Agricultural Communications

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 agriculture.

Event Format

- During the event, team members will collaborate on their message, communications plan and the component parts of their plan about the press conference topic.
- Recording devices are not allowed during the press conference.

Equipment

Needed: Students must provide pens and pencils. For practicums, students are encouraged to bring a laptop or other device for word processing or design.

Teams may be provided these items:

- Blank paper
- Digital photographs
- Dummy text
- Easel pads and markers

- Logos
- Printer
- Any other necessary materials

Team Activities

Press Conference

The team activities will begin with a press conference on an agricultural topic conducted by an 'expert'. 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 which will be followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer period. Students will be provided with paper to take notes if they wish. Students will stand to be recognized before asking a question. They 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 press conference, the team will be dismissed to a team working area to collaborate on their message, communications plan and the component parts. Students will be allowed up 2 hours to determine their message, determine responsibilities, complete components and prepare to present their ideas, plan and components to the judges. Teams should allow 90 minutes to complete the practicums.

Web design

Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a WordPress site. The objective is to communicate the press conference speaker's organization through appropriate design, navigation and use of provided photos and graphics. The designer may use the provided WordPress templates or customize the template. You will need to create at least a two-page web design. Each participant will have 90 minutes to complete the practicum.

Video producer

Students will be given a selection of video clips, photos, and music and will create a 60 to 90 second video that promotes the client's product or service. Before the contest begins, you will need to download a video editing software onto your computer. You can download that software at this link. They will not be recording a voice track. Participants will have 90 minutes to complete the practicum. Students will need to provide their own headphones. Additionally, all provided video clips, photos, and music must be downloaded to the computers before the contest begins.

Journalistic writers

Writers will write a journalistic piece based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. 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 90 minutes to complete the practicum.

- Press release
- News story
- Feature story

Opinion writers

Writers are to write a piece that takes a position and support it with evidence based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. 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 90 minutes to complete the practicum.

- A blog post (250–300 words)
- An op-ed (500–750 words)
- A letter to the editor (300–500 words)

Presentation of Plan

The team will present their message, plan, and selection of components as if presenting it to a client. All team members should participate in the presentation. Each team will be allowed up to 10 minutes to present to the judge(s). Following the presentation, the judges will be allowed five minutes to ask questions. This presentation should be a quick overview summary presentation of the message, reasoning, and objective of each component. The presentation will only be completed on the state level.

Individual Activities

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

Each student will complete a quiz that covers general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry and questions covering editing. Questions may come from any section of the listed references excluding sports guidelines and correcting the writing mistakes. Team

members may be required to use correct proofreading marks (see *Associated Press Stylebook*). Style, grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes will be included. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise. The test will come from the last five years of National FFA communications exam as well as the editing exam.

Scoring

Participants will be ranked in numerical order based on the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judge's ranking of each participant shall then be added, and the winner will be the participant whose total ranking is the lowest. Other placings will be determined in the same manner (use the low-point method of selection). Weighted rank scoring will be implemented to maintain point value emphasis between individual and team events. The criteria and points can be found on the scorecards.

Event	Individual Points	Team Points
Tests — 200 points possible		
Writing Mechanics exam	50	200
Team Activity — 400 points possible		
Web design practicum	100	100
Video producer practicum	100	100
Journalistic writing practicum	100	100
Opinion writing practicum	100	100
Presentation of the communications plan	0	175
TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE	**150**	**775**

Tiebreakers

Tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

Team
1. Combined rank score of components.
2. Presentation rank
3. Media plan

Individual:
1. Component score
2. Writing Mechanics quiz score

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 CDE Page — Past CDE Material (FFA.org/Ag Communications/Event Resources/Past Test & Practicums)

- Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

- Microsoft® Office computer program

- 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 (Online versions available)

Presentation Scorecard

175 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
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		X 5	
Confidence in speaking	• Speaks very articulately • Never has the need for 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		X 3	
Being detail-oriented; provide details	• Is able to stay fully detail-oriented • Always provides details that support the issue to communicate the key concepts of the plan; is well organized	• Is mostly good at being detail-oriented • Usually provides details that are supportive of the issue to 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		X 3	
Speaking unrehearsed and naturally	• 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, but 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 3	
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.		X 3	
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 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
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 3	
Questions and answers	• Correctly responds 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 12	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 175 POSSIBLE						175

Journalistic Writing 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
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	

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
Accomplish-ment 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			

