

## Effective Communication

The ability to develop and present ideas logically and effectively.

| Specific Skill or Knowledge Area  | Student Learning Outcomes  |  |  |   | 0  |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
|   | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1   |  |
| Central Message   | Central message is compelling, reinforced, and strongly supported.   | Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material.  | Central message is basically understandable but is not reinforced.   | Central message can be discerned, but is not explicitly stated.   | Assign a zero for a performance that does not meet a score of one (1). |
| Organization  | Organizational pattern is clear and consistent, polished, and makes the content cohesive.  | Organizational pattern is clear and consistent.  | Organizational pattern is partially developed.   | Organizational pattern is poorly developed and unclear.   |  |
| Supporting Material / Evidence  | Employs timely and relevant material to provide effective support in a way that reflects a thorough understanding of the topic/thesis.   | Selects sufficient and relevant supporting materials, but lacks in analysis, comparisons, or credible authorities.   | Uses some supporting materials with limited or incomplete explanations, examples, and/or descriptions.   | Uses insufficient or inappropriate supporting materials.  |  |
| Context and Audience  | Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the context, uses compelling language appropriate to the audience.  | Demonstrates adequate consideration of the context and uses thoughtful language given the audience.  | Demonstrates some awareness of the context and uses mundane language given the audience.   | Demonstrates minimal attention to the context and uses unclear language given the audience.   |  |
| <b>Select only one trait below depending on the mode of delivery for 5 total rubric traits.</b> |  |  |  |   |  |
| Verbal and Nonverbal Delivery (Oral Communication)  | Delivery is compelling and speaker fully engages the audience. i.e., Student appears polished and confident, does not read from notes. No distractors are present (e.g. vocalizations such as "uh", "um", "like", or fidgeting, swaying, etc.) | Delivery makes the presentation interesting, and speaker mostly engages the audience. i.e., Student refers only occasionally to notes. Minor distractors may be present (an infrequent "um" or shift in posture), but they do not distract the audience. | Delivery is understandable, but speaker inconsistently engages the audience. i.e., Student reads frequently from notes, inconsistent eye contact, distractors are noticeable (regular use of vocalizations like "uh" or "um," noticeable fidgeting.) | Delivery is understandable but speaker fails to engage the audience. i.e., Student reads almost entirely from notes, distractors are constant and noticeable (e.g. "uh", "um", "like", or fidgeting, swaying, etc.), significantly interfering with the audience's ability to focus on the content. |  |
| Control of Syntax and Mechanics (Written Communication)   | Demonstrates clear and fluid control of syntax and mechanics that skillfully communicates meaning to readers and is virtually error-free.  | Uses syntax and mechanics that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity. The language has few errors.   | Exhibits substantive errors in syntax and mechanics which, at times, impedes the clarity of the work.  | Shows a serious pattern of error in syntax and mechanics that interferes with meaning.  |  |

This rubric is to be used to score non-assisted student artifacts. Using this rubric to evaluate student work resulting from the use of AI or other means of supplementing a student's performance undermines the process of using this assessment rubric to evaluate a student's native level.

The purpose of a general education is to equip students with foundational skills—such as the ability to develop and present one's ideas logically and effectively—necessary to pursue advanced academic work and address real-world challenges. The UCA Core is designed to ensure that every student at UCA develops the essential intellectual foundation necessary for professional adaptability, informed citizenship, and lifelong learning. The UCA Core is not exhaustive of, nor does it replace, specialized learning acquired in the several disciplines throughout UCA.

This rubric defines skills and knowledge areas for Effective Communication. It is designed to assess evidence of learning and development across five student learning outcomes: Central Message; Organization; Supporting Material/Evidence; Context and Audience; and depending on mode of delivery Verbal and Nonverbal Delivery or Control of Syntax and Mechanics.

- **Central Message:** The topic, thesis, or main point of communication that is consistent with the purpose of the assignment.
- **Organization:** The grouping of material in communication, including a specific introduction, conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions.
- **Supporting Material/Evidence:** Explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities, or other kinds of information or analysis that support the central message.
- **Context and Audience:** The people and situations surrounding the communication, including the cognitive, social, and cultural factors that influence the audience and communicator.
- **For Oral Communication - Verbal and Nonverbal Delivery:** Posture, gesture, eye contact, vocal expressiveness (loudness, tone, emphasis), and vocal fillers (“um,” “uh,” “like,” “you know,” etc.).
- **For Written Communication - Control of Syntax and Mechanics:** The use of language to communicate meaning, including word choice, sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

### Assignment Design Principles

To map successfully to the rubric, an assignment should be a substantive project, such as a poster presentation, oral presentation, or research paper. It should include the following structural requirements:

- **Central Message:** Does the assignment require students to articulate a clear topic, thesis, or main point that is consistent with the assignment's purpose? Is the prompt designed so that a high-scoring student must make their central message compelling, reinforced, and strongly supported?
- **Organization:** Does the assignment require specific structural elements, such as an introduction, a conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions?
- **Supporting Material / Evidence:** Does the task necessitate the use of supporting information, such as explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, or quotations from relevant authorities?
- **Context and Audience:** Does the prompt clearly define the people and situations surrounding the communication?
- **For Oral Communication Deliverables:** Will you be able to observe and evaluate the student's posture, gestures, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, and use of vocal fillers?
- **For Written Communication Deliverables:** Does the format allow you to evaluate word choice, sentence and paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling?

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