Agricultural Communications
CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT
GUIDE BOOK
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PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

1. EMPHASIS
Emphasis refers to the focal point of the design in the order of importance of each design element. Ask yourself, “What is the first piece of information the reader needs to know?”

2. BALANCE & ALIGNMENT
Symmetrical design creates balance through equally weighted elements aligned on either side of a center line. Asymmetrical design uses opposite weights (like contrasting one large element with several smaller elements) to create a composition that is not even, but still has equilibrium.

3. CONTRAST
Contrast makes the design “pop.” Contrast creates stark differences between elements in a design to improve readability.
4. REPETITION

Repetition unifies a design. Repetition is important beyond printed products, but it is the first thing you feature on a website, business cards, social media, and more! Brand identity? Another term for repetition!

**REPETITION IS SHOWN HERE THROUGH THE CONTINUED USE OF COLORS, TYPEFACES, LAYOUTS AND PATTERNS.**

Example Credit: Molly Biggs

5. PROPORTION

Proportion is the visual size and weight of elements in a composition and how they relate to each other. It often helps to approach your design in sections instead of as a whole.

**PROPORTION EMPHASIZES WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT IN THE DESIGN**

Example Credit: Molly Biggs

6. MOVEMENT

Movement is controlling the elements in a composition so that the eye moves from one element to the next and the information is properly communicated to your audience. Movement creates the story or the narrative of your work.

**MOVEMENT HELPS THE READER MOVE THROUGH THE DESIGN, UNDERSTANDING THE INFORMATION ONE PIECE AT A TIME**

Example Credit: Molly Biggs

7. WHITE SPACE

White space is the empty space around the elements, giving a composition more room to breathe. Our brains naturally associate white space around an element with importance. It tells our eyes that objects in one region are grouped separately from other objects.

**WHITE SPACE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF DESIGN. DO NOT BE AFRAID OF IT! IT GIVES THE READERS AND THE DESIGN SPACE TO BREATHE!**

Example Credit: Molly Biggs
KEY TERMS

COLORS
- **CMYK** (cyan, magenta, yellow, black)
  - Best for printing
- **RGB** (red, green, blue)
  - Best for digital

DESIGN RESOURCES & PROGRAMS
- Canva
- Adobe Suite
  - Photoshop
  - InDesign
  - Illustrator
- Others

DIMENSIONS AND SPECS
- Facebook Post
  - Recommended upload size of 1200 x 628 pixels
- X (Twitter) Post
  - Image from a Tweet with shared link: 1200 x 628 pixels
- Instagram Post
  - Instagram images: 1080 x 1080 pixels
- TikTok (Video Specs)
  - **Resolution**: 1080×1920
  - **Aspect ratio**: 9:16
  - **Recommended video formats**: MP4 or MOV
- Visit SproutSocial.com for more info.

TYPOGRAPHY
- Typography is the art and technique of arranging type in order to make language visible. Arrangement of type involves typefaces, point size, line length, leading, tracking and kerning.

PRINT RESOLUTION
- Photos need to be > 300 DPI
  - DPI = Dots/Inch
WEBSITE DESIGN TIPS:

AVOID HECTIC COLOR SCHEMES
- When you put too many colors too close together, the visual noise that is created overpowers the rest of the web design.

PHOTOGRAPHS
- The photos that are integrated into a web design layout have a huge impact on the overall look and feel of a website. Poorly shot images can diminish the design. Using high-quality photos in a simple way to improve your designs.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN
- Remember to check the look on your phone too! There are many digital devices out there with varying screen sizes. No matter how someone is accessing your web design, it should offer a similar experience no matter what size screen the viewer has.

KEEP TYPOGRAPHY CONSISTENT
- When we read a book, every page follows a sense of order. The text will be the same size, set with exact spacing, and follow the same repeating format. Typography in a web design also needs to have a sense of consistency. Headers, body text, links, and other text need to follow the same styling from one page of a website to the next.

WEBSITE DESIGN PLATFORMS
- Wix
- Squarespace
- WordPress
- Adobe Portfolio
1. Lighting

Lighting the subject is vital during any video production. In most situations, shooting in a well-lit room should be more than adequate, but it is always important to consider how this light will affect your recording.

**Main Light**
- Light source is facing towards the subject of the video.

**Additional Light**
- Used to remove any unwanted shadows created by the main light source.

**Backlighting**
- Main light source is located behind the subject making them appear in silhouette.

2. Composition

The way a shot is put together on screen can make a huge difference in how viewers engage with a video.

