Oral Defense Policy (abstract for syllabus)

Your instructor may require an oral defense for any assignment at their discretion—a brief meeting where you explain and defend your submitted work. This process mirrors the business world, where professionals routinely present and defend their analyses to supervisors and clients, and ensures your work represents authentic learning. If required, you must schedule and complete your defense within 72 hours of notification to receive a non-failing grade; without the defense, **you will receive a zero on the assignment.** Routine scheduling conflicts (work, other classes, social commitments) do not qualify for extensions. Be prepared to summarize your arguments, explain your methodology, defend your conclusions with evidence, and answer questions about your work and writing process. If you've used AI appropriately—for brainstorming, clarifying concepts, or refining drafts—you should be well-prepared to defend your work authentically.

STUDENT-FACING POLICY: Oral Defense of Academic Work

What is an Oral Defense? An oral defense is a brief meeting (in person or on zoom) where you explain, discuss, and defend your submitted work with your instructor. This process mirrors the business world, where professionals routinely present and defend their analyses, recommendations, and decisions to supervisors, clients, and stakeholders. The oral defense develops your ability to clearly articulate your thinking, respond to questions, and stand behind your work, essential skills you'll use throughout your business career, while ensuring your academic work represents authentic learning and understanding.

Why Oral Defenses Matter for Business Students In your business career, you will regularly need to explain and defend your work in one-on-one and small group settings:

- Defend your data analysis when questioned by skeptical executives
- Justify your reasoning behind strategic recommendations under scrutiny
- Respond to challenges about your budget assumptions and projections
- Explain your methodology when clients question your conclusions
- Maintain your position when faced with pushback in critical meetings

The oral defense process develops your ability to think on your feet, articulate the truth of your findings, and demonstrate genuine mastery of your subject matter—skills that distinguish credible professionals from those who merely present information.

For Christian business professionals, this commitment to truth-telling takes on additional significance. Integrity in representing your own work aligns with biblical principles of honesty and authenticity. The oral defense ensures that what you claim as your understanding truly reflects your own learning and analysis, preventing any misrepresentation that could compromise your witness in the workplace.

How It Works

Faculty Discretion: Your instructor may require an oral defense for any assignment at their discretion.

Scheduling Requirement: If an oral defense is required, you must schedule and complete it within 72 hours of notification to receive a non-failing grade on your assignment.

Format: Oral defenses will be conducted one-on-one with your instructor (unless otherwise specified) and will vary in length based on the assignment.

Grading: Your assignment grade will be based primarily on your oral defense performance, demonstrating your understanding of the content, methodology, and implications of your work.

What to Expect

If your instructor asks you to participate in an oral defense to verify your authorship, you should be ready to **talk about your essay in your own words**. During your meeting, you may be asked to:

- **Summarize your essay:** Briefly explain what your paper was about and what your main point or argument was.
- **Describe your writing process:** Share how you researched, organized, and wrote the paper (for example, how you chose your sources or examples).
- **Explain your evidence:** Be prepared to discuss the key examples, quotes, or ideas you used to support your points.
- **Clarify your understanding:** Your instructor may ask questions about specific sentences or ideas to see if you understand what you wrote.
- **Reflect on your learning:** You may be asked what you learned from writing the paper or what you might do differently next time.
- **Answer follow-up questions:** The instructor may ask additional questions to confirm that the work reflects your own thinking and effort.
