Communications Assessment Rubric

THECB says that Communication Skills include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas in written oral and visual communication. We define the terms thusly:

- **Expression of Ideas**—represents the expression of a thesis or main idea in a rhetorical context where the communiqué seeks to persuade a specific audience in a specific context to achieve a specific, clearly defined purpose.

- **Interpretation**—represents the use of supporting evidence that serves to elucidate, illustrate, and make persuasive the main point of the piece of communication. This includes verbal and nonverbal means of persuasion such as written texts and visual aids.

- **Development**—represents formal aspects of communication such as effective focus, organization, style, and other aspects of delivery used to achieve the intended purpose clearly and persuasively.

To implement a grading rubric for the artifacts to be assessed, we are also adopting these terms:

- **Focus**—is the extent to which the content of the essay/presentation corresponds to the thesis statement. In other words, good focus means that the thesis statement drives the whole document. Each section, then, focuses on presenting and arguing the thesis statement with logical reasoning, supportive evidence, and correct documentation.

- **Organization**—relates to the order in which ideas are presented in support of the thesis statement. The introduction, body, and conclusion are developed in a logical, sequential order with clear transitions, and evidence is organized within each section. An artifact with good development includes supportive reasoning and evidence that **build** on each other as the document unfolds.

- **Assignment's Requirements**—relate to what the instructor has set forth in the assignment. A communications artifact can be delivered well in all aspects and not respond to the assignment.

- **Style**—is the way in which words and sentences are put together. It involves word choice, sentence structure, and tone appropriate for the rhetorical situation. Different styles can be effective in different genres; however, any style in academic communication should demonstrate control of sentence-level errors such as grammar problems, misspellings, improper use of punctuation, articulation, and vocal pauses.

- **Vocal Delivery**—includes elements such as volume, variety, fluency, rate, pronunciation, articulation, and vocal pauses.

- **Nonverbal Communication**—includes aspects such as eye contact, gestures, movement, vitality, facial expressions, and proper use of lectern and visual aids where appropriate.

Communication Skills Rubric

	Excellent (5 points)	Good (4 points)	Competent (3 points)	Marginal (2 points)	Poor (1 point)
Focus	Includes all elements that build upon the thesis.	Includes all elements that effectively support the thesis	Has a clear thesis but one or two digressive or unsupportive elements	Involves a missing thesis and/or insufficient support	Involves a missing thesis, no support, and/or plagiarized evidence
Organization	Has an effectively creative pattern of development	Has a clear and consistent pattern of development	Has a few minor problems (missing transition, short introduction and/or conclusion, etc.)	Involves missing transitions, introduction, and/or conclusion	Rambles from one thing to another with no attempt at a consistent development
Assignments Requirements	Enhances the assignment	Responds clearly to the assignment	Meets the assignments requirements	Ignores several requirements	Does not meet the majority of requirements
Style	Has flair for style with sustained grammatical accuracy	Has an effective style for the rhetorical situation with few interfering sentence-level errors	Has an inconsistent style and/or sentence-level errors, but meaning is not compromised	Has an obstructive style and/or contains sentence-level errors that begin to hoard the reader's attention	Has an offensive style and/or includes sentence-level errors that are glaring throughout the presentation and meaning is lost
Vocal Delivery (If oral presentation)	Is artful in the use of delivery and style	Is presented extemporaneously and conversationally without vocalized pauses (IE: um, er, like, you know)	Is presented extemporaneously with adequate vocal variety	Is stiff with little vocal variety	Is obviously unrehearsed in its delivery
Nonverbal (If oral presentation)	Has eye contact with the majority of the audience and mannerisms that enhance the speech	Has eye contact with the majority of the audience and mannerisms that enhance the speech	Has adequate eye contact and mannerisms that neither distract nor enhance	Is very dependent on notes and has some distracting mannerisms	Is reading and mannerisms distract