**Types of Shots**
- Mid Shot
- Medium Close
- Close Up
- Full Body
- Graphic
- Title

**Rule of Thirds**

The rule of thirds is an effective compositional rule highlighting the importance of positioning within the frame. To use the rule of thirds effectively, the focal point will be in the crosshairs of a 3x3 grid.
3. **FRAMING**  The way elements are arranged in the frame.

- ‘Full shot’ – providing context.
- ‘Close shot’ – all about the subject.
- ‘Medium shot’ – some context but focus is on the subject.

Example Credit: University of the Highlands and Islands 2016

4. **FOCUS**

Your subject is the focus of your recording. Find a spot with a background that helps to inform the scene. Alternatively, use an interesting generic space that does not confuse the viewer.

Diagram 1: Subject too close to the background.  
Diagram 2: Subject further away from the wall to create depth.

Example Credit: University of the Highlands and Islands 2016
5. AUDIO

Reduce background noises as much as possible and place the microphone as close to the subject as possible. The speaker needs to be the most prominent audio source and loud enough for play back. Increasing audio volume after filming will also increase all background noise.

THIRD PARTY AUDIO

Even during videos with no narration, the inclusion of background music can enhance the user experience and keep the viewer's attention.

Recommended sites for free audio:
- Uppbeat
- Pixabay
- Soundstripe
- Chosic

TRANSCRIPTS

For accessibility, it is important to create transcripts or descriptions any time audio or video are used to deliver educational material.

6. CAMERA MOVEMENT

Use a tripod to prevent camera shake and to ensure constant repetition of camera position. Maintaining a constant camera position helps to provide a seamless transition when editing.

Where a tripod is unavailable, techniques to keep the camera steady should be employed. Making use of any surfaces you can lean against can be useful, and certain ways of holding cameras can add stability.

BEST PRACTICE: Stability is maximised by using THREE points of contact.
**FILM PRODUCTION PROCESS**
- Pre-production
- Production
- Post-production

**SHOT LIST**
A document that maps out everything that will happen in a scene of a film, or video, by describing each shot within that film or video.

**LEAD IN**
Start recording slightly before the beginning of action or speech to avoid cut offs when editing.

**LEAD OUT**
End recording slightly after the action or speech to avoid cut offs when editing. Consider the fade out of a clip once the speaker has finished talking.

**B-ROLL**
Footage that supplements the main video clips.

**ESTABLISHING SHOT**
- Used to set the scene.
- For example, an extreme close-up can add an emotional focus.

**CLOTHING**
Clothing and accessories can present a problem for video recording. It's best to stay away from clothing with loud patterns and contrasting colors.

**PAN**
Refers to the horizontal movement of the camera from left to right. It is a technique used to capture a wider view or follow a subject's movement.
PRINCIPLES OF VIDEOGRAPHY

STORYBOARD
A series of drawings that visually tells the story of a screenplay or script.

CREATING A STORYBOARD
STEP 1: Plan your video
- Objective
- Length
- Message

STEP 2: Visualize your script
- Key characters or props
- Setting/ backdrop
- Order of sequences

STEP 3: Add script and additional notes

STEP 4: Collaborate and revise
Title: Placing Order

Storyboard

Scene 1
Audio: Voice Over

Description:

Scene 2
Audio: Voice Over

Description:

Scene 3
Audio: Voice Over

Description:

Scene 4
Audio: Voice Over

Description:

Scene 5
Audio: Voice Over

Description:

Scene 6
Audio: Voice Over

Description:
PRINCIPLES OF VIDEOGRAPHY

BASIC CAMERA GUIDE:

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE
The Exposure Triangle comprises of aperture, shutter speed and ISO. These three camera and lens controls work together to regulate the amount of light that makes it to the light-sensitive surface and the sensitivity of that surface.

APERTURE
- Controls the amount of light entering the lens.
- A diaphragm in the lens adjusts its width based on the f-stop being used.
- The higher the f-number, the smaller the aperture opening, and the less light coming into the lens.

SHUTTER SPEED
- Controls the duration of light that reaches the lens.
- It's controlled by a curtain in front of the camera's sensor.
- A fast shutter speed means that the curtain opens and closes quickly, thus minimizing how long the sensor is exposed to light.

ISO
- Responsible for the sensitivity of the camera's sensor to light.
- The higher the ISO, the more sensitive the sensor becomes.

