

Agricultural Communications

Rule years 2025–2028 · Revision 1 · Published October 9, 2026

0. General Rules & Eligibility

Career Development Events are governed by the NAEA CDE Committee. All events follow [CDE General Rules and Eligibility](#).

Qualification for this event

District qualification	Open to all schools; online pre-qualifier (Feb.), top 10 teams advance
Students per team	4
Grades	9–12
National qualifying event?	Yes
Timeframe	Prequalifying: early February; Finals: FFA Convention
Host	UNL ALEC Division
Event Superintendent	Dr. Laura Young

1. Overview

The Agricultural Communication Career Development Event provides individuals with the basic communication skills needed to take advantage of career opportunities in agricultural communication. Public communication about agricultural products, practices, and policies is essential to the future of agriculture. Students with strong communication skills who can use a variety of media to help the public understand issues related to the agricultural industry have a bright future in the job market. This event draws from Agricultural Communications curricula that contain the following elements: strategic communication/integrated multimedia communication, science literacy, public issues and policy, presentation strategies, news writing/editing, Associated Press (AP) style.

AFNR Courses this CDE Aligns with: ag sales and marketing, ag businesses, ag communication, entrepreneurship, economics and agribusiness management, leadership and ethics in agriculture.

Objectives

The Agricultural Communication CDE provides an opportunity for the participant to:

- As part of a team effort, develop and present an effective communication plan for a client by creatively using elements of communication planning referenced in the communication plan proposal scorecard.
- Demonstrate knowledge in areas of agricultural communication.
- Apply correct Associated Press style conventions to the selected communication channels (Purdue OWL <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>)

Communication Plan Objectives:

- Properly select a client or situation that matches the current year's scenario.
- Properly identify client needs.
- Create a strategic communication plan for a client using all the elements from the communication plan scorecard to satisfy the client's needs
- Deliver an effective presentation to communicate key points of the communication plan.

- Develop a news story that accurately reflects the campaign.
- Develop a social communication plan that promotes the campaign.
- Design a magazine spread.
- Create an audio/visual component that relates to the campaign.
- Demonstrate knowledge of AP style writing (OWL Purdue).
- Consider writing quality, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and format.

Editing Exercise and Communication Quiz Objectives:

- Demonstrate proficiency in AP style.
- Identify and correct grammatical errors.
- Demonstrate knowledge related to basic elements of journalistic writing, broadcasting, public relations, graphic design, and communication ethics.

2. Eligibility & Team

Open to students in Grades 9–12. Teams are 4 students. Open to all schools; online pre-qualifier (Feb.), top 10 teams advance. This event is national-qualifying.

Team Eligibility Guidelines

- Teams consist of four members. Teams with fewer than four members will **not** be allowed to participate.
- Teams must register and pay to compete in the pre-qualifier event, which will cover registration for teams that qualify to participate in finals (this is a reduced registration rate compared to other CDEs).
 - At the time of registration, all teams must provide the names of the four team members and four alternates.
 - Teams that qualify for finals will not need to pay an additional registration fee. Alternates may be used during finals as long as they were registered for the prequalifying round.

State Pre-Qualifier Guidelines

- All Nebraska schools will be eligible to compete in the state prequalifying competition (via Zoom) hosted by the Nebraska Agricultural Communication CDE superintendent(s) in early February.

State Finals Eligibility Guidelines

- The top 10 teams from the prequalifying round will be eligible to compete at the Nebraska Agricultural Communication CDE Finals and to submit a full communication plan.
- Qualified schools must complete and submit a communication plan by the provided deadline (typically mid-March) to compete in the state CDE. The communication plan must be submitted electronically in PDF format to the link provided on the [Agricultural Communications page on the Nebraska CDEs website](#)
- A 10% penalty will be assessed for documents received after the deadline.

The communication plan must address the theme/scenario as described, meet the same criteria as the National FFA rules, and be judged using the same rubric. Refer to the “Event Guideline” section for more details about the communication plan format.

3. What to Bring

Attire

- FFA official dress or other professional dress is required to participate in this event.
- Ten points will be deducted from the individual score if the individual **does not** wear official/professional dress.

State Prequalifying Event (via distance)

- Students must be in the same room with an approved proctor. **The room must be quiet, and only the proctor and four students may be present.** See Section 4 for more details on who may proctor.

