

ATISSA

In 8.13, students have to present over and over and over again throughout the course of the semester. And we think that this iterative process is really important. We start out giving them some instruction at the beginning of the semester. But often, they still don't feel wholly comfortable with what they're doing the first time they present.

BANUAZIZI:

And so once they've presented, they get videotaped. And then we meet with them to discuss the video, to discuss the slides, to see what worked and what didn't work. And those one-on-one conferences that we have with them, they're reinforcing the core concepts in the instruction but in a way that's really directly linked to the work that they've already done, the work that they're continuing to do, and to challenges that they've already experienced so they can really understand the significance of these strategies.

And so by the time we have them revise one of these presentations that they present in the public oral, which is to their entire class and, often, to people outside the class-- they might be other faculty; they might be friends of the class of the students-- they're already fairly experienced communicators. And they have a pretty good idea of what's effective and what isn't.

A lot of classes at the Institute do a terrific job of exposing students to many, many genres of communication. What I think is unusual about this class is sort of how deeply they're asked to delve into a couple of very specific genres.