Opinion Writing 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
Lead/focus	• Strong lead that draws in audience • Lead is engaging, catchy, and original • Leads shows strong focus to topic	• Lead has 1 or 2 strong elements but loses some focus to topic • Shows some signs of originality, but lacks hook to audience	• Lead is buried in the writing • Lead lacks clear focus of topic • Lead is neither original or catchy, too long, etc.	x 3		
Accuracy of information and quotes	• Opinion pieces adequately uses multiple sources, ideas, and facts • Sources/quotes used are appropriate and have good connection to topic • Piece tells a complete story • Information is properly attributed	• Minor inaccuracies or sources improperly used in opinion piece • One or two pieces of information or opinion given without attribution • Missing one or two key sources • Sources/quotes used have a weak connection to topic	• Opinion piece is missing information or has major holes • Weak or no sources/quotes used • Sources/quotes used have no connection to topic • Piece contains multiple unfounded opinions or inaccuracies	x 3		
Clarity and conciseness	• Focus of opinion piece is clear • Piece makes use of effective words and is descriptive • Nothing detracts from focus of the piece • Everything contributes to angle/opinion of the piece and its topic	• Focus of opinion piece is only somewhat clear • Some poor word choice found in piece, passive voice used, slightly wordy or confusing • Piece lacks sense of unity throughout • Some areas detract from angle/opinion of the piece and its topic	• No clear angle/opinion of the piece and its topic • Piece rambles, portrays awkward wording or poor word choice • Piece contains multiple unclear statements • Writing is dull and unfocused	X 2		
Correct style (AP)	• 0-2 errors in AP style • All attributions/ citations use correct AP style	• 3-5 errors in AP style • 1-2 attributions/ citations errors in AP style	• 6 or more errors in AP style • 3 or more attributions/ citations errors in AP style	X 2		
Takes a position that is supported with evidence	• Opinion piece takes a strong, clear position on the topic • Position is well supported with facts/statistics from press materials to back it up • Opinion of writer is well supported by accurate, thorough information connected to the topic	• Opinion piece takes a mild, sometimes unclear position on the topic • Position is only partially supported with facts/statistics from press materials • Opinion of writer is only sometimes supported by accurate information or information is only somewhat connected to the topic	• Opinion piece has no clear position on the topic and position is weakly argued • Position is not supported with any facts/statistics from press materials • Opinion of writer is does not support position with accurate information or information used is not connected to the topic	X 2		
Header/ headline	• Headline is catchy, original, and unique • Headline shows clear connection/tie to position and topic discussed in opinion piece • Headline is specific, contains strong, active	• Headline is slightly mechanical and does not show much originality • Headline is weakly tied to position and topic discussed in opinion piece • Headline is not specific	• Headline is dull and not original • Headline makes no connection to position, and topic discussed in opinion piece • Headline is missing	X 2		

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
	verbs and uses short, simple words	enough, is slightly longer or shorter than needed, or does not contain strong active verbs				
Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice	• Opinion piece is largely error-free and is well edited • Piece contains no spelling/grammatical errors • Piece includes proper spelling of all names	• Opinion piece contains minor errors but is still readable • Piece contains several (3-5) spelling/grammatical errors • Piece contains 1-2 misspelled names	• Opinion piece contains major errors that interfere with comprehension, • Piece contains several (6 or more) spelling/grammatical errors • Piece contains 3 or more misspelled names	X 2		
Organization and format	• Opinion piece is well organized • Information flows seamlessly from one point to the next and makes use of effective transitions • Makes use of inverted pyramid with information descending in order of importance • Piece is an appropriate length (within word count limit)	• Opinion piece is mostly organized • Information flows somewhat well with a few confusing or weak transitions, • Piece is somewhat abrupt or does not use inverted pyramid fully • Piece is slightly shorter/longer than designated length	• Opinion piece is not organized • Information does not move logically from one point to the next and has no or poor transitions • Piece is choppy or confusing and does not use inverted pyramid • Piece is much shorter/longer than designated length	X 2		
Accomplishment of purpose/ Impact/Effectiveness	• Opinion piece is effective and conveys a well-supported message to readers • Reader is left with a strong call to action and has no doubt about any information	• Opinion piece is somewhat effective but may leave readers with some questions • Piece has a weak call to action or ending	• Opinion piece is not effective but may leave create confusion among readers • Piece has no call to action or not clear ending	X 2		
			TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE			

