

**Communication Concerns
Illinois State University**

Teacher candidates need to practice and demonstrate effective speaking and listening skills in a variety of contexts. Quality communication is expected not only in the classroom, but also in formal and informal faculty, student, and parent interactions.

Best practices in teaching are often correlated to good oral presentation skills (volume, rate, expression, articulation), non-verbal skills (eye contact, posture, gestures), and the understanding of good content (organizing, arranging). Speaking and listening skills contribute to establishing effective messages and teacher credibility.

Faculty, staff, and supervisors who have concerns regarding a teacher candidate's speaking and listening abilities should report those concerns as soon as possible so that remedial actions can be implemented. Those identifying a communication concern are encouraged to use the rubric provided to assist in recognizing and assessing the communication concern.

Communication Indicators

- **Vocal Qualities:** Elements of oral expression including articulation, pronunciation, vocal expression, volume and rate of speaking.
- **Verbal Qualities:** Use of vocabulary and grammar.
- **Non-Verbal Qualities:** Sending confirming and clarifying messages through non-verbal means such as eye contact, facial expression, gestures, posture, and body movement.
- **Listening Qualities:** Indicating that one is listening well and providing feedback in their interactions.
- **Organizational Qualities:** Helping their listeners by providing a clear introduction, coverage, and conclusions to their lessons and other interactions.

Teacher candidate's Name (print)	UID	Major
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Explanation of Communication Concern(s):

Faculty/Staff Signature	Teacher Candidate Signature
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Faculty/Staff Name (print)	Department	Date
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The teacher candidate must contact the Communications Coordinator, Anna Wright, Fell 402, 438-2872, amwright@ilstu.edu, within one week.

Faculty must submit a copy of this report and rubric to CELP, Campus Box 5440

Procedures Communication Concern

Faculty/Staff will report communication concerns after discussing the concern with the teacher candidate. The faculty/staff member should complete the Communication Concern form; have the teacher candidate sign and date the form; and review the communication skills rubric with the teacher candidate. The Communication Concern form should be forwarded to the Office of Clinical Experiences and Licensure Processes (CELP) to be recorded.

The CELP office will send a copy of the communication concern to the teacher candidate's major program coordinator. It is the responsibility of the department to meet with the teacher candidate and make a referral for additional help for the student.

Referral Procedure:

1. Faculty/Staff identifying a potential communication concern should utilize the Communication Skills for Teachers rubric to help identify the specific nature of the concern. The rubric and the Communication Concerns Form should then be forwarded to CELP. CELP will notify the candidate's major advisor and the Coordinator of Communication Education of the concern.
2. The candidate's major advisor should refer the teacher candidate to the Communication Coordinator, Anna Wright, in Fell Hall 402.
3. The teacher candidate must contact the Communication Coordinator, Anna Wright, and make an appointment for a communication assessment.
4. The Communication Coordinator will gather additional information about the teacher candidate's communication issue(s) and design a Communication Plan for the candidate. Actions may range from personal coaching, making formal presentations in the lab, or taking additional classes in communication (e.g. Com 283, Communication in the Classroom).
5. The Coordinator of Communication Education will notify the teacher candidate, CELP, and the candidate's major or program advisor of the Communication Plan and implementation schedule.
6. The teacher candidate will be expected to maintain the Communication Plan and when completed will receive a signature from the Coordinator of Communication Education. The Coordinator of Communication Education will then notify CELP that the plan has been met. It will be the candidate's responsibility to notify their major advisor that the Communication Plan is completed. Teacher candidates not meeting their Communication Plan will have a "No" for meeting the Communication Concern and will not be admitted to Professional Studies and/or Student Teaching.

Communication Concerns Rubric

E = Exceeds Expectations
M = Meets the Standard (minimum acceptable)
A = Approaching the Standard
B = Does not meet the standard

VOCAL QUALITIES

Volume and projection

- E Speaks loudly enough to be heard by the entire class
- M Speaks softly at times causing occasional hearing problems
- A Speaks softly often causing considerable hearing problems
- B Cannot be heard by the class

Vocal expression

- E Uses purposeful vocal expression throughout the presentation
- M Uses occasional vocal expression in the presentation
- A Rarely uses vocal expression in the presentation
- B Presentation is missing vocal expression

Articulation/Pronunciation

- E Regularly uses clear and distinct pronunciation and articulation
- M Articulation or pronunciation occasionally distract or harm credibility
- A Articulation or pronunciation often distract or harm credibility
- B Articulation or pronunciation cause serious distractions or problems

Vocal rate

- E Speaking rate is lively, variable, interesting, and comfortable for the class
- M Speaking rate is occasionally too fast or too slow for the class and can cause some distractions
- A Speaking rate is consistently too fast or too slow for the class and causes distractions
- B Speaking rate causes considerable class distractions

VERBAL ASPECTS

Vocabulary use

- E Word choice is almost always appropriate for the class topic and level of student
- M Word choice is occasionally inappropriate for the class or students
- A Word choice is often inappropriate for the class or students and creates distractions
- B Word choice is creating significant problems for the class or students

Grammar

- E Grammar use is almost always proper and accurate
- M Grammar use is occasionally inaccurate or inappropriate, but does not distract
- A Grammar use sometimes negatively effects the ability to communicate ideas
- B Grammar use is significantly effecting the ability to communicate ideas

NON-VERBAL ASPECTS

Eye contact

- E Eye contact displays awareness and contact with the entire class
- M Eye contact occasionally misses parts of the classroom
- A Eye contact consistently misses parts of the classroom
- B Eye contact is avoided with the students

Facial expression

- E Maintains purposeful and vivid facial expressions throughout the class
- M Occasionally uses purposeful and vivid facial expressions in the class
- A Occasionally uses negative facial expressions in the class
- B Uses facial expressions that create negative or distracting effects

Gestures

- E Uses purposeful and natural gestures while teaching
- M Uses purposeful and natural gestures occasionally while teaching
- A Uses purposeful and natural gestures rarely while teaching
- B Gestures are problematic or distracting to the class

Posture and movement

- E Displays natural movement and good posture while teaching
- M Movement or posture occasionally are problematic or distracting
- A Movement or posture often create problems or distractions to the class
- B Movement or posture are inappropriate and problematic

LISTENING SKILLS

Listening attitudes

- E Displays positive attitudes and attentiveness while listening to others
- M Occasionally displays negative attitudes and attentiveness while listening to others
- A Often displays negative attitudes and attentiveness while listening to others
- B Disregards others or fails to listen

Providing feedback

- E Displays active listening by providing appropriate feedback while listening
- M Occasionally fails to provide feedback while listening
- A Occasionally provides inappropriate feedback while listening
- B Often provides inappropriate feedback while listening

ORGANIZATIONAL CONCERNS

Beginnings

- E Established topic, interest, process, and justification of the lesson segment
- M Began the class with introductory remarks but missed some of the above
- A Began the class without sufficient introductory remarks creating some confusion
- B Began the class in an unclear, confusing or inappropriate manner

Organization and labeling

- E Progressed through the lesson segment in a clear and logical manner
- M Progressed through the lesson segment, but direction and progression seemed vague
- A Confused the students in the lesson progression and direction
- B Failed to use any direction or method of progression in the lesson segment

Endings

- E Reviewed main points and reminded class of objectives for the lesson
- M Reviewed main points of the lesson
- A Had an incomplete review of points and objectives due to time constraints
- B Incomplete or missing review of points and objectives even though time was available