Supplies

Technology Minimum Requirements for the prequalifying event:

- A reliable internet connection of at least 10 Mbps is required.
- Install and update Zoom to the latest version before the event. We recommend testing Zoom beforehand to ensure the camera and audio are configured properly. Tip: Students may need to click “Connect to Computer/Device Audio” after joining a meeting.
- Each student must have their own device with a functioning web camera, microphone, and speakers capable of running Zoom. Choose an option listed below:
 - Option 1 (preferred): A Windows or Mac laptop/computer. System Requirements for Windows/Mac are available [here](#).
 - Option 2: A Chromebook capable of running Zoom (download from the Google Play Store). Some Chromebooks have difficulty running Zoom, so pre-testing is strongly encouraged.
 - iPads/tablets are **not allowed**, as Zoom stops sending video once a student moves to a different App/web browser.
- Events will utilize Google Forms (Quiz) as the testing platform. Access to Google services with a modern web browser is essential, so school filters should be checked.

State Finals (in-person): Qualifying teams must supply the following:

- Four (4) pencil/pens for the editing exercise and communication quiz.
- Materials needed for communication plan presentations.
- The following equipment will be provided for the communication plan presentations:
 - PC computer with PowerPoint
 - Digital projector
 - Projector screen and table
- Note. Teams may bring additional equipment for the communication plan presentation, as long as they can set up and tear down equipment within the time allowed for the presentation.

4. Event Format

Timing

Important Dates

- A. January 15 (Approximately) - Registration for state prequalifying event
- B. 1st two weeks of February - State qualifying event held via Zoom (two meeting times available)
- C. 3rd week of February - Top 10 teams qualified for state finals competition notified and communication plan scenario provided
- D. Mid-March - Communication plans due to the CDE superintendent for qualified teams.

State CDE Schedule

- A. Teams will have scheduled presentation times.

- B. On the day of the event, teams will complete the editing exercise, communication quiz, and communication plan presentation.

Format

This event includes a qualifying round and a final round.

Prequalifying Round (online in February)

A. Prequalifying Details and Requirements

- I. The CDE superintendent will host the state prequalifying competition via Zoom for all teams wishing to compete in the Nebraska Agricultural Communications CDE.
- II. **For the prequalifying event, teams must identify a proctor.** The proctor must be an administrator, guidance counselor, or librarian, and you must provide the proctor's contact information by a specified date after registration. Proctor guidelines will be distributed to registered proctors prior to the pre-qualifier.
- III. The top 10 scoring teams will be invited to the finals.
- IV. All prequalifying scores will be reset and will NOT carry over to finals scoring.

B. Components of the Qualifying Round include:

I. Individual Communications Quiz (15 minutes)

1. Each member will complete a quiz that covers basic elements important to journalistic writing, broadcasting, public relations, graphic design, and communication ethics. Much of the information for the quiz will be drawn from the National FFA's online resource: Agricultural Communications in the Classroom: Preparing for a Future in the Agricultural Communications Industry or from the Associated Press Stylebook. Team members **will NOT be** able to use the style manual or dictionary during this exercise.

II. Individual Editing Exercise (15 minutes)

1. Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each team member will complete an editing exercise. They will receive a printed document containing 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members may be required to use correct proofreader's marks (see Associated Press Stylebook). The document will include style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes. Team members **will NOT be** able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

III. Team Communications Plan Exercise (30 minutes)

1. All members of the team will work together to complete and submit a single communications plan Exercise.
2. Each team will complete a communications plan Exercise consisting of 5 short-answer questions related to developing a communications plan. Teams **will not develop** full plans but will instead explain and draft components of a plan. Teams will have 30 minutes to complete this exercise.
3. Students will complete this only during the prequalifying round and will require a registered proctor to be present in the room.

Finals Round (in-person in Lincoln)

- A. The top 10 scoring teams from the qualifying round will be invited to compete at the Nebraska Agricultural Communications CDE - Finals.
- B. When teams receive the finals invitation, they will receive a pre-recorded press conference from an agricultural organization. This press conference will guide students and provide background information on the scenario as they create a communication plan.

- C. At the finals, each team will deliver their communication plan as a formal presentation, and each team member will retake the communication quiz and editing exercise.
- D. Only the scores from the Finals will count toward the State CDE.

