Department of Communication Studies and Philosophy
Communication Studies
2022-2023 Assessment Data

All rubric scores are based on direct assessment of the students by faculty members within the Communication Studies (CMST) program. Details on each rubric can be found in our assessment plan.

1. **Objective: Design and deliver effective messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context (based on the capstone 35 minute oral presentation).**

   Rubric is based on a four-point scale with **four being the highest**.

Presentation Area	Fall 2021 n=17	Spring 2022 n=44	Fall 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=48
Organization	4.0	3.4	3.43	3.7
Language Use	4.0	3.4	3.71	3.4
Delivery Style	3.9	3.1	3.28	3.1
Content & Support	3.9	3.6	3.67	3.5
Central Message	3.9	3.6	3.71	3.8
Total Average Score	3.9	3.4	3.56	3.5

   Interpretation: The average scores are the middle of the three point range. Based on the rubric, this means that the average presentation by a CMST graduate has the following qualities:
   1. A specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions are clearly and consistently observable within the presentation.
   2. Language choices that are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in the presentation is appropriate to the audience.
   3. Uses delivery techniques (posture, gestures, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, and any use of technology) that make the presentation interesting and the speaker appears comfortable.
   4. Content material, such as explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, and quotations from relevant authorities often engages the audience and generally supports the presentation or establish the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.
   5. A central message that is clear and consistent with the supporting material. The connection to the audience is also clear.
   6.

   Below are student perceptions of learning based on our annual survey of students who have graduated in the last year. These are based on a five-point scale with five representing strong agreement that the objective was met for the student, three would be neutral and a one would mean the student strongly disagreed that the objective had been met. Clearly the students believe the objective has been met.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Recent Graduates	4.8 n=16	5.0 n=19	4.9 n=22	4.8 n=25	4.8 n=23	4.9 n = 12	4.7 n = 11	4.9 n = 17	4.8 n=14[1]

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[1]The survey was distributed in early July instead of May, which may account for the smaller numbers of participants.

2. **Objective: Effectively explain and apply communication concepts, theories, perspectives, and principles to their personal experiences (based on final what I have learned papers)**

   Rubric is based on a four-point scale with **four being the highest**.

Evaluation Point	Fall 2021 n=17	Spring 2022 n=44	Fall 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=48
Purpose & Organization	3.9	3.4	3.9	3.4
Writing Mechanics	3.8	3.2	3.9	3.0
Connection to Discipline	3.7	3.5	3.9	3.5
Connection to Experience	3.7	3.3	4.0	3.5
Reflection/Self-Assessment	3.9	3.3	4.0	3.6
Total Average Score	3.8	3.3	3.94	3.4

   Interpretation: The scores across the three semesters average three. The lowest spot is on writing mechanics. Based on the rubric, this means that the typical CMST graduate:
   1. Demonstrates an adequate consideration of the purpose of the assigned task and organizes the material in a clear format with a preview & summary.
   2. Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.
   3. Demonstrates a clear understanding of the discipline by fully and clearly explaining concepts. Makes tentative or few connections across concepts.
   4. Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences from a variety of contexts to illuminate basic concepts in the communication field.
   5. Demonstrates the ability to evaluate and recognize changes in one's own learning. Able to articulate basic changes in self and identify patterns of behavior.

Below are student perceptions of learning based on our annual survey of students who have graduated in the last year. These are based on a five-point scale with five representing strong agreement that the objective was met for the student, three would be neutral and a one would mean the student strongly disagreed that the objective had been met. Clearly the students believe the objective has been met.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Recent Graduates	4.6 n=16	4.9 n=19	4.8 n=22	4.8 n=25	4.7 n=23	4.6 n = 12	4.8 n = 11	4.8 n = 17	4.9 n=14

3. **Objective: Feel confident in their understanding of how to 1) Build lasting and mutually positive interpersonal relationships; 2) Effectively communicate in organizational settings; 3) Sensitively understand and bridge cultural differences when interacting in a culturally diverse society; and 4) Recognize, plan, and implement strategies of persuasion that are effective and ethical.**

   This objective is not measured by a rubric as it is grounded in student perception of their abilities. Below are student perceptions of learning based on our annual survey of students who have graduated in the last year: These are based on a five-point scale with five representing strong agreement that the objective was met for the student, three would be neutral and a one would mean the student strongly

disagreed that the objective had been met. Clearly the students believe all parts of this objective have been met and the responses show that they have been consistently met for the past six years.

Thematic Area	2015 n=16	2016 n=19	2017 n=22	2018 n=25	2019 n=23	2020 n = 12	2021 n = 11	2022 n = 17	2023 n=14
1. Interpersonal Communication	N/A	N/A	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8
2. Organizational Communication	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.9
3. Intercultural Communication	4.9	5.0	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.8	4.8
4. Persuasion/Social Influence	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.3

4. **Objective: Effectively, critically and systematically analyze messages.**

Rubric is based on a three-point scale with three being the highest.

