



Agricultural Communications

2026 Updates

Below is a summary of updates to the Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook for the 2026-2027 cycle.

HANDBOOK UPDATE:

Agricultural Communications

- Magazine Layout — Changing instruction from 2 pages to 2-4 pages. Clearly defining the requirement to include the entire feature story in the magazine layout and accommodating the insertion of the complete 500-word feature story. Changes are within the rubric.
Rationale: Increased number of pages allows for the insertion of the complete feature story.
- Broadcast Media – Clarified that grammar points are for both written and verbal/audio errors. Changes are within the rubric.
- *Rationale: Fair application of the need for proper grammar in both the written and the verbal/audio submissions.*
- Communications Plan – clarified questions for the plan and ensured questions are consistently presented across the materials. Introduced a limit of 150 words per question and required submission in the required document format. Changes are within the template.
- *Rationale: Updated the template provided to the students for the Communications Plan and limited their responses in length and to the same be succinct for submission and fair in evaluation.*

Professional Integrity

FFA members participating in Tennessee FFA programs and events understand and agree that all work must result from their own effort and ability, created, and completed alone (except for partner or chapter applications). When outside sources (direct quotes or phrases, specific dates, figures, or other materials) are used for a project, document, or application, the required reference citation must be completed according to the rules specified by the applicable handbook.

While participating in Tennessee FFA programs, FFA members are prohibited from:

- Plagiarizing
- Violating copyright
- Cheating
- Falsifying information
- Using another person's results or thoughts as their own, even with this person's permission. This includes work done by a family member or a mentor.
- Using information or data obtained from the internet without proper citation.

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Non-compliance represents plagiarism and will automatically disqualify a member.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for National Programs and Events

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems capable of performing complex tasks that historically only a human could do, such as reasoning, making decisions, or solving problems. As AI continues to evolve, it can be a tremendous tool to help companies, organizations and individuals enhance their productivity and work. Therefore, the Tennessee FFA Association allows the use of AI tools. FFA members may use AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and CoPilot, to assist them in their learning.

Appropriate uses of AI may include:

- generating ideas for any FFA-related assignments, projects, contests and award applications
- checking facts of a phenomenon
- checking for and correcting grammatical errors in a paper written by a member

For more information, please see the [Standard Operating Procedures on the Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) for National Programs and Events document](#).

Purpose

The agricultural communications career development event aims to excite and inspire students to develop essential skills relevant to the communications industry. Students will be equipped with strong communication skills and will have developed the ability to work collaboratively to communicate and advocate for agriculture.

Event Rules

All participant submissions shall result from their own efforts. This competition does not permit using web-based or other artificial intelligence or editing applications.

Event Format

In agricultural communications, we work as individuals and as a team. This contest is designed to mimic a communications team in the context of a magazine, *FFA New Horizons*. Almost all agricultural publications now promote stories using social media and supplemental materials on their websites (in the form of videos, audio recordings, podcasts, etc.) in addition to the story and traditional magazine layout.

- FFA official dress is required for this event.
- The top two teams from each region will advance to the state contest.
- Teams will work together to create a media communications plan and package as if they are on FFA New Horizons magazine staff.
- During the practicum portion of the event, teams will work together to create their team's communications package. Team members will work collaboratively to create four practicum components - a feature story, a magazine layout design incorporating that story, a broadcast production piece to promote or enhance their story topic, and a social media plan to promote their story.
- Any participant possessing an electronic device during the exam is subject to disqualification.
- Recording devices are not allowed during press conferences.

Equipment

Equipment students should bring:

- Computing equipment for each participant. It can be any combination of laptops, tablets, and/or smartphones for word processing and/or design work for creating practicum components. Remember to bring all power cords required for your devices. A power supply will be furnished.
- Pens or pencils
- Privacy screens for laptops (not required, but allowed) are permitted to protect the security of students' work/ideas
- Headphones of your preference equipped with a microphone.

Teams will be provided with the following items:

- Table and chairs for each team of four team members in the shared team workspaces
- Blank paper or notebooks
- Digital photographs/images
- Digital video files

- Digital audio files
- Information regarding press conference speaker and topic
- Dummy text
- Logos
- Any other necessary materials depending on the story topic
- Power supply for devices, etc.

The following Items will NOT be allowed:

- Desktop computers
- Smartwatches
- Add-on editing software, such as Grammarly
- Photos and videos that were not supplied by event officials or created by the students within the contest time frame

The following activities will not be permitted:

- Outside assistance during the contest from any person or company
- Text messages, phone calls, emails, or other communication with anyone outside of the contest while the event is in progress
- Leaving the contest area other than a restroom break

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

Writing Mechanics exam (50 points/individual; 200 points/team)

Each student will complete a 50-question writing mechanics exam covering general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry and editing questions. Questions will come from the test bank maintained on tnffa.org.

TEAM ACTIVITIES

Press Conference

The team activities will begin with a “press conference” or “story assignment on an agricultural topic. All team members will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and the expert to use during the event. The expert will speak on the agricultural topic for 20 minutes, followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer period. Students will be provided with paper to take notes if they wish. [Students' electronic devices must remain under their chairs during this portion of the event, as note-taking by hand is an essential communication skill.](#) Students will stand to be recognized before asking a question. They may ask multiple questions; however, the expert will attempt to address questions from as many participants as possible. No electronic devices, including tape recorders and cell phones, will be allowed during this portion of the event.