Detailed descriptions for each Finals Round component:

- A. **Individual Communications Quiz (15 minutes, 25 points)**—Similar to the prequalifying round, each member will complete a quiz that covers basic elements important to journalistic writing, broadcasting, public relations, graphic design, and communication ethics. Much of the information for the quiz will be drawn from the National FFA's online resource: Agricultural Communications in the Classroom: Preparing for a Future in the Agricultural Communications Industry or from the Associated Press Stylebook. Team members **will NOT be** able to use the style manual or dictionary during this exercise.
- B. **Individual Editing Exercise (15 minutes, 25 points)**— Similar to the prequalifying round, each team member will complete an editing exercise. They will receive a printed document containing 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members may be required to use correct proofreader's marks (see Associated Press Stylebook). The document will include style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes. Team members **will NOT be** able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.
- C. **Communication Plan (completed before the event, 100 points)**—Teams will act as communications consultants and develop an agriculture-related communications plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a client with a communications need. Please reference the current event specifications in the term orientation packet. At the state event, the team will make an oral presentation of the communications plan.
 - I. **Communication Plan Details** — The team must prepare a three-page communication plan in PDF format, as if presenting it to a client. Creating the communication plan should be a collaborative effort involving all team members. The communication plan should address the following points:
 1. Provide an overview of the communication plan
 2. Define the central theme or controlling idea
 3. Pose the main question or narrative inquiry
 4. Specify the intended call to action
 5. Explain the rationale and goal, as well as the relevance to the audience, and alignment with the mission of the FFA New Horizons magazine for each of the four components: feature story, magazine layout, broadcast production piece, and social media plan.

II. Guidelines for the Communication Plan

1. A maximum of three typed pages, not including the cover page, table of contents, references, or appendices.
2. Double-spaced with 1" margins.
3. Paginated (numbered pages not including cover page).
4. 12-point Times New Roman font (not including display text or headings).
5. Formatted and edited according to AP Style guidelines (see Associated Press Stylebook).
6. The communications plan must include the following sections (points will be deducted for missing or incomplete sections):
 - a. **Cover page**
 - i. Must include the title of the communications plan, CDE name, chapter name, team member names, and year in school.
 - ii. May include a creative design.
 - b. **Table of Contents**

c. References

- i. Formatted and edited according to AP Style guidelines (see Associated Press Stylebook).

d. Appendices/Deliverables (REQUIRED; see Appendix A for descriptions. These do NOT count toward the 3-page communication plan limit.)

- i. **Feature Story** (100 points)
- ii. **Magazine Layout** (100 points)
- iii. **Broadcast Production** (100 points)
- iv. **Social Communications Plan** (100 points)

D. Communication Plan Presentation (12 minutes, plus questions and set-up time, 200 points)

- I. Qualified teams for finals will present their communications plan as if pitching it to the client identified in the scenario on the day of the event.
- II. The presentation should follow the structure of the written communications plan.
- III. Teams are encouraged to bring examples of materials that would be used to execute the plan (e.g., social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, website, blogging, and displays).
- IV. Each team member must participate in the presentation.
- V. Each team will be allowed 12 minutes to present its communications plan to a panel of judges, who will play the role of the client. Five points will be deducted for each 15-second overrun beyond the 12-minute limit. After the presentation, judges will have five minutes to ask questions.
- VI. Teams will have 10 minutes total to set up and tear down equipment (e.g., 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to tear down).
- VII. If equipment fails, the team may be asked to proceed with the presentation. A backup plan is recommended.

No unapproved electronic devices of any kind, including cell phones, computers, tablets (e.g., iPad), and audio recorders, will be allowed during the Editing Exercise or Communications Quiz. Using these devices will result in automatic disqualification of your team.

5. Scoring & Tiebreakers

Prequalifying Round Team Score Calculation

- Individual Communications Quiz (25 points x 4 individuals) = 100 points
- Individual Editing Exercise (25 points x 4 individuals) = 100 points
- Team Communications Plan Exercise = 25 points
- Total Points Possible = 225 points

Prequalifying Round Team Score Tiebreakers (in order):

- A. Communications Plan Exercise Score
- B. Combined Communications Quiz
- C. Combined Editing Exercise Score

Finals Individual Scoring

Finals Individual Score Calculation Score (Based on scores only from the Finals)

Component	Detail	Points
Communications Quiz	Quiz score out of 25 points	25
Editing Exercise	25 Mistakes × 1 Point	25
Grand total		50

Finals Individual Tiebreakers

Individual ties will be decided in the following order:

- A. Editing Exercise Score
- B. Communications Quiz Score
- C. Team Communications Plan Score
- D. Questions as determined by the Superintendent

Finals Team Scoring

Finals Team Score Calculation Score (Based on scores only from the Finals)

Component	Detail	Points
Communications Plan	Scored by scorecard (Appendix B: Communications Plan Scorecard)	100
Magazine Layout	Scored by scorecard (Appendix E: Magazine Layout Design Practicum Scorecard)	100
Broadcast	Scored by scorecard (Appendix F: Broadcast Production Scorecard)	100
Feature Story	Scored by scorecard (Appendix C: Feature Story Practicum Scorecard)	100
Social Media Plan	Scored by scorecard (Appendix D: Social Media Plan Practicum Scorecard)	100
Communications Plan Presentation	Scored by scorecard (Appendix G: Communications Plan Presentation Scorecard)	200
Sum of Individual Scores	4 Students × 50 Points	200
Grand total		900