Web Page 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 Site	• Site is very aesthetically pleasing, nice to look at, and captures attention • Appropriate and attractive use of color, images, and fonts throughout • All content on sight is easy to read and consume • Consistent feel throughout all site pages with consistent use of color, fonts, and font size • All pages have good flow and are easy to skim	• Site look is average, but does not capture viewer attention • Most colors, images, and fonts are appropriate • Some content on sight is not easy to read or consume • Some consistency throughout site pages, color or fonts, but not as cohesive as it could be • Site pages have some flow, but one or more elements are out place • Not all pages are easily skimmable	• Site does not draw viewer attention and is not pleasing to look at • Inappropriate use of color, images, and fonts – makes the sight difficult to view • Content on sight is not easy to read and consume • No consistency throughout site pages, color or fonts • Pages have little or no flow and no pages are easy to skim		X 4	
Technical skills specific to activity	• Site contains 3 unique pages • Site has an appropriate and relevant title • Site is appropriate and relevant for speaker's organization/topic	• Site contains only 2 unique pages • Site has a title, but it lacks appropriateness or relevancy to site content • Site is only loosely tied to speaker's organization/topic	• Site contains only 1 unique page • Site does not have a title • Site does not fit with speaker's organization/topic		X 4	
Use of design principles Contrast Repetition Alignment Proximity	• All elements on site have good contrast which make them easy to view and read • • All elements on site display good use of repetition/consistency • All elements on sight are aligned well to aid in viewing and reading • All elements on sight have good proximity with appropriate spacing between items	• One or more elements on site have poor contrast, making them difficult to view or read • • One or more elements or pages on site does not fit repetition/ consistency established throughout • One or more elements or pages on site has poor alignment making them difficult to view or read • One or more elements or pages on site has poor proximity with inappropriate spacing between items	• Many elements on site have poor contrast which make them difficult to view and read • • Site has poor repetition/consistency amongst sections and pages • Many elements on sight have poor alignment which make it difficult to view or read • Spacing between elements on sight shows poor proximity		X 3	
Neatness and creativity	• Site is well-organized • Site displays creative or unique design and layout • Site creatively portrays elements of speaker's organization/topic • No GSP errors found in site text	• Site is somewhat organized but could be improved to aid in viewing • Site design or layout is average (lacking creativity) • Minor GSP errors found in site text	• Site is disorganized and needs to be restructured • Site design or layout is poor • Major GSP errors found in site text		X 3	
Choice and placement of photo(s) and graphic(s)	• Appropriate and relevant images, graphics, and photos were used • Placement of images enhances look of site • Images help to promote	• One or more images, graphics, and photos used are not relevant or appropriate • Placement of one or more images distracts from look	• No images, graphics, and photos used are relevant or appropriate • Placement of images is poor and distracts from look of site		X 3	

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

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
	the speaker's organization/topic and help tell an appropriate story	of site • One or more images do not help to promote the speaker's organization/topic or do not relate to story being told	• Images do not promote the speaker's organization/topic or distract from story being told			
Usability and navigation of site	• Site navigation is easy to find, use, and understand • Site navigation flows well between pages and is consistent • All links on site work correctly and can be easily seen • All files are name properly • Site is effective and easy to use	• Site navigation is somewhat easy to find, use, and understand • Site navigation has some errors or is not consistent between pages • One or more links on site do not work correctly • Links cannot be easily seen • Some files are name properly • Site is somewhat effective, but usability could be improved	• Site navigation cannot be found or is confusing to use and understand • Site navigation does not flow between pages • No links present on site or all links on site are broken • No files are name properly • Site is difficult to use		X 3	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF A 100 POSSIBLE						

Electronic Media 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 add clarity and support overall video message. • Incorporated numerous clips/visuals. • Content was not repetitive, no recognized use of repeated shots.	• Visual aids add some clarity and support to overall video message. • Incorporated adequate number of clips/visuals. • Content was not repetitive, no recognized use of repeated shots.	• Visual aids add little to no clarity and support to overall video message. • Failed to incorporate clips/visuals. • Repeated use of content. •		X 3	
Video editing/ continuity quality	• Editing enhances final product, clear grasp of techniques and tools. • Video moves smoothly from shot to shot (no erratic movements/ transitions). • Excellent placing and timing. • Appropriate screen time for readability. • 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 video sequence well. • Most video clips move at a steady pace, feels smooth. • Screen time for readability was rushed. • One (1) spelling and/or grammatical error. • Digital effects are used appropriately for emphasis, some minor errors in timing or application.	• Seemed to have difficulty with editing tools. • Video clips are varied; unsteady pace. • No transitions or inappropriate transitions. • Timing is clumsy and choppy. • Readability was not considered in editing. • 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 main idea. • One to two jumpy edits • Audio generally balanced.	• Audio is inconsistent/cutof; • confuses audience. • • Audio is overpowering, unbalanced.		X 3	
Length	• Final video play time was at or within the length requirement.	• Final video play time was 10-15 seconds above or below the length requirement.	• Final video play time was 15+ seconds above or below the length requirement.		X 1	
Promotional value	• Video articulates a clear message and theme. • Video actively promotes the client's product or service.	• Video struggles to present a clear message. • Video passively promotes the client's product or service.	• Video lacks a central message. • Video doesn't clearly promote the client's product or service.		X 4	

