

Foster Care to Academic Success

Foreign Language Oral Exams

As a college undergraduate, you are most likely to face an oral exam if you are taking a foreign language. In a foreign language oral exam, you are graded in four separate categories – grammar, pronunciation, communication, and ease of speech or naturalness.

Studying for the test

To study for an oral exam, the best thing you can do is practice. Practice by talking to yourself, in front of the mirror. If you know the subject you'll be asked to talk about, read up on it in the language and learn as much vocabulary as you can. Topics that tend to be asked on oral exams include family life, hobbies, music, school life, what you would like to do during your next vacation or what you did over your last vacation, and current events.

Talk, talk, talk – practice, practice, practice!

Taking the test

- On an oral exam, presentation counts. Dress nicely and arrive a little bit early. Stand straight and keep good eye contact. Remain collected and calm as best you can, but if you feel nervous or there are distractions (such as something happening outside the window) take a deep breath and tell the examiner.
- Try to steer the questions to a subject of interest to you. For example, if you are asked about your favorite sport and you don't have one, say "I am not interested in sports but I saw a good movie the other day," or "I don't have a favorite sport but I love to read." Hopefully, the examiner will then ask you about movies or books.
- Say as much as you can, but stick to what you know.
- If you get nervous or off-track, STOP, look at the professor, take a deep breath, and start over.

Good luck!

Bonne chance!

Buena suerte!

Viel Glueck!