Finals Team Tiebreakers

Finals Round Team Ties will be decided by the following order:

- A. Communications Plan Score
- B. Communications Plan Presentation Score
- C. Combined Editing Exercise Score
- D. Combined Communications Quiz Score

6. Study Resources

Approved study resources

- [UNL CDE Study Materials Folder \(OneDrive\)](#) — Practice materials and examples for this CDE.
- [Nebraska Agricultural Communications CDE](#) — Nebraska Agricultural Communications CDE resource hub: practice exercises, example communication plans, and more
- [Associated Press \(AP\) Style section \(Writer Practicum writing style\)](#) — Purdue OWL guide to AP (Associated Press) style — the writing style used in the Writer practicum.
- [Formatted and edited according to AP Style guidelines \(see Associated Press Stylebook\)](#) — Purdue OWL guide to Associated Press (AP) style rules for news writing and editing
- [Quick and Dirty Tips: Grammar \(Grammar Girl\)](#)
- [Recommended: Telg, R., Irani, T., Kent, K., & Lundy, L. \(Eds.\) \(2022\). Agricultural and Natural Resources Communications. Free online textbook.](#) — Free online textbook, Agricultural and Natural Resources Communications (Telg et al., 2022)

Past Exams

- [Communications Quiz - Practice Questions](#) — Practice communications quiz question sets (combined from archived Word sources).
- [Editing Quiz - Practice Questions](#) — Practice editing/AP-style quiz question sets (combined from archived Word sources).
- [2022 National CDE Communications Quiz](#)
- [2022 National CDE Communications Quiz - Answer Key](#)
- For past examples of communications plans, editing exercises, and communications quizzes, please click the links below
- [National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE](#)
- [Agricultural Communications page on the Nebraska CDEs website](#) — Format, deliverables, timeline, and scenario.

7. After the Event

There will be no debriefing however, all scorecards are returned to the teams at the conclusion of state convention.

List of Appendices

- [Appendix A: Explanation of Communications Plan Deliverables](#)
- [Appendix B: Communications Plan Scorecard](#)

- [Appendix C: Feature Story Practicum Scorecard](#)
- [Appendix D: Social Media Plan Practicum Scorecard](#)
- [Appendix E: Magazine Layout Design Practicum Scorecard](#)
- [Appendix F: Broadcast Production Scorecard](#)
- [Appendix G: Communications Plan Presentation Scorecard](#)

Appendix A: Explanation of Communications Plan Deliverables

Feature Story (100 points)

Writers will write a news story for FFA New Horizons magazine using the provided materials and press conference information. It should be written for the magazine's target audience, have a strong focus and lead (opening paragraph), and include a headline. Although the news writer will provide their copy to the magazine designer for placement in their layout, news writers must also submit a PDF of their story for judging. Feature stories should be 350-500 words in length. A feature story is oftentimes a human interest piece and might be a multi-part series. One example was about the homeless in Omaha. It's a story told from multiple perspectives. <https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-a-feature-231602>

Magazine Layout Design (100 points)

Designers will use the press packet and information gathered in the press conference to develop a magazine layout for FFA New Horizons using the feature story text written by the news writer. Various photos, graphics, and logos will be provided for use in these layouts. Designers may use any page layout software available (i.e., Canva, Adobe Express, InDesign, etc.) if it appropriately tells the story and represents a design in FFA New Horizons. The magazine designer must use the text written by the news writer. Layouts will be saved and submitted in a PDF for judging.

Broadcast Production (100 points)

Broadcasters will receive video and/or audio clips, photos, and/or music to create a 60 to 90- second story for the FFA New Horizons website. This can be a television story, online video, radio story, podcast, or slide show. This broadcast product can be used to promote readership of the story created by their team, or it can supplement what is in the written story – it is up to the team to decide the best use of these resources. Spotify for Podcasters, Adobe Premiere, Express, Rush, or Audition; Canva Video; iMovie; Movie Maker; Anchor; BounceCast; or PodCastle are all acceptable software for this practicum but are not the only available software options. To be submitted for judging, broadcast productions must be exported to the student's device in a standard format, such as mp4 or mov. Please submit your video as a link. It may be easiest to upload your video to YouTube. You can find directions for how to post an unlisted video to YouTube here. <https://go.unl.edu/unlistedyoutubevideos>

Social Communication Plan (100 points)

Social communication planners will develop posts to accompany and promote their team's magazine story. The strategy should be for a one-week flight, involve at least three social media platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Snapchat, or others), and contain a minimum of seven posts total. Students may use any design software to create the posts (Canva, Adobe Express, Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, for example). The plan must be submitted in PDF format, including screenshots, links and/or embedded images of each created post. Downloaded posts and videos may be included in the social media package.