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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
Clear, Creative Storytelling	• Clear and logical story is told by video. • 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 video. • Some creative elements were used. Dull narrative. • Video theme is vague, and some supporting elements seem disconnected. • Doesn't evoke interest in topic.	• Unclear or disorganized story told by video. • 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				

Web Design Instructions

<u>Web Designers</u>

Students will create a **three-page WordPress website** using the information gathered during the press conference and the materials provided in the press packet. The objective is to communicate the press conference speaker's organization through appropriate design, navigation, and use of provided photos and graphics. The designer may use the provided WordPress themes or customize them as they wish.

You will be given a login to access WordPress. Their website must be created entirely during this time, and students may not access previously created files or sites. You will have 90 minutes to create this web design.

> **Each student will be provided with unique login information to an already created, blank WordPress.com account. Passwords and usernames will be provided in the practicum room. Students must use this account to create their website, and only materials created in this account and on this site will be judged for the contest.**

Prior to the practicum, students were provided with a selection of image files. **These are the only files students may use on their sites**, but they do not have to use all the files provided to them. If a student is seen using any other program or is found accessing other sites online during the practicum time, they may be disqualified.

Judging will be based on overall attractiveness, effectiveness, usability and navigation of the site, use of design principles, and creativity.

To Set Up Your Site

Room monitors will ensure everyone has completed this step prior to starting official practicum time

- Log in to the WordPress account using the username and password provided to you
  - Click on **My Site** in the upper left-hand corner of the screen
  - Select "**Create Site**"
  - Give your site a name when prompted - use **your last name and your chapter name** (all one word) as your site name. You will only enter in your last name and your state name in the field provided (e.g., GibsonParis).
    - *You may add FFA following your state name if needed to create your URL*
  - When prompted to "Choose a Domain", select the **Free URL option** in the list below to create a wordpress.com account
    - Example: GibsonParis.wordpress.com
  - Click "**Select**" – please make sure you select the free wordpress.com option here
  - When prompted to "Choose a Plan", click **Start with a free site** at the top of the page (this is just below the "Choose a plan" header. *Please do not select one of the paid options below that.*

- When prompted with "What are your goals?", select "**Other**" and click "**Continue**"
- When prompted with "What's your site about", select "**Education**" and click "**Continue**"
- Choose a design for your site – you may select any of the free design themes/layouts provided on this screen and click "**Continue**". *Please do not select a Premium design.*
- Your site should load and be ready to edit at this point
  - Click on the blue house icon next to your newly created site in the top left-hand corner of your dashboard to start editing your site.

Please STOP once you hit this point and wait for further instructions from the room monitor. DO NOT begin building or editing your site.

All students will be instructed when they may begin working on their site to ensure equal time for all participants.

When Creating and Building Your Site

- You may use any of the FREE WordPress themes to develop your website, or you may customize the themes as you wish – you do not have to stick with the theme/layout you selected when setting up your site. If you choose to change this mid-design, you may.
- Upload the images and files you wish to use in your website from the files provided by placing them in the "**Media**" section of the WordPress template
- Information on your website should be created using information gathered during the press conference and the materials provided in the press packet only.
  - You may not visit any other websites to gather information for your site.
- Develop your website as if you work for the press conference speaker's company/organization
- Give your website a title
- Your website must include a menu for navigation and **at least three pages**
- You may use dummy text (provided in the asset files you downloaded ahead of time) as needed on your site
- Links to external sites and/or embedded YouTube videos may be used; however, you may not use the Internet to look up other information to include on your site.
  - You may briefly go to the website to grab the link to this content, but no other information from that site should be used in your design.
  - Do not copy and paste text from sources on the Internet. *Plagiarism will result in disqualification.*

BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR WEBSITE

Be sure to save your work early and often while creating your site.

