

Graduate Module — Orals Coaching & Presentation Discipline (GE 651)

The session-by-session teaching plan for GE 651, a focused six-session elective. Follows the module contract in `modules/module-template.md`. Doctrine 10 names the rules of orals — the proposal in person — but nothing in the curriculum teaches the coaching discipline that makes a team good in the room. This elective is that gap: who presents, how the rehearsal is run, how hard questions are handled, how a virtual oral is won, and how a color-team-style critique turns a live rehearsal into a sharper performance. The orals-coaching canon is at concept altitude (doctrine/08).

Audience: graduate students in the MS program. **Prerequisites:** GE 640 recommended (proposal management & color teams); doctrine/10 required. **Readings:** doctrine/10, the Shipley orals canon, and the course reader on oral presentation and coaching. **Case object:** Ravonics and real (closed) RFPs with oral evaluation components.

Session 1 — The orals architecture

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) design the orals team — who presents, who answers, who observes; (2) set the presentation length and the agenda-deck structure; (3) map the deck onto the evaluation factors.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “The proposal is on the page. Why does the government still want to meet the people?” - Teach (25 min): doctrine/10 + the orals-architecture canon. Orals as the proposal in person — themes, discriminators, and price posture align exactly with what was submitted. The four roles: presenters, subject-matter answerers, the observer-note-taker, and the timekeeper. One voice per topic; roles pre-decided before the room. The agenda deck: opening statement, theme and discriminator walk, evidence for the evaluation factors, personnel and management, price posture, closing. Length discipline: the deck fits the evaluation window, never the reverse. - Apply (25 min): build the orals architecture for a case pursuit — the roster, the agenda-deck outline, and the time budget against the evaluation factors. - Discuss (15 min): “What changes when an evaluator meets the people, not just the pages?” - Close (5 min): assignment.

Discussion prompts. 1. Why does the deck fit the time window rather than the content? 2. When is the presenter the wrong person to answer a technical question?

Homework / reading. Read doctrine/10. Deliverable: a one-page orals architecture for a case pursuit — roster with roles, agenda-deck outline, time budget per section.

Comprehension check. Who fills the four orals roles, and what does each do? How is the agenda deck sized, and why does the time window win?

Session 2 — The rehearsal protocol

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) run a full team run-through to a stopwatch; (2) build the Q&A bank; (3) assign a primary and backup responder per question.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “What does a rehearsal actually rehearse — the words, or the timing and the recovery?” - Teach (25 min): the rehearsal canon. The run-through: full length, timed, with an external observer playing the hostile evaluator. The stopwatch as a hard discipline: every section has a budget, and an overflow is a finding, not a note. The two-pass structure: the first pass finds the weaknesses, the second fixes them. The Q&A bank: built from the evaluation factors, the risk register, the price position, the past-performance citations, and the key personnel, with a primary and a backup responder for each question. - Apply (25 min): run a mini rehearsal of a case pursuit’s opening statement to a stopwatch; then build a ten-question Q&A bank with primary and backup responders. - Discuss (15 min): “Why must the hostile observer be external — what does an insider miss?” - Close (5 min): assignment.

Discussion prompts. 1. What does the stopwatch catch that a friendly run-through will not? 2. How do you decide which questions make the bank?

Homework / reading. Read the rehearsal canon and doctrine/10. Deliverable: a ten-question Q&A bank with primary and backup responders for a case pursuit.

Comprehension check. What is the two-pass rehearsal? Why a primary and a backup responder per question?

Session 3 — Handling hard questions

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) apply the bridge–caveat–commit structure; (2) distinguish answering from defending; (3) handle a question whose answer you do not have.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “The panel asks about your pricing posture — in front of everyone. What do you say?” - Teach (25 min): the hard-question canon. The structure: bridge (acknowledge the question and connect it to a strength), caveat (state the honest limit), commit (promise the specific follow-up). The rules: answer the question asked, never argue with the evaluator, never invent a fact, and treat “I do not know, but I will get you the answer” as legitimate only when the commit is real and followed. - Apply (25 min): role-play hard questions from a panel — price, a past-performance gap, the

incumbent advantage, a security concern — using bridge-caveat-commit. Half the class plays the panel; half answers; then swap. - Discuss (15 min): “When is a non-answer worse than a wrong answer?” - Close (5 min): assignment.

Discussion prompts. 1. What makes a non-answer detectable, and what does it cost the team? 2. How do you bridge without sounding like you are dodging?

Homework / reading. Read the hard-question canon. Deliverable: a bridge-caveat-commit response card for five hard questions on a case pursuit.

Comprehension check. What are the three parts of a hard-question response? When is “I do not know” a legitimate answer?