Appendix B: Communications Plan Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Overview	- Overview of communications package and created components is concise, precise, and clearly explained. - Created components are logical and relevant to the package.	- Overview of communications package and created components need clarification at times. - Created components are effective but need more relevance or thought.	- The overview of the communications package and created components is not clearly explained. - Created components are sometimes confusing or leave questions about their relevance.		x2	
Central Theme or Controlling Idea	The central theme or controlling idea is clearly defined and is concise, precise, and clearly explained.	The central theme or controlling idea is mostly defined but needs some clarification or additional details.	The central theme or controlling idea is unclear, poorly defined, or confusing.		x2	
Main Question or Narrative Inquiry	The main question or narrative inquiry is clearly posed and adequately guides the communications plan.	The main question or narrative inquiry is only somewhat clear to guide the communications plan.	The main question or narrative inquiry is missing or fails to guide the communications plan.		x2	
Call To Action	The communications plan specifies a clear and appropriate intended call to action.	The communications plan includes a call to action, but it was not specific, clear, or appropriate.	The communications plan does not specify a clear or appropriate intended call to action.		x2	
The following indicators reference the success of explaining the rationale and goal of the specific component, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine						
Feature Story	Rationale conveys the full intended message, calls to action and aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale mostly conveys the full intended message, some call to action and mostly aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale lacks a clear full intended message with little call to action and does not align to the publication's mission.		x3	
Magazine Layout	Rationale conveys the full intended message, calls to action and aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale mostly conveys the full intended message, some call to action and mostly aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale lacks a clear full intended message is unclear with little call to action and does not align to the publication's mission.		x3	
Broadcast Production Piece	Rationale conveys the full intended message, calls to action and aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale mostly conveys the full intended message, some call to action and mostly aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale lacks a clear full intended message is unclear with little call to action and does not align to the publication's mission.		x3	
Social Media Plan	Rationale conveys the full intended message, calls to action and aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale mostly conveys the full intended message, some call to action and mostly aligns to the publication's mission.	Rationale lacks a clear full intended message is unclear with little call to action and does not align to the publication's mission.		x3	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE						

Appendix C: Feature Story Practicum Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1– 0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Lead/focus	Lead is accurate, draws in audience, engaging, catchy, original	Lead has 1 or 2 strong elements but fails in others, shows some signs of originality	Misses point of story, buries lead, neither original or catchy, too long, inaccurate		x 3	
Accuracy of information and quotes	Adequately uses multiple sources, ideas, and facts, tells complete story, information is properly attributed	Minor inaccuracies or sources improperly used, info or opinion given without attribution, missing key sources, quotes used with weak connection	Missing information, holes, no or weak quotes, unfounded opinions, inaccuracies		x 3	
Clarity and conciseness	Focus of story is clear, makes use of effective words, descriptive, nothing detracts from focus of story, everything contributes to angle of story	Clear writing with some poor word choice, passive voice, slightly wordy or confusing, lacks sense of unity, some areas detract from angle	No clear angle, story rambles, is awkward, poor word choice, unclear statements, dull writing		x 2	
Correct style (AP)	0-2 errors in AP style, attributions done correctly	3-5 errors in AP style, 1 attribution error	6 or more errors in AP style, 2 or more attribution errors		x 2	
Depth of coverage	Strong evidence of good research, adequately presents all sides, all in story are identified, info is accurate and thorough, overall fairness to subjects and sources, bias free	Quotes are interesting and storytelling, presents sides mostly equal, quotes lead to question of bias, minor insertions of opinions	Quotes are short, absent, or weak, ineffective use of quotes, displays unjustifiable bias, relies on stereotype, involves unwarranted opinion		x 2	
Header/ headline	Headline is catchy, is positive and specific, contains strong, active verbs and short, simple words	Headline is slightly mechanical, slightly longer or slightly shorter than needed, headline is slightly vague	Headline is mechanical, too long or too short, has no connection to the story at all, left out or forgotten		x 2	
Grammar, spelling, punctuation & word choice	Largely error-free, well edited, no spelling errors, includes proper spelling of all names	Minor errors but still readable, story is spell checked but contains several grammatical errors	Errors interfere with comprehension, names are misspelled, spelling errors, contains many grammatical errors		x 2	
Organization and format	Information flows seamlessly from one point to next, effective transitions, appropriate length of story, inverted pyramid order with information descending in order of importance	Information generally well ordered with a few confusing jumps, weaker transitions, readable with inconsistent flow, somewhat abrupt or not using inverted pyramid fully	Structure does not move logically from one point to another, no or poor transitions, choppy or confusing, not in inverted pyramid		x 2	
Accomplishment of purpose	Story conveys the full intended message to audience, no doubt about any information	Story has a few confusing parts but mostly leaves readers with a feeling of full information and understanding	Creates confusion among readers, has information missing and is overall unclear		x 2	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE						