Example Credit: Action Camera Blog
**PRINCIPLES OF JOURNALISTIC WRITING**

**SIX NEWS VALUES**

1. **Timeliness** - Recent events have a higher news value than less recent ones.
2. **Proximity** - Stories taking place in one's hometown or community are more newsworthy than those taking place far away.
3. **Prominence** - Famous people and those in the public eye have a higher news value than ordinary citizens.
4. **Uniqueness/oddity** - A story with a bizarre twist or strange occurrences.
5. **Impact** - Stories that impact a large number of people may be more newsworthy than those impacting a smaller number of people.
6. **Conflict** - Stories with strife, whether it's actual violence or not, are more interesting.

**PYRAMID STYLE WRITING**

In news writing, the most fundamental information is in the lead paragraph of the story, and then arranging the remaining details from most important to least important.

![Pyramid Diagram]

**Most Newsworthy Info**

**Important Details**

**Other General Info**
- Background Info
LEADS

Opening sentence or paragraph that gives readers the most important information in a clear, concise and interesting manner. It also establishes the voice and direction of an article.

Imagine you had to sum up to a friend, in one sentence, what your story is about. How would you sum up quickly what happened?

TYPES OF LEADS

- **Summary lead:** This is the most traditional lead in news writing. It is often used for breaking news, a “just the facts” approach.
- **Anecdotal/Descriptive lead:** Beginning a story with a quick anecdote or description of the scene can draw in readers, must be interesting and closely illustrate the article’s broader point.
- **Question lead:** Start by asking the audience a question, usually open-ended.

ATTRIBUTIONS

When attributing a direct quote, always use the verb “said” and never any other verbs such as “explained,” “whispered,” etc. It is also more common to use the format “Smith said” instead of “said Smith.”

Even when information from a source is not used in a direct quote and is paraphrased instead, it still must be attributed to that source.

- **EXAMPLE:** “THE HOUSING CRISIS IS GROWING OUT OF CONTROL,” BERNANKE SAID.
- **EXAMPLE:** BERNANKE SAID THE RECESSION IS PROBABLY OVER.
- **EXAMPLE:** THE RECESSION WILL LIKELY BEGIN TO RECEDE IN SIX MONTHS, BERNANKE SAID.
AP Style is a style and usage guide for American English grammar created by American journalists.

1. MONTHS/DATES/TIMES
2. NAMES/TITLES
3. NUMBERS/MONEY
4. PUNCTUATION
5. QUOTATIONS

A. EXAMPLE:

“The cattle have a ruminant digestive system,” Kansas State University Extension beef specialist John Doe says. “This means they have four compartments to their stomach.”

“The ruminant stomach consists of the rumen, abomasum, omasum and reticulum. Each has a specific role to digest and absorb nutrients.

The abomasum is considered the true stomach,” Doe says.
NEWS WRITING

- News articles are short, averaging 100-400 words
- A news article reports the facts: who, what, where, when, why, and how. It is written in a straightforward, concise reporting style
- Time-sensitive and of immediate interest

FEATURE WRITING

- Feature articles are longer and a typical feature word count is between 1,000 – 2,000 words
- A feature article is a human interest story about a person, event, or place
- Can be published at any point. Its content is often evergreen

What is evergreen?
Timeless, can be published year after year, relevant information or interesting topic not dependent on current year

Who is it about? Who is affected? Who benefits? Who loses?

What has happened? What are the consequences? What does this mean for the reader?

When did it happen (time of day, day, month, year)? When was the last update? When can you expect to learn more? When will the effects be felt?

Where is this taking place (building, neighborhood, city, country)? Where should readers go to learn more?

Why did this event take place? Why is this important in the big picture? Why should readers care?
5 STEPS WHEN WRITING TO PERSUADE AND INFLUENCE

1. UNDERSTAND THE PROMPT
   - After the speaker’s presentation, carefully read and analyze the prompt to ensure a clear understanding of the topic or issue you are asked to express your opinion on.
   - Identify key components such as the target audience, purpose of the writing, and any specific points you are expected to address.

2. RESEARCH AND GATHER INFORMATION
   - Take thorough notes on the topic to gather relevant and accurate information.
   - Use reputable sources such as agricultural journals, industry reports, and FFA publications to support your opinions with facts and evidence that ensures that you have a well-rounded understanding of the subject matter.

3. ORGANIZE YOUR THOUGHTS
   - Create an outline to organize your thoughts and structure your opinion piece logically.
   - Clearly define your introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. The introduction should provide background information and a clear thesis statement, the body should present your arguments with supporting evidence, and the conclusion should summarize your main points and restate your opinion.
4. DEVELOP STRONG ARGUMENTS

- Edit and revise your work to refine your arguments, improve flow, and eliminate any unnecessary information.

