AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT

Purpose:

To provide individuals with practical communications skills necessary to pursue career opportunities in agricultural communications. Public communications about agricultural products, practices and policies are essential to the future of agriculture. Students who are equipped with strong communication skills, have developed teamwork skills, and who can use a variety of media have a bright future in the job market. Participants' goals are to help the public understand issues related to the industry of agriculture.

Objectives:

- To develop employment skills for students who are interested in exploring or pursuing career opportunities in the agricultural communications industry.
- To assist the local agricultural education instructor in motivating students to become knowledgeable receivers and producers of communication products, or become active in the industry of agricultural communications.
- To encourage the development of broader analytical skills, critical thinking strategies and an understanding of appropriate communications terminology for high school students.
- To develop the ability to create media products order to clearly communicate a message and to meet the needs of the receiver.

General Rules and Regulations

1. Three persons will constitute an official team for the Agricultural Communications Career.
2. It is highly recommended that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
3. Team members will work together to prepare a written media plan prior to the Idaho FFA Agricultural Communications CDE. The team will also be responsible for presenting the plan during the CDE and completing individual practicums.
4. During the practicum portion of the event, each team member will be responsible for completing a written communication activity, an electronic media activity, or a visual design activity. All FFA members will perform the same practicum based on the content of the Press Conference. The Press Conference will be held during the CDE, and hosted by an appropriate agricultural or natural resources entity.
5. Any participant in possession of an electronic device in the event area is subject to disqualification.
6. Participants in need of special accommodations (disability or other health issues) must submit the Idaho State FFA Career Development Events Request for Special Accommodation Application found at the end of the General Rules and Regulations at least one month prior to the event.

Format and scoring:

1. Each November following the national FFA convention, the agricultural communications CDE committee will release event specifications for the next year via www.ffa.org under programs/cde/agricultural communications as well as an e-mail notification to all agriculture instructors. The specifications will outline the scenario to be used for the media plan and presentation as well as the specific practicum activities and software. Idaho FFA will use the same scenario as the National FFA, and a practicum will be based on the following rotation:
   2014- Writer Practicum
   2015- Designer Practicum
   2016- Electronic Media Specialist
   2017- Writer Practicum
   ***The CDE Superintendent will reserve the right to adjust the practicum based on the advice of Idaho Agriculture Teachers.
2. Students must provide pens and pencils for their own use.
3. The following specialized equipment will be provided:
   a. For team presentation: projector, projector screen, and table. **Note:** Teams may bring additional equipment for the media plan presentation as long as they are able to set up and tear down equipment in the time allowed for the presentation. A remote clicker may be available, but it is recommended that teams bring their own.
   b. For practicums: PC computer, printer, blank paper, recorder, digital photographs (at least 5 that relate to the press release topic), dummy text (to be used where normal text would go in the design practicum), logos (when available) and any other necessary materials.
4. Team Activity: Agriculture Related Media Plan (200 points/team)
   a. Teams will play the role of communication consultants and will develop a media plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a type of client with a communications need and a budget. Please reference the current event specifications on the CDE webpage. The media plan should be based on the types of communication strategies that will be used for a client; the media plan should NOT be focused on purchasing supplies for a local FFA event.
   b. A media plan is a written document that describes the following:
      i. Objectives: What the group wants to accomplish with the media plan.
      ii. Target Audience: Description of who the client is trying to reach, including demographic data.
      iii. Strategic plan and tactics: Ways in which the objectives can be accomplished.
      iv. Timeline: When the objectives will be accomplished.
      v. Evaluation: How the results will be measured.
      vi. Budget: How much the plan will cost.

c. Guidelines for media plan

i. The media plan should be:

- A maximum of 15 typed pages not including cover page, table of contents, references or appendices. 10 to 15 pages is recommended.
- Double-spaced with 1” margins.
- Paginated (numbered pages not including cover page).
- 12-point Times New Roman font (not including display text or headings).
- Submitted electronically to the Idaho Agricultural Communications CDE superintendent. Paper copies of the media proposal will also be accepted.
- Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) when citing sources.

ii. The media plan must include the following sections (points will be deducted for missing or incomplete sections):

1. Cover page
    a. Must include the title of the media plan, CDE name, state, chapter name, team member names and year.
    b. May include a creative design.
2. Table of Contents-
    a. *Helpful tip: complete this after the plan has been written and check for accuracy.*
3. Executive Summary- 1 page maximum
    a. Brief description of the contents of the media plan. The executive summary previews the main points of the complete plan. It allows the reader to get the main points without reading the whole document.
    b. *Helpful tip: complete this after the plan has been written.*
4. Introduction and Overview- 2 pages maximum
    a. *Introduction*- a brief background of the issue/topic and a statement of the problem establishing the need for this media plan.
    b. *Overview*- a brief preview of what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client.
5. Audience- 2 pages maximum
    a. Who the client is trying to reach with the media plan.
    b. The demographic characteristics of the intended audience. This may include age ranges, socio-economic ranges, genders, and other characteristics of who you will target. For example, if one of your target audiences is rural high school students, the strategic plan should be tailored to this specific audience. If a different audience is 26-32 year old urban women who have started a family, consider the most effective communication strategies for this group.