Appendix D: Social Media Plan Practicum Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Purpose and goals of plan	• Purpose of the social media plan is clearly described. Plan clearly describe why and how social media promotion is important to the team's story. • Objectives/goals for the plan are clearly stated.	• Purpose of the social media plan is somewhat clearly described. Plan is lacking some detail on why and how social media promotion is important to the team's story. • Objectives/goals for the plan are lacking in detail.	• Purpose of the social media plan is not clearly described. Plan does not provide details on why and how social media promotion is important to the team's story. • No objectives/goals for the plan are provided.		x 3	
Clarity and conciseness	• Focus of social media plan and posts is clear yet concise and is easy to understand and implement • Plan explains social media platform justification and use well • Plan is focused and cohesive. • All elements of plan contribute to overall purpose and goals	• Focus of social media plan and posts is only somewhat clear and lacks some clarity in places. Some areas are unclear or wordy. • Justification and use of social media platforms lacks some detail or clarity • Plan lacks sense of unity throughout • Some elements of plan detract from overall purpose and goals	• No clear focus for social media plan and posts. A lack of clarity and detail is provided. • Plan is too wordy or drawn out and lacks clarity. • No justification for use of social media platforms is provided. • Plan has no unity. • Elements of plan do not fit overall purpose and goals		x 3	
Scope of plan	• Social media plan encompasses one full week's worth of content. • Plan involves at least 3 social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, SnapChat, etc.)	• Social media plan is written for one week's worth of content, but lacks an adequately complete plan for the week • Plan involves only 2 social media platforms	• Social media plan lacks content to fill one week of posting • Plan involves only 1 social media platform		X 3	
Posts contained within plan	• Social media plan contains 7 or more posts • All posts are relevant and promote/accompany team's story very well • Posts contain clear and specific message to promote/accompany team's story • Posts are concrete, creative and well thought out	• Social media plan contains 4- 6 posts • One or more posts lack relevance and/or do not promote/accompany team's story well • Message(s) within posts are somewhat unclear and vague • Posts lack some creativity and thought and are a bit abstract	• Social media plan contains 3 or fewer posts • Posts provided are not related to team's story • Message(s) within posts are unclear and vague • Posts are not creative and lack thoughtfulness		X 3	
Timeline for plan	• Social media plan contains a clear timeline for use and for posting content online • Timeline is well-formatted and is easy to view • Timeline is logical and promotes proper use of social media platforms proposed	• Timeline is somewhat unclear or incomplete • Timeline lacks some formatting or is a somewhat confusing for viewers • Timeline is mostly logical but lacks some understanding of social media platforms proposed	• No timeline for plan is provided • Timeline does not reflect plan presented		X 2	
Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice	• Largely error-free, plan and posts are well edited, no spelling errors, include proper spelling of all names	• Minor errors but still readable, plan and posts are spell checked but contains several grammatical errors	• Errors interfere with comprehension of plan/posts, names are misspelled, many spelling errors, contains many grammatical errors		X 3	
Organization and format	• Social media plan is well organized. • Plan flows seamlessly and makes use of effective transitions and heading/subheadings • Plan is formatted well for ease of use	• Social media plan is mostly organized. • Plan lacks some transitions and heading/subheadings • Plan is only somewhat well formatted	• Social media plan is not organized. • No transitions or heading/subheadings are used • Plan is difficult to read or use		X 3	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100						