Upon completion of the press conference, the team will be dismissed to a team working area to collaborate on their message, communications package, and the component parts. Students will be allowed up to 3 hours to collaborate with their team members to determine their message, define responsibilities, complete components, and finalize their practicum elements. **ALL communications plan components must be created and submitted for judging during this time.** Teams will not be in a private area - teams will be working in a newsroom environment with other teams in the same location. Event officials will monitor the teams for outside help and have the authority to disqualify anyone breaking the rules. Teams should allow a minimum of 90 minutes to complete the practicum components utilizing the remaining time to create and finalize their communications plan for submission. The committee may designate required and optional components.

Practicums – Communication Plan Components (100 points/component = 400 points/team)

The practicums will be completed by teams of four students working collaboratively together. Team members may work collectively on each practicum, including sharing devices and contributing jointly to the completion of each activity.

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.

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. Students will be allowed to record voiceovers within their broadcast story. Students will need to provide their own headphones and software. 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.

Social Media Plan (100 points)

Social media 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. Students may use any design software to create the posts (Canva, Adobe Express, Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign). These are all acceptable software for this practicum but are not the only software options available. 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.

Communication Plan (100 points)

The team is required to prepare a 3-page Communications Plan in PDF format as if it were to be presented to a client. Creating the Communications Plan should be a collaborative effort involving all team members. The Communications Plan should address the following points:

1. Provide an overview of the Communications 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 of the feature story, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine.
6. Explain the rationale and goal of the magazine layout, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine.
7. Explain the rationale and goal of the broadcast production piece, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine.
8. Explain the rationale and goal of the social media plan, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine.

Scoring

Event	Individual Points	Team Points
Exams— 200 points possible		
Writing Mechanics exam	50	200
Team Activities — 400 points possible		
Magazine Layout Design		100
Broadcast Production practicum		100
Feature Story practicum		100
Social Media Plan Practicum		100
Communication Plan		100
TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE	50	700

Tiebreakers

Tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

1. Communication Plan
2. Combined score of components.
3. Combined score of Writing Mechanics Exam

Communications Plan Rubric

100 POINTS

Chapter			State		Team Number	
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.		x1	
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	
Document Specifications and Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation	- Communications plan was submitted using the provided Word document - Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation was used - File was saved as a PDF file .	- Communications plan formatting was slightly changed from the provided Word document 1-2 grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors was found - File was saved as a PDF file	- Communications plan was not submitted using the provided Word document - Multiple grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors were found - File was not saved as a PDF file		x1	

TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE

Feature Story Practicum Scorecard

100 POINTS

Chapter							S	T
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 and 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								

Social Media Plan Practicum Scorecard

100 POINTS

Chapter				S	Team Number		
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 detail 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		

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
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 if difficult to read or use		X 3	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE						

Magazine Layout Design Practicum Scorecard

100 POINTS

Chapter	State			Team Number		
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 2 to 4-pages for layout spread. - Layout has an appropriate and relevant title. - Layout is appropriate and relevant for topic and story. - Entire feature story is presented in the layout.	- Layout does not effectively use a 2 to 4-page layout spread. - Layout has a title, but it lacks appropriateness or relevancy to story content - Layout is only loosely tied to topic and story. - Feature story is not fully presented in the layout.	- Layout utilizes only 1 page or extends beyond 4 pages. - Layout does not have a title. - Layout does not fit with topic and story. - None of the feature story is presented in the layout.		X 4	
Use of design principles	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.	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.	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.		X 4	
Appropriateness	Colors, fonts, graphics, and photos are used effectively throughout the layout and unify all pages of the spread.	One or more colors, fonts, graphics, and/or photos are used ineffectively throughout the layout and break the unity of the spread.	Most colors, fonts, graphics, and/or photos are used ineffectively throughout the layout and break the unity of the spread.			
Consistency	Layout has a center of focus and leads the reader’s eye across the spread.	Layout lacks a strong center of focus and fails to fully lead reader’s eyes across the spread.	Layout has no center of focus and fails to lead reader’s eyes across the spread.			
Focus & Flow	Layout encourages the reader to read the ENTIRE story.	One or more elements in layout has poor balance in the spread. Some elements have poor proximity with inappropriate spacing between items.	Elements in layout are poorly balanced. Elements are poorly placed.			
Balance	All elements in layout create a balanced spread. All elements have good proximity with appropriate spacing between items.					

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
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 100 POSSIBLE						

Broadcast Production Practicum Promotional Video Scorecard

100 POINTS

Chapter		State		Team Number		
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 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 overall message in the broadcast piece. • Incorporated 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 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 grammatical errors – verbal or written. • 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) grammatical error – verbal or written. • 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 - verbal or written • Digital effects/graphics are not used appropriately.		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 main idea. • One to two jumpy edits • Audio generally balanced.	• Audio is inconsistent/cutoff; • confuses 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 New Horizons magazine or story team created.	• Broadcast piece struggles to present a clear message. • Broadcast piece passively promotes the topic, FFA New Horizons 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 100 POSSIBLE						

Sample Communication Plan Form

Instructions: Add responses in the fields provided below. Submit your final communications plan as a PDF.

Chapter/State:

*Provide an overview of the Communications Plan.
(Maximum of 150 words)*

*Define the central theme or controlling idea of practicum elements.
(Maximum of 150 words)*

*Pose the main question or narrative inquiry.
(Maximum of 150 words)*

*Specify the intended call to action.
(Maximum of 150 words)*

Explain the rationale and goal of the feature story, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine. (Maximum of 150 words)

Explain the rationale and goal of the magazine layout, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons Magazine. (Maximum of 150 words)

Explain the rationale and goal of the broadcast production piece, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons Magazine. (Maximum of 150 words)

Explain the rationale and goal of the social media plan, its relevance to the audience, and its alignment with the mission of FFA New Horizons magazine. (Maximum of 150 words)