

Guidelines for the STAR (Study/Act/Reflect) Exercise

The STAR paper is required of all CMST and CMST-PR majors. This paper reflects on the relationship between the knowledge and skills you acquire in your major and their applicability to a particular activity. This activity may include one of the following:

- Internship
- Employment situation
- Volunteer activity with a particular community group or organization
- Community engagement exercise that is part of a class
- Holding office in an organization

After completing the paper, you are required to meet with the Coordinator of the STAR program to provide an oral report on your paper and to discuss broader issues relating to the department and the role of communication in society. The following steps guide you through completion of both the paper and the oral component.

1. Contact the STAR Coordinator, Dr. Peter Shields (pshields@ewu.edu), to discuss the activity you plan to engage in.
2. Complete the reflection paper. This paper should include the following sections:
 - a. Description
 - i. Describe the nature of the activity. When and for how long did you engage in this activity? What role(s) and task(s) did you perform while engaged? (200 words)
 - b. Relevancy of Communication Concepts and Skills
 - i. Discuss your take on the relevancy of the knowledge and skills you have acquired in your major. That is, what communication class(es), concepts, and skills did you find relevant when engaging in the activity? In what ways were they relevant? (200 words)
 - c. Assessment
 - i. Looking back on your activity, what do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of your communication-related knowledge and skills in relation to the role(s) and task(s) carried out? That is, in what ways were your recently acquired knowledge and skills helpful? In what ways did they fall short? Do you think you were well-equipped to deal with ethical issues that may have arisen during the duration of your activity? (Ethics has to do with knowing the difference between right and wrong and deciding to do the right thing – it includes upholding qualities of personal integrity such as honesty and fairness). (200 words)
 - d. Summary
 - i. Summarize what did you learn about the organization and yourself during the activity. Include a discussion of your most important learning experiences. (300 words)
 - e. Guidelines
 - i. The paper should have a separate cover page.
 - ii. Avoid using typeface greater than 12-point font.
 - iii. The paper should be double-spaced with numbered pages.

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- iv. The paper should be organized in sections with the appropriate sub-headings (i.e., Description, Relevancy of Communication, Concepts and Skills, etc.)
 - v. Make sure to thoroughly edit the paper for spelling and grammar before submitting.
 - f. Submission
 - On completion of the paper, submit an electronic copy to the Coordinator.
3. After reading the paper, the Coordinator will provide written feedback. Revisions may be necessary. When the paper is accepted, the Coordinator will contact you to arrange a time to meet so you can give a brief oral report on your paper as well as discuss broader issues relating to the department and the role of communication in society. On the successful completion of the paper and oral component, the Coordinator will ensure the STAR requirement is removed from your degree audit.

Additional points to keep in mind:

- A minimum of 15 credits of CMST coursework at EWU must be taken before beginning the STAR activity.
- The STAR paper and oral report should be completed during the regular academic year.
- Within the academic year, the latest you can submit your paper is two weeks BEFORE the last day of classes in the quarter you intend to submit the paper. This will ensure the Coordinator has adequate time to read the paper and schedule the oral component before the end of the quarter.