Session 4 — Virtual orals

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) run an oral over video; (2) manage the camera, the sound, and the tech rehearsal; (3) coordinate a hybrid team without losing the one-voice discipline.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “The oral is on a screen. What changes, and what does not?” - Teach (25 min): the virtual-orals canon. What carries over unchanged: content, roles, the Q&A discipline, the stopwatch. What changes: the camera is the room (eye line, framing, lighting), sound is the reliability risk (microphone discipline, a backup connection), the deck is the visual (screen-share discipline), and latency makes the one-voice rule harder — a pause that reads as a finished thought is now a gap another voice can fall into. The tech rehearsal is a separate pass from the content rehearsal, and it runs first. - Apply (25 min): design the tech protocol and hybrid seating plan for a virtual oral; run a three-minute mini-virtual opening and review the camera and audio against the protocol. - Discuss (15 min): “What is the first thing that fails in a virtual oral, and how does the protocol catch it before the panel does?” - Close (5 min): assignment.

Discussion prompts. 1. Why does latency change the one-voice rule? 2. What must a tech rehearsal check that a content rehearsal will not?

Homework / reading. Read the virtual-orals canon. Deliverable: a virtual-oral protocol — tech checklist, camera plan, hybrid seating chart, and the failover plan.

Comprehension check. What changes in a virtual oral, and what stays the same? Why is the tech rehearsal a separate pass?

Session 5 — The color-team-style oral critique

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) run a peer-panel critique of a live rehearsal; (2) grade a performance against the evaluation factors; (3) write specific, actionable findings.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “The color-team rules were written for documents. How do they transfer to a live performance?” - Teach (25 min): the oral-critique canon + GE 640’s color-team discipline. The two non-negotiable rules transfer whole: reviewer independence (no one grades the section they present) and finding specificity (a finding names the factor, the moment, and the fix — it is never an opinion about the presenter). The critique is forward-only: its job is the next rehearsal, not a ranking of people. - Apply (35 min): a live mini-oral. One team presents a five-minute opening under the Session-2 stopwatch; a peer panel grades against the evaluation factors and produces a findings register (critical / major / minor) with a fix for each finding. - Discuss (10 min): “What does a rehearsal critique reveal that a document review cannot?” - Close (5 min): assignment.

Discussion prompts. 1. Why must the critique panel be independent of the presenters? 2. What is the difference between a rehearsal finding and an opinion about the presenter?

Homework / reading. Read GE 640’s color-team canon and doctrine/10. Deliverable: the oral-critique findings register for the live rehearsal, with a fix per finding.

Comprehension check. How do the two non-negotiable color-team rules transfer to a live rehearsal? What makes a critique finding specific?

Session 6 — The oral-day playbook

Learning objectives. By the end of this session, students can: (1) build the oral-day timeline from T-24 hours to the room; (2) run the pre-room rituals; (3) run the after-oral capture that feeds the retrospective.

Session plan (75 min). - Open (5 min): “The morning of the oral. What is on your checklist at 6 a.m.?” - Teach (25 min): doctrine/10 + the oral-day canon. The timeline: travel and arrival, the tech check, the team huddle (the story in one line), the room walk, the presentation, the Q&A, the close, and the capture — every question, every commitment, every signal recorded before the room disperses. The pre-room rituals: the one-story huddle, the no-new-information rule (nothing new is introduced the night before), and the roles re-confirmation. After the room: every oral commitment is reconciled against the written proposal, because a commitment made in person that the proposal does not back is a hole in the story. - Apply (25 min): build the full oral-day playbook for a case pursuit — timeline, pre-room checklist, and the post-oral capture template. - Discuss

(15 min): “Which oral-day failure is most common, and how does the playbook prevent it?” - Close (5 min): assignment and bridge to the practice challenge.

Discussion prompts. 1. Why is the after-oral capture as important as the presentation? 2. What does the no-new-information rule protect?

Homework / reading. Read doctrine/10. Deliverable: the full oral-day playbook with timeline, pre-room checklist, and capture template.

Comprehension check. What are the three phases of oral day? What must be captured before the room disperses, and why does it feed the retrospective?

Module self-check

1. What does “the oral is the proposal in person” change about how a team prepares — versus how it might prepare a generic presentation?
2. What are the two non-negotiable rules of a color-team-style oral critique, and how do they transfer from the document review to the live rehearsal?
3. Why does the after-oral capture matter as much as the presentation itself — and where does its record feed?

The practice challenge

This elective’s live edge is the practice layer’s **oral-rehearsal challenge** — **CH-25** in **practice/challenges/**, built by the practice-layer agent to pair with this module. It is the cohort drill that turns these six sessions into a dress rehearsal: a team takes a real (closed) solicitation with an oral component, runs the architecture and rehearsal protocol from Sessions 1–2, and is graded by a peer panel using the critique from Session 5. Run it after Session 6 — the playbook from Session 6 is exactly what the drill is designed to test.