6. Strategic Plan- 6 pages maximum
    a. The heart of the plan, including the objectives. Goals should be measurable and tied to the evaluation section of this proposal.
    b. Key messages or themes to communicate to the audience.
    c. Explanation of how the objectives will be met, including justification of chosen media tactics.
    d. A minimum of three examples must be included in the appendices. Electronic examples should include links to live sites.
    e. Examples of tactics include but are not limited to social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, web site, blogging and displays.
    f. Description of how the plan will be executed. For each strategy, consider answering the 5 W's and the How.
7. Timeline- 1 page maximum
    a. Explanation of the duration of the plan and the timing of the media tactics.
8. Evaluation- 1 pages maximum
    a. Description of proposed methods to determine if the objectives were met. This section should match the goals set in the strategic plan section.
9. Budget - 1 page maximum
    a. Table of all costs and quantities associated with implementing the media plan.
    b. Narratives typically will not be included with the budget table.
    c. *Helpful tip 1 .Do not make these up – cite actual costs. If a billboard is going to be used, call around to see how much it costs to print a billboard design, and how much it costs to rent a billboard.*
    d. *Helpful tip 2: Although Facebook may be free, your communication firm will likely charge for the service of the development and implementation of Facebook communication with intended audiences.*
10. Conclusion- 1 page maximum
    a. A final summary of key points related to the strategic plan and a statement persuading the client that the plan is a good solution to the communication problem.
    b. Not a restatement of the introduction and overview.
11. References
    a. Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

12. Appendices/Examples
    a. *Helpful tip: Create a title page for each appendix or example. The title page could include necessary details and a page number.*
13. **An electronic copy or hard copy of the media plan must be submitted two weeks prior to the CDE to the superintendent.** A penalty of 10% will be assessed for documents received after the deadline. If the document is not received seven days after the deadline, the team may be subject to disqualification.

5. Team Activity Media Plan Presentation (125 points/team)
    a. The team should present the media plan as if pitching it to the client identified in the scenario and media plan.
    b. The presentation should follow the structure of the written media plan.
    c. Teams are encouraged to bring examples of materials that would be used in the execution of the plan (e.g. social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, web site, blogging and displays).
    d. Each team member must participate in the presentation.
    e. Each team will be allowed 15 minutes to present its media plan to a panel of judges, who will play the role of the client. Teams will be stopped if they are not finished at 15 minutes to protect the event schedule. No deduction will be made for finishing in less than 15 minutes. Following the presentation, judges will be allowed five minutes to ask questions.
    f. Teams will have a total of 10 minutes for setting-up and tearing-down equipment (e.g. 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to tear down).
    g. Provided equipment includes a projector, projector screen and table.
    Note: Teams may bring additional equipment for the presentation as long as they are able to set up and tear down equipment in the time allowed. The team should set-up the equipment and props without help from their advisor, coach, or chaperone.
    h. In the case of equipment failure, the team may be asked to move forward with the presentation. A back-up plan is recommended.
    i. Presentation flights will be seeded by proposal scores. Flights are announced during the team orientation meeting at the start of the event.

6. Individual Activity Test
    a. Although a communications quiz and an editing exercise are part of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE, neither test will be part of the Idaho FFA Agricultural Communications CDE.