Message Analysis material (n=46)

Area	Fall 2021 n=17	Spring 2022 n=44	Fall 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=36
Communication Complexity	3.0	2.6	2.76	2.64
Informed Curiosity	3.0	2.8	2.95	2.72
Communication Sophistication	3.0	2.7	3.0	2.77
Total Average Score	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.71

Interpretation: The scores across the two semesters averaged in the high two's on a three point scale. Based on the rubric, this means that when faced with a problematic communication situation the typical CMST graduate:
1. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of potential meanings by articulating three or more potential meanings and motivations behind the analyzed messages.
2. Is able to articulate a series of questions that would skillfully guide a person to better understand the message and/or similar future messages from multiple perspectives.
3. Is able to provide multiple suggestions for how improve the message grounded in communication concepts
   with a recognition of potential benefits and dangers associated with these suggestions.

Percentages of students falling in the three categories

Fall 2022, N=21

Area	Novice	Emerging	Accomplished
Communication Complexity	0%	24%	76%
Informed Curiosity	0%	5%	95%
Communication Sophistication	0%	0%	100%

Spring 2023, N=36

Area	Novice	Emerging	Accomplished
Communication Complexity	4%	34%	62%
Informed Curiosity	0%	28%	72%
Communication Sophistication	2%	22%	76%

Below are student perceptions of learning based on our annual survey of students who have graduated in the last year. These are based on a five-point scale with five representing strong agreement that the objective was met for the student, three would be neutral and a one would mean the student strongly disagreed that the objective had been met. The students clearly feel the objective has been met.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Recent Graduates	4.6 n=16	4.8 n=19	4.6 n=22	4.5 n=25	4.7 n=23	4.7 n = 12	4.6 n = 11	4.8 n = 17	4.8 n=12

5. **Objective: Demonstrate understanding of how to engage in communication inquiry.**

Rubric is based on a four-point scale with four being the highest.

Area	Quantitative Methods, (CMST 4810) Fall 2022 n=25	Communication Criticism (CMST 4820) Fall 2022 n=25	Communication Criticism (CMST 4820) Fall 2022 n=13	Communication Criticism (CMST 4820) Fall 2022 n=24	Communication Criticism (CMST 4820) Fall 2022 n=15	Qualitative methods (CMST 4800) Spring, 2023, n=24
Topic/Fit	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.7	3.7	3.6
Literature Review	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	2.9	3.5
Design	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.7	2.7	3.6

Analysis	3.0	3.6	3.5	3.8	2.7	3.6
Conclusion	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.8	2.6	3.4
Total Average Score	3.4	3.5	3.44	3.7	2.92	3.54

Interpretation: The scores vary slightly by topic area with the overall average is in the mid-three range. The one outlying class may be based on the instructor teaching the course for the first time. In general, based on the rubric, the average CMST graduate has produced research that:

1. Identifies a creative, focused, and manageable topic that addresses potentially significant issues and is appropriate to the method under study.
2. Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.
3. Has all elements of the methodology or theoretical framework skillfully developed. Appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks may be synthesized from across disciplines or from relevant sub-disciplines.
4. Organizes evidence to reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.
5. States a conclusion focused solely on the inquiry findings. Discusses relevant and supported limitations and implications of the research.

Below are student perceptions of learning based on our annual survey of students who have graduated in the last year: These are based on a five-point scale with five representing strong agreement that the objective was met for the student, three would be neutral and a one would mean the student strongly disagreed that the objective had been met. Our number are consistently in the mid-fours, with the students feeling as though they have a good understanding of the communication methods of inquiry.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Recent Graduates	4.4 n=16	4.4 n=19	4.1 n=22	4.3 n=25	4.1 n=23	4.3 n = 12	4.5 n = 11	4.5 n = 17	4.4 n=12

Anonymous Comments from Qualtric Survey

absolutely love this program and would recommend it to anyone who is unsure about a degree

Communication studies is an interesting and valid area of study, but the faculty and people in the communication studies program at USU made the program truly worthwhile. They are kind, responsive, thoughtful, and capable people. There is a lot more I could say, but I think that one thing the program and department could do better is to promote student affiliation or engagement with on- or off-campus activism. Students of communication and philosophy have the capacity to create a lot of good, and the program department should support that.

Loved my program! My only complaint is that when I took my Persuasion class, which feels very important, I had a terrible professor ([xxxxxxx], who has since been terminated), and despite many students submitting complaints about the ineffectiveness of the class, no intervention or oversight happened.

I LOVED the Comm Studies program so much! The professors and fellow students I worked with made my college experience fulfilling and phenomenal. I learned so many interpersonal and research skills that are applicable to my life and that I believe will help me be successful in the workforce. However, I do wish the program did a better job connecting graduating students with career opportunities in the field or at least companies that like to hire Communication students. That is definitely a struggle upon graduating!