Appendix E: Magazine Layout Design Practicum Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1– 0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Overall attractiveness of layout	- Layout is very aesthetically pleasing, nice to look at, and captures attention - Appropriate and attractive use of color, images, and fonts throughout - All content on layout is easy to read and consume - Consistent feel throughout all layout pages with consistent use of color, fonts, and font size - All pages have good flow and are easy to skim	- Layout look is average, but does not capture viewer attention - Most colors, images, and fonts are appropriate - Some content on layout is not easy to read or consume - Some consistency throughout layout pages, color or fonts, but not as cohesive as it could be - Layout pages have some flow, but one or more elements are out place - Not all pages are easily skimmable	- Layout does not draw viewer attention and is not pleasing to look at - Inappropriate use of color, images, and fonts – makes the layout difficult to view - Content on layout is not easy to read and consume - No consistency throughout Layout Pages, color, or fonts - Pages have little or no flow and no pages are easy to skim		X 4	
Technical skills specific to activity	- Layout effectively utilizes a full 2-page spread - Layout has an appropriate and relevant title - Layout is appropriate and relevant for topic and story	- Layout does not effectively use full 2-page spread - Layout has a title, but it lacks appropriateness or relevant to story content - Layout is only loosely tied to topic and story	- Layout contains utilizes only 1 page - Layout does not have a title - Layout does not fit with topic and story		X 4	
Use of design principles Appropriateness Consistency Focus & Flow Balance	- All elements match the purpose and audience. Fonts, graphics, and layout are “appropriate” for the purpose & audience. All elements have good contrast which make them easy to view and read. - Colors, fonts, graphics, and photos are used effectively throughout the layout and unify all pages of the spread. - Layout has a center of focus and leads the reader’s eye across the spread. Layout encourages the reader to read the ENTIRE story. - All elements in layout create a balanced spread. All elements have good proximity with appropriate spacing between items.	- One or more elements does not match the purpose and audience. Fonts, graphics, and layout do not fit the purpose and audience. Some elements have poor contrast which make them difficult to view and read. - One or more colors, fonts, graphics, and/or photos are used ineffectively throughout the layout and break the unity of the spread. - Layout lacks a strong center of focus and fails to fully lead reader’s eyes across the spread. - One or more elements in layout has poor balance in the spread. Some elements have poor proximity with inappropriate spacing between items.	- Many elements do not match the purpose and audience. Fonts, graphics, and layout poorly fit purpose and audience. Most elements have poor contrast which make them difficult to view and read. - Most colors, fonts, graphics, and/or photos are used ineffectively throughout the layout and break the unity of the spread. - Layout has no center of focus and fails to lead reader’s eyes across the spread. - Elements in layout are poorly balanced. Elements are poorly placed.		X 4	
Neatness and creativity	- Layout is well-organized - Layout displays creative or unique design and layout - Layout creatively portrays elements of topic and story - No GSP errors found in layout text	- Layout is somewhat organized but could be improved to aid in viewing - Layout design is average (lacking creativity) - Minor GSP errors found in layout text	- Layout is disorganized and needs to be restructured - Layout design is poor - Major GSP errors found in layout text		X 4	
Choice and placement of photo(s) and graphic(s)	- Appropriate and relevant images, graphics, and photos were used - Placement of images enhances look of layout - Images help to promote the topic and help tell an appropriate story	- One or more images, graphics, and photos used are not relevant or appropriate - Placement of one or more images distracts from look of layout - One or more images do not help to promote the topic or do not relate to story being told	- No images, graphics, and photos used are relevant or appropriate - Placement of images is poor and distracts from look of layout - Images do not promote the topic or distract from story being told		X 4	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF A 100 POSSIBLE						

Appendix F: Broadcast Production Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Use of provided materials	• Photos, video, & audio add clarity and support the overall message in the broadcast piece. • Incorporated numerous elements/visuals. • Content was not repetitive, no recognized use of repeated elements.	• Photos, video, & audio add some clarity and support to the overall message in the broadcast piece. • Incorporated an adequate number of elements/visuals. • Content was not repetitive, no recognized use of repeated elements.	• Photos, video, & audio add little to no clarity and support to the overall message in the broadcast piece. • Failed to incorporate elements/visuals. • Repeated use of elements.		x 3	
Editing/continuity quality	• Editing enhances final product, clear grasp of techniques and tools. • Broadcast piece moves smoothly (no erratic movements/ transitions). • Excellent placing and timing. • No spelling or grammatical errors. • Digital effects are used appropriately for emphasis.	• Basic usage of editing tools is evident. Techniques are clear and simple. • A variety of transitions are used. Most fit broadcast piece well. • Broadcast piece mostly moves at a steady pace, feels smooth. • One (1) spelling and/or grammatical error. • Digital effects are used appropriately for emphasis, some minor errors in timing or application.	• Excessive use of transitions • Seemed to have difficulty with editing tools. • No transitions or inappropriate transitions. • Timing is clumsy and choppy. • Multiple spelling and/or grammatical errors. • Digital effects/graphics are not used appropriately. • Excessive use of transitions		X 3	
Audio editing/continuity quality	• Audio is clear and effectively assists in communicating the main idea. • No jumpy audio edits • Audio is balanced.	• Audio is clear; partially assists in communicating the main idea. • One to two jumpy edits • Audio generally balanced.	• Audio is inconsistent/cutoff; • Confuses the audience. • Audio is overpowering, unbalanced.		X 3	
Length	• Final broadcast piece play time was at or within the length requirement.	• Final broadcast piece play time was 10-15 seconds above or below the length requirement.	• Final broadcast piece play time was 15+ seconds above or below the length requirement.		X 1	
Promotional value	• Broadcast piece articulates a clear message and theme. • Broadcast piece actively promotes the topic, FFA NewHorizons magazine or story team created.	• Broadcast piece struggles to present a clear message. • Broadcast piece passively promotes the topic, FFA NewHorizons magazine or story team created.	• Broadcast piece lacks a central message. • Broadcast piece doesn't clearly promote the topic, FFA New Horizons magazine or story team created.		X 4	
Clear, Creative Storytelling	• Clear and logical story is told by broadcast piece. • Creative and compelling narrative. Evokes interest in the topic. • Supporting information/ elements contribute to the narrative and overall appeal. • Content was used in appropriate places and presented in a logical order.	• Mostly clear and logical story is told by broadcast piece. • Some creative elements were used. Dull narrative. • Broadcast piece theme is vague, and some supporting elements seem disconnected. • Doesn't evoke interest in topic.	• Unclear or disorganized story told by broadcast piece. • Lacks creativity and a compelling narrative. • Lacks a clear theme and logical sequence of information. • Creates lack of interest in topic or negative perception.		X 6	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF A 100 POSSIBLE						