7. Individual Activity Practicums (100 points/individual; 300 points/team)
    a. Idaho FFA will use the same practicum as the National FFA. In Idaho, each member of a team will conduct the same practicum individually. *Note: At the National FFA event, each member of a team will perform separate practicums based on the press conference.
    b. The practicum will be based on the following rotation:
        2014- Writer Practicum
        2015- Designer Practicum
        2016- Electronic Media Specialist
        2017- Writer Practicum

        ***The CDE Superintendent will reserve the right to adjust the practicum, based on the advice of Idaho Agriculture Teachers.
    c. All teams will meet in a central location for an orientation and press conference. Teams will be seated by practicum group. All team members will be given an orientation at the beginning of the practicums to last no more than 10 minutes.
    d. The press conference will be held following the orientation meeting. Each team member will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and expert to use during the event. An expert will speak on a current agricultural topic for 20 minutes. Students can bring paper to take notes if they wish. After the 20-minute presentation, the participants will then be involved in a 10-minute question and answer period with the expert (speaker). Each member will stand to be recognized before asking a question. Members may ask more than one question; however, the expert will attempt to address questions from as many different participants as possible. No electronic devices of any kind, including tape recorders and cell phones, will be allowed during this portion of the event. Upon completion of the 10-minute question and answer session, participants will be dismissed to complete their assigned practicums.
        i. Designer
            1. Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a graphic design layout. The specific type of layout and details will be announced each November for the next convention on the CDE webpage. The objective is effective communication or information sharing through visual tools. Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.
            2. The activity may be chosen from the following:
                a. Magazine page layout
            3. Web page layout
            4. Electronic publication layout
            5. Flier/poster

ii. Electronic Media Specialist
    1. Each electronic media specialist will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop an electronic media message. The specific medium and details will be announced each November for the next convention on the CDE webpage. Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.
    2. The activity may be chosen from the following:
        a. Digital news broadcast
        b. Blog
        c. Social media
        d. Video

iii. Writers
    1. Writers are to write a journalistic piece based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. The specific activity and details will be announced each November for the next convention on the CDE webpage. It should be written for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead (opening paragraph) and include a headline. The story will then be word processed by the student on a computer and turned in to be scored. Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.
    2. The activity may be chosen from the following:
        a. Press release
        b. News story
        c. Feature story

8. Scoring
    a. Participants' work will be evaluated by each judge without consultation. The judges will use the score sheets for this CDE. The criteria and points can be found on the scorecards in Appendix B.

9. Event Points

a.	Media Plan Proposal	200
b.	Media Plan Presentation	125
c.	<u>Practicums- 300 points possible</u>	
	Practicum	300 (100 points/member)
d.	**Total individual score possible**	**300**
E.	**Total team score possible**	**625**

10. Tiebreakers
    a. Team tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:
        i. Combined individual practicum score
        ii. Proposal rank
        iii. Presentation rank
    b. Individual tiebreakers will not be broken.

Awards

Awards will be presented to individuals and/or teams based upon their scores at the awards ceremony. Awards are sponsored by a cooperating industry sponsor(s) as a special project, and/or by the general fund of the Idaho FFA Foundation. Specialty awards will be given to the high individual in each practicum area.

References

This list of references is not intended to be all-inclusive. Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation.

National FFA Core Catalog—Past CDE Material (http://shop.ffa.org/cde-qas-c1413.aspx)

Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual (current edition)

Microsoft ® Office computer program

Adobe ® Creative Suite (most current edition)

Bivins, T. *Public Relations Writings: The Essentials of Style and Format*, 4th edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-844-20351-3

Harrower, T. *Newspaper Designer's Handbook,* 5th edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. ISBN 0-07-249291-0

Kalbfeld, B. *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-07-136388-2

Telg, R. and T. Irani. *Agricultural Communication in Action: A Hands-On Approach*, 1st edition. Cengage/Delmar Publishing, ISBN 1111317143 (Available in October 2011)

Agricultural Communications CDE Presentation Rubric - 125 points

Agricultural Communications CDE

Media Plan Presentation Scorecard

Chapter: _____

	Possible Score	Team Score
Plan Includes all Requirements Cover page, titles and names on cover page, table of contents, does not exceed page limit, double spaced, one inch margins, page numbers, required headings (-1 point per missing item)	10	
Proposal is Relevant to Scenario Entire narrative focuses on addressing client's specific public communication needs.	10	
Executive Summary Adequately explains the plan without reading the entire document	10	
Introduction Provides adequate background of the issue; clearly states the problem and need for plan; describes how the plan will benefit the client	15	
Description of Audience Clearly describes (including demographics) who is targeted with the media plan	15	
Detailed Strategic Plan Clearly states objectives; explains how objectives will be met; explains why chosen mediums are appropriate to meet objectives; describes how plan will be executed	30	
Timeline Explains duration of plan and timing of media tactics	10	
Method of Evaluation Proposes methods to determine if the objectives were met	15	
Budget Explains all costs associated with implementing the media plan	20	
Conclusion	10	
Appendices Quality of communications documents. Three required	30	
Quality of writing Grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure	25	
TOTAL POINTS	200	