I loved the major and enjoyed almost every single one of my classes. I think it helped me drastically in developing humility, empathy, and strong interpersonal relationships. It has helped me see my communication strengths and weaknesses. However, now that I am graduated, I am realizing I need more hard skills if I am to get a job. I wish I would have done that more while in college or perhaps even considered re thinking the major.

I have loved the communication studies major. It genuinely has changed my life for the better. I have become the person that I am through applying the things that I have learned. All of the teacher I had were wonderful and truly cared about our success. I also loved working with Clair in his Conflict classes and the development of the Peace Institute.

I loved this degree so much. I learned a lot and would recommend it to most people! I noticed that I began learning about how to apply what I've learned in my degree to a professional setting, at the very end of the semester in my capstone class. I noticed myself wishing that I had had more classes that had this information earlier on in my degree. It was cool to work on our resumes and stuff I just wish this information would have been a bigger part of the whole process.

It changed my life in so many ways and I met some of the most amazing people, for which I am extremely grateful!

This major changed my outlook on relationships, communication and learning. I went from hating school and what I was learning to becoming really passionate about something in education! What I've learned through communication studies is priceless and has added so much value to my life and relationships.

Open-Ended Questions during Final Interview on Strengths or Weaknesses/Ways to improve the Program

Qualitative Feedback Spring 2023

Note from the professor: I find that I do need to push them a little bit for ideas on how we can do better as most start off saying it is just great and they have loved it). Also multiple strengths are often mentioned whereas usually only one way to improve is mentioned.

Strengths that came up at least twice in order of frequency

The Professors/Faculty 41 of the 48 interviewed brought this up and often different aspects of the faculty. Below are some of the most common aspect of the faculty noted along with the number of times this was brought up.

The faculty care about and respect the individual student (20)

The ability to access and have an actual relationship with the faculty, often mentioned in contrast to programs where they were not able to have this (14)

The faculty expertise and knowledge (13)

The faculty live (model) what they teach (6)

Diversity of faculty (3)

How applicable the ideas were to their life (13)

Improved their thinking skills and the ability to see things differently (8)

Helped them to understand themselves better and to grow personally (8)

Improved their writing and speaking skills (7)

Diversity of classes (6)

Flexibility to do what fit with their interests (4)

Connections with fellow students (4)

Sense of community with both fellow students and faculty (4)

Our different "areas of emphasis for students to choose from (4)

The diversity of perspectives presented (4)

Small class size (3)

Great classes (3)

Group projects (3)

Areas students suggested could improve the program that came up at least twice

Require people to take more classes/credits (longer program) (7)

More career examples and ideas of potential jobs (perhaps via alumni visits) (7)

The different areas of possible emphasis brought up and explained more earlier in their time in the program (5)

More done as a program to combat the stigma or negative images others have of this major (4)

More research opportunities (or getting the word out on these) (4)

More social activities for communication majors (3)

More internship opportunities (or the word out on these) (3)

More word out on special topics classes when they are offered (3)

Professors sometimes too flexible and lenient (2)

Concern about some political bias against conservatives by faculty and fellow students (2)

 And then I will mention one other even though it was only explicitly mentioned by one person during the interviews because it is something I heard mentioned by at least 6-7 others early in the semester – Tell Students early on in classes to Save your Notes it will help when you take the capstone class.

Qualitative feedback Fall 2022

Program Strengths:
Faculty! This is the constant piece of feedback. Faculty that see students, care about them individually, teach great classes, mentor them, create welcoming environments, practice what they preach, and challenge and stretch them.

Cassidy Hansen. Students greatly appreciate Cassidy and her help. She's bringing in majors
through her exploratory conversations.

Smaller class sizes and positive learning environments.

Diversity of topics to study and major emphases

Opportunities for research and mentoring outside the classroom

Applicability of content for personal and professional growth

Programs teaches students to love learning and become better people.

Closeness with other students in classes; personal relationships with peers that are meaningful.

Many come because they are needing a major and ours seems most interesting or they hear
good things, then the arrive and are very happy with the content and faculty. (This is good to
know about a good number of our majors.)

Areas for Improvement:

Market the program better so students know about it sooner. (Many wished they could have
started sooner.)

Majors feel lost when they start. They like the content but have no real roadmap outside of
the Catalog to guide decisions. Need to know more about what classes mean and what they
do. Some course names are unhelpful.

Better ways to talk about the major to others to combat weird or bad stereotypes of the
major. The name of the program isn't helpful. This needs to happen early on and not just in
capstone.

Increase class caps just a little so more students can have seats in upper division classes.

More chances to take additional classes with professors; more classes with full-time rather
than part-time faculty.

More sections of Persuasion. More health classes. Regular sections of emotions and listening

Spread out upper division courses more across days and times.

More connection of content to professional goals

Ways to learn about getting involved in research earlier in the program. Some don't know about it.

More alumni connections