Appendix G: Communications Plan Presentation Scorecard

School:

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present (10-8 points)	Moderate evidence of skill is present (7-4 points)	Strong evidence of skill is not present (3-0 points)	Pts	Wt	Total Score
Examples	Examples are vivid, precise, and clearly explained. Examples are original, logical and relevant.	Examples are usually concrete, sometimes need clarification. Examples are effective but need more originality or thought.	Examples are abstract or not clearly defined. Examples are sometimes confusing, leaving the listeners with questions.		X3	
Confidence in speaking	Speaks very articulately. Never uses unnecessary pauses or Hesitation when speaking. Speaks at the right pace to be clear. Pronunciation of words is very clear, and intent is apparent.	Sometimes speaks articulately. Occasionally has the need for a long pause or moderate hesitation when speaking. Speaks at the right pace most of the time, but shows some nervousness. Pronunciation of words is usually clear, sometimes vague.	Rarely articulate. Frequently hesitates or has long, awkward pauses while speaking. Pace is too fast; nervous. Pronunciation of words is difficult to understand; unclear.		X3	
Being detail-oriented; provide details	Is able to stay fully detail-oriented. Always provides details which support the issue to communicate the key concepts of the plan; is well organized.	Is mostly good at being detail-oriented. Usually provides details which are supportive of the issue, communicate the plan; displays good organizational skills.	Has difficulty being detail-oriented. Sometimes overlooks details that could be very beneficial to the issue; Not enough detail provided lacks organization.		X2	
Speaking unrehearsed and natural	Speaks unrehearsed with comfort and ease. Speaks effectively without losing focus and with organized thoughts and concise answers.	Speaks unrehearsed mostly with comfort and ease, but sometimes seems nervous or unsure. Speaks effectively, has to stop and think and sometimes gets off focus.	Shows nervousness or seems unprepared when speaking unrehearsed. Seems to ramble or speaks before thinking.		X3	
All team Members participated	All team members took an active role in the presentation.	Two to three team members took an active role in the presentation.	One team member took an active role in the presentation.		X1	
Use of visual aids	Visual aids add clarity and support what is being said during the presentation.	Visual aids add some clarity and support to what is being said during the presentation.	Visual aids add little to no clarity and support to what is being said during the presentation.		X3	
Communications plan	Key elements of the communications plan are clearly communicated. Strong understanding of chosen media is present.	Key elements of the communications plan are vaguely communicated. Vague understanding of chosen media is present.	Key elements of the communications plan are not communicated. Little to no understanding of chosen media is present.		X3	
Questions and answers	Correctly respond to judges' questions. Answers show familiarity with subject matter.	Is somewhat able to correctly respond to judges' questions. Answers show vague familiarity with subject matter.	Is unable to correctly respond to judges' questions. Answers do not reflect any familiarity with subject matter.		X2	
Total (200 possible points)						

Subcommittee

Standing subcommittee for this event

Name	School / Organization	Role
Katie Arp-Donahue	Central	Chair
Dr. Laura Young	UNL — ALEC	Superintendent
Dr. Matt Kreifels	UNL	Exec liaison
Cole Blomendahl	Mead	Member
David Gibbens	West Holt	Member
Spencer Noble	Kearney	Member

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