Agricultural Communications CDE Presentation Rubric - 125 points

Indicators	Very strong evidence skill is present 5-4	Moderate evidence skill is present 3-2	Strong evidence skill is not present 1-0	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
A. Examples	*Examples are vivid, precise and clearly explained.* · *Examples are original, logical and relevant.*	*Examples are usually concrete, sometimes needs 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.*		*X 3*	
B. Speaking without hesitation	*Speaks very articulately without hesitation. Never has the need for unnecessary pauses or hesitation when speaking.*	*Speaks articulately, but sometimes hesitates. Occasionally has the need for a long pause or moderate hesitation when speaking.*	*Speaks articulately, but frequently hesitates. Frequently hesitates or has long, awkward pauses while speaking.*		*X 2*	
C. Tone	*Appropriate tone is consistent. Speaks at the right pace to be clear. Pronunciation of words is very clear and intent is apparent.*	*Appropriate tone is usually consistent. Speaks at the right pace most of the time, but shows some nervousness. Pronunciation of words is usually clear, sometimes vague.*	*Has difficulty using an appropriate tone. Pace is too fast; nervous. Pronunciation of words is difficult to understand; unclear.*		*X 1*	
D. Being detail-oriented	*Is able to stay fully detail-oriented. Always provides details which support the issue; is well organized.*	*Is mostly good at being detail-oriented. Usually provides details which are supportive of the issue; displays good organizational skills.*	*Has difficulty being detail-oriented. Sometimes overlooks details that could be very beneficial to the issue; lacks organization.*		*X 2*	
E. Speaking unrehearsed	*Speaks unrehearsed with comfort and ease. Is able to speak quickly with organized thoughts and concise answers.*	*Speaks unrehearsed mostly with comfort and ease, but sometimes seems nervous or unsure. Is able to speak 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.*		*X 2*	
F. Connecting and articulating facts and issues	*Exemplary in connecting facts and issues and articulating how they impact the issue locally and globally. Possesses a strong knowledge base and is able to effectively articulate information regarding related facts and current issues.*	*Sufficient in connecting facts and issues and articulating how they impact the issue locally and globally. Possesses a good knowledge base and is able to, for the most part, articulate information regarding related facts and current issues.*	*Has difficulty with connecting facts and issues and articulating how they impact the issue locally and globally. Possesses some knowledge base but is unable to articulate information regarding related facts and current issues.*		*X 2*	
G. All team members participated	*All team members took an active role in the presentation.*	*Two team members took an active role in the presentation.*	*One team member took an active role in the presentation.*		*X 2*	
I. 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.*		*X 2*	
J. Media Plan	*Key elements of the media plan are clearly communicated. Strong understanding of chosen media is present.*	*Key elements of the media plan are vaguely communicated. Vague understanding of chosen media is present.*	*Key elements of the media plan are not communicated. Little to no understanding of chosen media is present.*		*X 2*	
H. Questions and Answers	*Is able to 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.*		*X 7*	
Total Points						

Agricultural Communications CDE Scorecard

Writer Practicum

Name: _____ Chapter: _____

	Possible Score	Member Score
Lead/Focus	**15**	
Accuracy of information and quotes	**15**	
Clarity and conciseness	**10**	
Correct style (AP)	**10**	
Depth of coverage	**10**	
Header/Headline	**10**	
Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice	**10**	
Organization and format	**10**	
Accomplishment of purpose	**10**	
Total Possible:	**100**	

Agricultural Communications CDE Scorecard

Electronic Media Practicum

Name: _____ Chapter: _____

	Possible Score	Member Score
Effective use of medium	**20**	
Technical skills specific to activity · Outlined in event specifications	**20**	
Power of expression	**15**	
Creativity	**15**	
Clarity of communication (writing)	**10**	
Organization and format	**10**	
Accuracy of information	**10**	
Total Possible:	**100**	

Agricultural Communications CDE Scorecard

Design Practicum

Name: _____ Chapter: _____

	Possible Score	Member Score
Overall aesthetics of design	**20**	
Technical skills specific to activity · Outlined in event specifications	**20**	
Use of graphic design principles	**15**	
Neatness and creativity	**15**	
Choice and placement/cropping of photo(s) and graphic(s)	**15**	
Writing and editing (specific to activity)	**15**	
Total Possible:	**100**	

Agricultural Communications CDE

Team Scorecard

Name: _____ Chapter: _____

	Possible Score	Team Score
Practicum Scores	**300**	
Media Plan Proposal	**200**	
Media Plan Presentation	**125**	
Total Possible:	**625**	