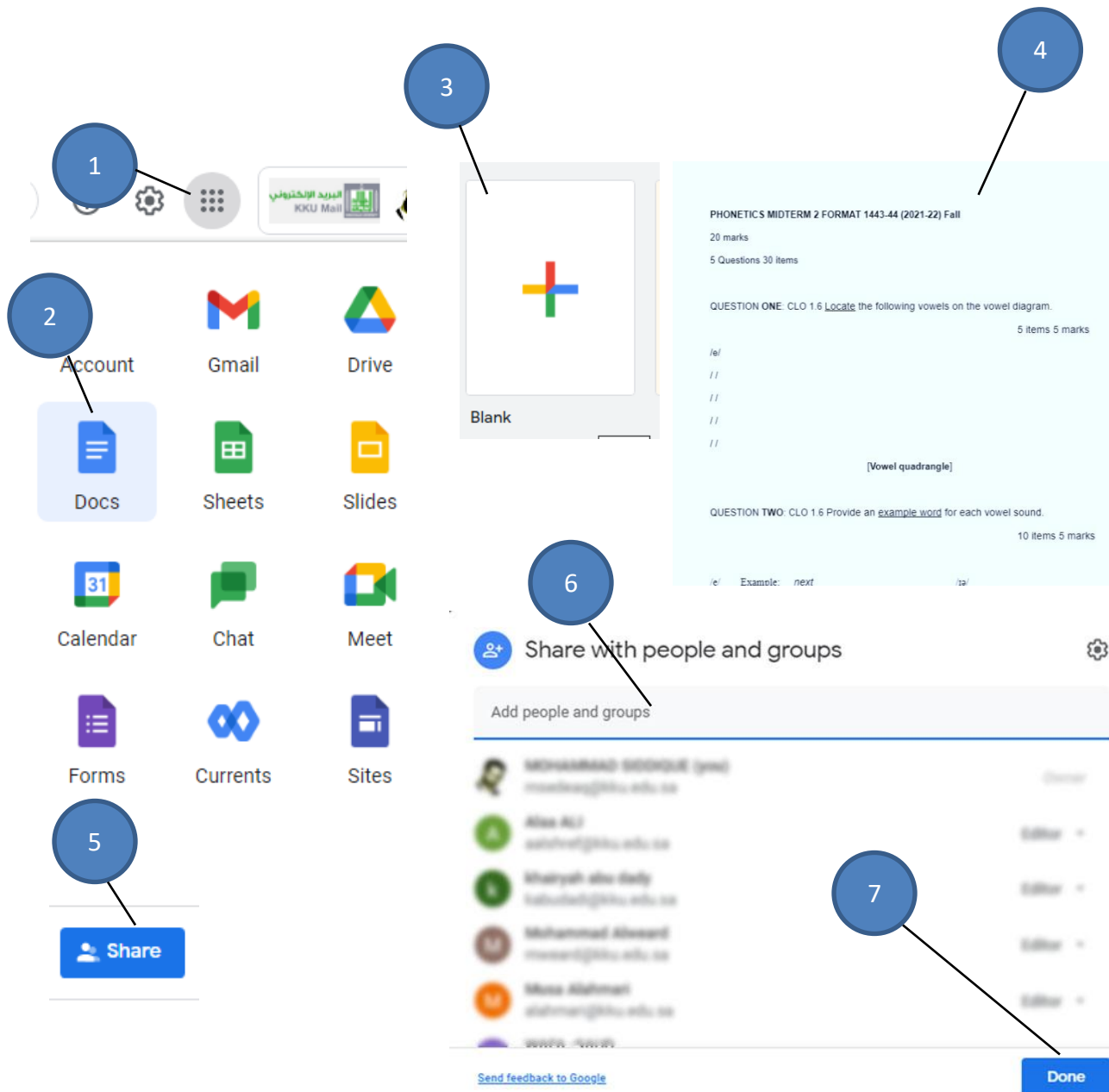
Here is how you plan and start working on a test.



contexts and daily life	QUIZ 1 (Points: 2.5) MT1 (Listening)
feelings in academic and daily	MT1 (Listening) QUIZ 2 (Points: 2.5)
lly.	MT2 (Speaking)
perly while listening.	MT1 (Listening)
to communicate orally to ulks, make plans etc.	FINAL (Speaking)
social communications.	QUIZ 3 (Points: 05)
ctly and clearly while speaking.	FINAL (Speaking)
vocabulary to express various listening topics relevant	FINAL (Listening)
d exercise leadership when	SURVEY (Points: 100)
d professional relationships.	
al responsibility .	