5. POLISH YOUR WRITING

- Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation to ensure clarity and professionalism.
- Use a tone that is appropriate for the audience and purpose, balancing a confident expression of your opinion with respect for differing views.
- Edit and revise your work to refine your arguments, improve flow, and eliminate any unnecessary information.

WANT TO READ SOME EXCELLENT FEATURE WRITING AND EDITORIAL PIECES?

SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ THE K-STATE AGRICULTURIST MAGAZINE
PERSUASION AS A KEY GOAL
The primary goal of opinion writing is often to persuade the audience. Writers aim to convince readers to adopt or consider their perspective on a particular issue or topic.

PRESENCE IN VARIOUS GENRES
Opinion writing is found in various genres, including editorials, columns, blog posts, reviews, essays, and social media content. The style and tone can vary based on the platform and target audience.

USE OF RHETORICAL DEVICES
Writers often employ rhetorical devices, such as ethos, pathos, and logos, to enhance the persuasiveness of their arguments. Ethos relates to credibility, pathos appeals to emotions, and logos involves logical reasoning.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE
The landscape of opinion writing is dynamic and constantly evolving, influenced by cultural shifts, technological advancements, and changes in media consumption habits.
# Opinion Words and Phrases

## Introductory Words and Phrases
- I think
- I believe
- I feel
- In my opinion
- My favorite
- The best
- I am convinced
- I strongly believe
- From my point of view
- It’s my belief
- Based on what I know
- Speaking for myself
- I know you will have to agree that
- I am confident that

## Transitions
- First/Second/Third
- First of all
- Next
- After that
- Additionally
- Equally important
- Consequently
- Besides
- Further/Furthermore
- Clearly
- Obviously
- In addition
- For all these reasons
- Finally
- In conclusion

## Opinion Clues
- Always/Never
- Awful/Wonderful
- Beautiful/Ugly
- Better/West/Worst
- Delicious/Disgusting
- Definitely
- Enjoyable/Horrible
- Favorite
- Far/Against
- Good/Bad
- Inferior/Superior
- Oppose/Support
- Terrible
- Unfair
- Worthwhile
CONCEPT REVIEW
The following is a list of important terms to help guide your studying and preparation for the Agricultural Communication CDE.

**Design:**
- Adobe Programs
  - InDesign
    - Good for editorial design
  - Photoshop and Lightroom
    - Editing Photos
  - Illustrator
    - Vector-based graphic
- Elements of Design
  - Line
  - Shape
  - Texture
  - Proximity
  - Alignment
  - Composition
- Elements of Photography
  - Leading Lines
  - Rule of Thirds
- Elements of Typography
  - Point Size
  - Leading
  - Tracking
  - Kerning
- Font Types
  - San Serif
  - Slab Serif
  - Serif
  - Script
- White Space

**Videography:**
- Audio Elements
  - Background music
  - Sound effects
  - Third-party audio
- Exposure Triangle
  - Aperture
  - Shutter speed
  - ISO
- Interviewee's Clothing
- Principles of videography
  - Lighting
  - Composition
  - Framing
  - Focus
  - Audio
  - Camera movement
- Production Process Phases
  - Pre-production
  - Production
  - Post production
- Storyboarding steps
  - Step 1: Plan Video
  - Step 2: Visualize Script
  - Step 3: Add Script and Additional Notes
  - Step 4: Collaborate and Revise
- Tripod and Monopod
- Types of Framing
  - Full Shot
  - Close Shot
  - Medium Shot
KEY CONCEPTS

Opinion writing:
- AP Style
- Rhetorical Devices
  - Ethos
  - Pathos
  - Logos
- Types of Writing
  - Editorial
  - Letter to the Editor
  - Columns
- Words and Phrases
  - Introductory Words and Phrases
  - Transitions
  - Opinion Clues
- Persuasive Layout
  - Opinion
  - Reason
  - Examples
  - Opinion
- Types of Arguments
  - Evaluation
  - Proposal
  - Narrative
  - Rebuttal
  - Definition

Journalistic Writing:
- Six News Values
  - Timeliness
  - Proximity
  - Prominence
  - Uniqueness/oddity
  - Impact
  - Conflict
- Pyramid Style Writing Structure
- Types of Leads
  - Summary lead
  - Anecdotal/Descriptive lead
  - Question lead
- How to attribute information and quotes
- AP Style
- Content to include
  - Who, What, When, Where, Why
- Differences between news writing and feature writing

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MEET THE CREATORS:
This guidebook and interactive components was created by the 2023-2024 Agricultural Communications Advancement Team (A-Team). This group is comprised of agricultural communications students selected to represent the agricultural communications department.
