

Department of Communication Studies and Philosophy
 Communication Studies
 2023-2024 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 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=48	Fall 2023 n=25	Spring 2024 n=48
Organization	3.43	3.7	4.0	3.92
Language Use	3.71	3.4	3.96	3.97
Delivery Style	3.28	3.1	3.88	3.7
Content & Support	3.67	3.5	3.88	3.75
Central Message	3.71	3.8	3.88	3.93
Total Average Score	3.56	3.5	3.92	3.88

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.

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.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recent Graduates	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	4.75 n=20

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 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=48	Fall 23 n=25	Spring 24 n=48
Purpose & Organization	3.9	3.4	4.0	3.97
Writing Mechanics	3.9	3.0	3.96	3.93
Connection to Discipline	3.9	3.5	3.96	3.98
Connection to Experience	4.0	3.5	3.96	3.93
Reflection/Self-Assessment	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.0
Total Average Score	3.94	3.4	3.97	3.96

Interpretation: The scores across the four semesters average quite high. 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

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

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.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recent Graduates	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	4.8 n=20

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 nine years.

Thematic Area	2016 n=19	2017 n=22	2018 n=25	2019 n=23	2020 n = 12	2021 n = 11	2022 n = 17	2023 n=14	2024 n=20
1. Interpersonal Communication	N/A	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.45
2. Organizational Communication	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.9	4.55
3. Intercultural Communication	5.0	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.8	4.8	4.6
4. Persuasion/Social Influence	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.65

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

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

Area	Fall 2022 n=21	Spring 2023 n=36	Fall 2023 n=25	Spring 2024 n=47
Communication Complexity	2.76	2.64	2.96	2.95
Informed Curiosity	2.95	2.72	2.96	2.93
Communication Sophistication	3.0	2.77	2.96	2.95
Total Average Score	2.9	2.71	2.96	2.94

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 2023, N=25

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

Spring 2024, N=47

Area	Novice	Emerging	Accomplished
Communication Complexity	0%	5%	95%
Informed Curiosity	0%	7%	93%
Communication Sophistication	0%	5%	95%

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.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recent Graduates	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	4.65 n=20

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) Spring 2024 n=20	Communication Criticism (CMST 4820) Fall 2023 n=24	Qualitative methods (CMST 4800) Spring, 2024, n=25
Topic/Fit	3.65	3.5	3.7
Literature Review	3.55	3.2	3.4
Design	3.6	3.0	3.8

Analysis	3.85	3.3	Not Assessed
Conclusion	3.55	3.0	Not Assessed
Total Average Score	3.64	3.2	3.63

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.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recent Graduates	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	4.55 n=20

Anonymous Comments from Qualtrics Survey

- I loved comm studies! The one thing I wished we were better at though was networking.
- I loved it! Grateful for everything I learned! One suggestion I would have would be to talk more about the different areas that you can emphasize in within the major and how those work. I heard about it my freshman and sophomore year just a little bit, but I had to do a lot of digging to get information.

- I think the biggest thing is providing more internship and career opportunities. I greatly struggled to find opportunities at Utah State and had to search from other universities and websites in order to find internships while still attending Utah state. Even for my Marketing minor I found this hard. Utah state needs to do a better job at having internships, study abroad' opportunities and career opportunities as well.
- I loved the program and the only thing I would recommend is spending more time teaching APA format if it is to be used in class. I often had to use other examples and guess on what to do when it came time to write a paper and it really only was used once on a big paper in class.
- I love this degree. It has changed my life and helped me come to know who I am.
- I loved my classes, professors, and experience!
- I've loved everything about this program. The professors truly care about the students and I've grown so much through this program. One thing I would have loved is more opportunities to connect with people outside of the university (connections for future jobs specifically!)
- I have absolutely loved my time in the program! The classes that are offered are amazing and diverse. The professors are phenomenal. I have met life long friends through the program and am extremely grateful for the opportunity I had to be a part of the program.
- I learned a lot about myself as a daughter, sister, student, friend, and creative. I wish more people took CMST courses to learn communication because it is the basis of healthy relationships and well-formed systems.
- I loved my professors and everything I learned!
- I feel like one of the reasons I was able to grow so much was because I felt trusted. It made me feel like my education mattered because I was going to have an impact almost immediately. I was also provided with a community that was there to support me if there was ever anything wrong. It became a community that met most of my needs so I didn't have to exhaust myself by going to 8 different communities to fulfill those same needs.
- Wonderful program and wonderful professors!
- I love this department!!

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

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.
- Learn to appreciate difference
- Interconnected classes and broad range of topics; you can make it what you want
- Conflict class was very impactful; very helpful in life

- Opportunity to practice what we learn.
- Learning to write and think carefully
- TA and RA opportunities are really meaningful
- Emphases help in choosing classes

Areas for Improvement:

- Market the program better so students know about it sooner. Many wished they could have started sooner. Also, communicate the emphases earlier.
- Students need career help and connections. They feel lost as to how to market themselves after graduation. More career building.
- More class options; can't always get the class they want.
- Research classes seem to narrow.
- The perception of the major as a "useless degree" is hard to deal with.
- Too many presentations without enough training.
- Not always clear that students have been accepted into the major.
- Limited options for class times.
- Lack of viewpoint diversity from some faculty; students have to write the professor's point of view to get a good grade. Teaching the subjective as objective.
- Nothing happens during finals week.
- More transparency with certificates and minors that are helpful to the major.
- Students need online options for classes.
- Redundancy in curriculum. Learning the same thing in 3-4 classes.
- Need an introductory course.