If you are the coordinator, share your exam format with the instructors through a Google document. Here is how.

The main advantage of this is that the instructors make comments directly at their convenience in a single document, and you can check regularly what they are trying to say. When it is done, you have a look at a single document. You don't need to read separate emails.



Now read the CLOs and start designing your main test. Below is an example. (Phonetics Midterm 1)

Alignment between the CLOs and the tasks/tests

1: Knowledge		
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1.2	name the organs of speech, label them in a diagram and explain speech production mechanism.	
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1.5	define and describe consonants in terms of place and manner of articulation, explain states of the glottis, and review full articulatory description of consonants.	MT1 ASSIGNMENT 1 (Points: 2.5)
1.6	define and describe vowels, states of muscles, tongue's vertical and horizontal movements, and states of lips, and classify them into simple and complex ones.	MT2

5 items

Question ONE: Introduction

2.5

Complete the following statements.

- There are three branches of phonetics: Articulatory phonetics, auditory phonetics and _____.
- Phonetic transcription is narrow, but the phonemic one is _____.
- Articulatory phonetics deals with how _____.
- In this course, we are studying _____ phonetics.
- Auditory phonetics deals with _____.

Question TWO: Speech mechanism

2.5

Identify the speech organ in the following diagram.

1.



5 items

Question THREE: IPA, letters and phonemes, RP and GA, Vowels and Consonants differences

Answer ANY TWO of the following.

4

- What are the differences between vowels and consonants? Explain. (40-50 words)

- What is IPA? Explain. (40- 50 words)

2 items

Question FOUR: Consonants

- Complete the following table with full articulatory description of the consonants.

05

Consonant phonemes	Voicing	Place of articulation	Manner of articulation
/f/	voiced		
/n/	voiced		
/t/			stop
/r/		alveolar	
/w/	voiced		

- Complete the following table with the missing information.

06

10 items

Consonant phoneme	Example word with the sound
1. /k/	
2.	chef
3.	nation
4. /j/	
5. /θ/	
6.	zoo

For example:

/p/ pen

What to do about “Values”?

3: Values		
3.1	relate their knowledge and learning experience to developing their competence in using different phonetic applications or related websites.	SURVEY (Points: 100)
3.2	reflect on their learning experience of English sounds to improve their overall understanding of English pronunciation.	
3.3	communicate effectively and appropriately by synthesizing their knowledge of English speech sounds.	
3.4	organize their learning of phonetics being an independent learner teaming up with their peers.	

A survey is a good idea. Below is a sample.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING 1

SURVEY

The measurement of the CLOs under “Values” domain

To the instructor

Please,

1. photocopy pages 2, 3 and 4.
2. before you hand it to your students, make sure that they are fully aware of the fact that this is just a survey, not a test and has nothing to do with their grades. The idea about taking a test may make them feel nervous and eventually lead to erroneous or equivocal data.
3. tell them that their names are not in the form, so they should not worry at all.
4. encourage them to be open and honest about their opinions because this is fully confidential and anonymous.
5. do not show your students the points (5, 4.....0; already deleted). They may unconsciously tend to do better if they know the points, which may lead to wrong data.
6. after you finish, calculate each (using the KEY) and average them (part 1 and part 2 separately) all.

Part 1: Total X 4

Part 2: Total X 2

KEY

5	4	3	2	1	0
Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
دائماً	عادةً	غالباً	بعض الأحيان	نادراً	أبداً

7. keep your data with you until you fill out the following column in the course report after the final examination.

Instructors will read these instructions before they conduct this survey.

SURVEY FORM (Students)

Section _____ Date _____

The instructor will hand this form to the students.

PART 1: Read the statements carefully and check ✓ where appropriate.

Rubrics	Always دائما	Usually غالباً	Often كثيراً	Sometimes بعض الأحيان	Rarely نادراً	Never أبداً
CLO 3.1						
1. I enjoy sharing my knowledge with my classmates. استمتع بمشاركة معلوماتي مع زملائي في الصف						
2. I ask my classmates for help (understanding words or improving listening etc.) whenever possible. أطلب من زملائي في الصف المساعدة في فهم الكلمات التي تساعدني في تطوير مهارة الاستماع عند الضرورة						
3. I act like a group leader and help my classmates to improve their listening and speaking skills. أشارك كقائد مجموعة وأساعد زملائي في الصف في تطوير مهارتي الاستماع والمحادثة لديهم.						
4. I enjoy working in groups. استمتع بالمشاركة في التعلم عن طريق مجموعات						
5. I enjoy working in pairs.						