Before your site is ready to be judged, you must first **Launch Your Site** and set it to **Private**.

Launch Your Site

Once you are finished with your site and are ready to submit it for judging, you will need to launch your site.
- Go to your Dashboard
- On the left-hand side of the screen, select **Settings**
    - Scroll down and click "**Launch Site**"
        - Under "Choose a domain", select the "**Skip Purchase**" option – this should be the last option available
        - When asked to Choose a Plan, click "**Start with a free site**"- this option appears right under the "Choose a Plan" header

Change Your Privacy Settings to Private

Before your site can be submitted for judging, your last step should be to set your site to **Private**.
- Go to your Dashboard
- On the left-hand side of the screen, select **Settings**
    - Scroll down to **Privacy**
    - Change from a Public site to a **Private** site
    - Click the pink "Save Settings" button

Log out of your WordPress account

Before submitting your site for judging, please log out of your WordPress account.
- Click on the outline of a person in the top right-hand corner of your screen
    - Click "**Log Out**" on the left-hand side of the screen

Submitting Your Site for Judging

Once you are ready to officially submit your site for judging, please notify the room.

- The room monitor will confirm your site is viewable and ready to be judged *(this may take a few minutes so please be patient).*
- You will be notified that your site has been cleared for judging and you will be dismissed from the practicum room at that time.
    - Once you leave the room, you will not be allowed to re-enter or submit your site.

As soon as you leave the practicum room, the password to your WordPress account will be changed and you will no longer have access to edit your page.

- **No changes can be made to your site after the conclusion of the practicum**

Video Production Practicum Instructions

<u>Video Producer</u>

Students will create and edit a **60-90 second promotional video** using the information gathered during the press conference and the materials provided in the press packet. The objective is to create a video as if the student works for the press conference speaker's organization: edit the videos and/or photos in a sequence that tells a positive story about the topic and promotes the client's product or service. **The press organization would like the video to be ready to present to the general public on various platforms (commercial, social media, etc.). Prior to the contest, each chapter will need to have a chapter YouTube account set up. Your video will be posted to the chapter's YouTube.**

After students are in their practicum room and have been given set-up instructions by the room monitor, they will have **90 minutes** to create and edit their promotional video. The student's computer must have the appropriate video editing software (Filmora) installed and in working order during the practicum time. Videos must be created entirely during this time, and students may not access previously created files. **Students are urged to wear headphones as to not disrupt teammates working in the same room.**

All students will be instructed when they may being working on their video to ensure equal time for all participants. Please wait for the room monitor to tell you can begin before creating and editing.

Prior to the practicum, students were provided with a selection of video, image, and audio files. **These are the only files students may use in their videos**, but they do not have to use all of the files provided. It is <u>the student's</u> responsibility to have these assets installed onto their computer by the time the practicum begins.

Students may only use Filmora while creating their videos and during the practicum time.

- **Videos, images, audio, and/or templates other than those provided by the National FFA Ag Communications CDE Committee are strictly prohibited.**
  - Motion graphics that come pre-installed with Filmora are allowed.
    - Only pre-installed graphics are allowed. Do not download extra graphics.

It is <u>the student's</u> responsibility to have all assets and software installed onto their computer and be able to open their editing software, import their assets, edit, and export their projects. Assistance from the room monitor, contest officials, room proctor, and/or teammates is prohibited.

Judging will be based on the promotional value of and story told within your video, the readiness to present to the general public, use of provided materials, quality of video and audio editing, and creativity.

Be sure to save your work early and often to your computer.

<u>Submitting Your Video for Judging</u>

All videos will be uploaded to YouTube and a link will be submitted though the communicated method.

When you are finished editing, export your video to a format that is accepted by YouTube, such as mp4, m4v, or other accepted format*. Double check your video to ensure it exported properly and in the version you want.

Upload the exported video to your own or your chapter's YouTube page. You should have created a YouTube account prior to the practicum. Please be sure to include your chapter name at the beginning of

your video title on YouTube (i.e. Paris – Tennessee FFA Ag Comm Video or something similar).

Double check to make sure the uploaded video is not set to private.
 − It can be unlisted, just not private.

When you are certain the <u>correct</u> video was uploaded successfully and will open in YouTube, submit the link to your video via the communicated method.

Once your link had been submitted, please notify the room monitor.
- The room monitor will confirm your link has been successfully submitted and can be opened for judging (this may take a few minutes so please be patient).
   Once you leave the room, you will not be allowed to re-enter or submit your files.