Calculation.

أشارك كقائد مجموعة وأساعد زملائي في الصف في تطوير مهارتي الاستماع والمحادثة لديهم.						
4. I enjoy working in groups. استمتع بالمشاركة في التعلم عن طريق مجموعات						
5. I enjoy working in pairs. استمتع بالمشاركة في التعلم عن طريق مجموعات زوجية						
Total =					Total X 4 =	

You may download a [sample form](#) and the [calculation method](#).

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Common mistake we make

As an instructor

- ▶ Working on the course report **right after the exam result**.
- ▶ **Always agreeing** with the coordinator.
- ▶ **Not reading the emails** from the coordinator carefully.
- ▶ Measuring “Values” using **direct assessment** (quizzes, assignments).

As a coordinator

- ▶ Designing tests **without reading the CLOs**.
- ▶ Working on the report **right after the exam result**.
- ▶ **Sending a “blank” Course Report form** to the instructors after the final exam.
- ▶ Designing a single task with **various items** (i.e. focusing on many CLOs).
- ▶ Measuring “Values” using **direct assessment** (quizzes, assignments).

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Your stress reduction policy

If you are the coordinator

- Fill in the common boxes (CLOs, assessment methods, N/As etc.) in the CR template/form and send it to the instructors in advance (at least two or three weeks before the final exam starts).
- ask them to keep on working/ editing on a regular basis until the final submission.
- ask them to conduct the survey to measure “Values” during the course and fill in the appropriate boxes with the figures (e.g.75%).
- provide them with calculators (Excel) to make their tasks easy.

But, avoid

- sending a **bank CR form**.
- **burdening the instructors** with things you can do easily alone.
- **dominating**. (I’m the coordinator! This is my decision!)

If you are an instructor

- Share your best practices with the coordinator (because you may be a coordinator for another course or may have been a coordinator before).
- Read emails carefully before you reply/give feedback.
- Act promptly and on time.

But, avoid

- **letting** the coordinator **chase you**. Be available.
- **always agreeing with her/him** (“It’s good. Thank you.”) when he/she asks you for feedback. Instead, praise her/him and provide practical feedback.
- **criticizing** her/his work. Instead, correct her/him politely if necessary.

If you are a coordinator, instead of sending the instructors a **blank form**, you should send the CR after doing the following.

- Make the boxes **green** which you need the instructors to fill in or edit.
- Fill the form in with the **common information**. (CLOs, Assessments methods etc.)
- Email it.

A. Course Identification

No	Instructor(s)	Location	Number of Sections	Number of Students	
				Starting the course	Completing the course
1	Mohammad Adil	Graigor Male Campus	1 (2355)	30	28

B. Course Delivery

1. Course Contact Hours (per semester)

No.	Activity	Planned	Actual
1	Lecture	45	45
2	Laboratory/Studio	0	0
3	Tutorial	0	0
4	Others (Specify)	0	0
Total		45	45

2. Topics not Covered

Topics	Reason for Not Covering	Extent of their Impact on Learning Outcomes	Compensating Action*
All Topics were covered	NA	NA	NA
NA	NA	NA	NA

A. Course Identification

No	Instructor(s)	Location	Number of Sections	Number of Students	
				Starting the course	Completing the course

B. Course Delivery

1. Course Contact Hours (per semester)

No.	Activity	Planned	Actual
1	Lecture		
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3	Tutorial		
4	Others (Specify)		
Total			

2. Topics not Covered

Topics	Reason for Not Covering	Extent of their Impact on Learning Outcomes	Compensating Action*

*Compensating actions already taken or suggested

Course learning Outcomes (CLOs)		PLOs Code	Assessment Methods	Assessment Results		Comment on Assessment Results
				Target Level/ Criterion for Success	Actual Level	
1	Knowledge and Understanding: By the end of this course, students will have been able to:					
1.1	define phonetics and its branches, identify the difference between phonetics and phonology.	K2	Quizzes: (MCQ, gap-filling) Tests (Completing tables, open-ended questions) Midterm examination 1 and Final examination: (Similar question types)	70%%	Level:
1.2	name the organs of speech, label them in a diagram and explain speech production	K3	Quizzes: (MCQ, gap-filling) Tests (Completing	70%%	Level:

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Conclusion

- Always work ahead of time and be proactive.
- Avoid burdening the instructors with tasks you can do alone if you are the coordinator.
- Be always available if you are an instructor.