

CoC Assessment Plan 2010/2015

A. Mission and Goals

Our goals for undergraduate learning are expressed in the college's mission statement, in this way:

The College of Communications provides students with an education that enables them to organize, synthesize and communicate information professionally in a democratic, multicultural society.

Our students learn to think critically and communicate effectively, providing them with the intellectual flexibility to perform the jobs of today and to assume leadership in meeting the challenges of tomorrow.

Learning Outcomes

We achieve these goals by adopting as our undergraduate learning outcomes the ACEJMC values and competencies. All baccalaureate graduates are expected to have acquired the following core values and competencies and be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in relation to mass communications.
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts; apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

We carry out our assessment of these outcomes at two levels: Program (degree) and Course.

Program Level Means of Assessment

Our undergraduate program level means of assessment is organized into three categories: Senior Assessment; Alumni Surveys; and Employer Surveys:

Senior Assessment: This assessment utilizes two direct, and three indirect, measures. The direct measures are a Senior Knowledge Inventory and Portfolios from Capstone Courses. The indirect measures are Internship Placement data; Internship and Practicum Supervisor Evaluations, Senior Exit Survey

1. Capstone Courses (direct measures) – Students compile a portfolio of works they have completed in designated capstone courses for each emphasis area. Projects completed in both fall and spring semesters of an academic year are evaluated by faculty members and by professional advisory committees, whose members include alumni and other professionals. The judges rate the portfolios using a 6-point rubric, with 6 being the highest level of performance and a 3 representing professional entry-level performance. Results are analyzed and summarized by the head of department, who generates a report shared with faculty and retained in the dean's office. The report is reviewed annually and changes are made to course content, structure and delivery accordingly. Department advisory boards meet at least once a year to also evaluate capstone portfolios, using the same instrument that faculty apply and providing evaluative comments about the quality of the portfolios.
2. Internship and Practicum Placement and Supervisor Evaluations (indirect measures) - Internship and practicum placements are documented. Internship supervisors and practicum supervisors provide evaluations of each of the students they supervise. The information is compiled by faculty members coordinating internship and practicum experiences and communicated to the chairs and dean. The information is discussed in faculty meetings.
3. Senior Exit Surveys, Resumes and Transcripts (indirect measure) – All graduating seniors are required to complete senior exit surveys and submit professional resumes before their graduation checkout is complete. Exit surveys ask for evaluation of their learning and advising experiences. The combination of surveys and resumes provides other information, including the level of communications experiences on campus and in professional settings (with or without credit). Transcript analysis tracks distribution of courses in the major, outside the major and in the liberal arts and sciences. The dean compiles the data and shares the results with chairs and in faculty meetings. The self study indicated a need to streamline the data analysis so it can be shared with faculty on a regularly scheduled basis.
4. Senior Knowledge Inventory (direct measure) – At the suggestion of our university director of assessment, we added a Senior Knowledge Inventory to our assessment effort in Fall 2010. Our plan is to have all graduating seniors take a senior knowledge examination covering the cognitive aspect of our stated learning outcomes (the 12 ACEJMC values and competencies). The Inventory will be administered in the capstone course in their emphasis areas. The Inventory scheme is in development and scheduled to be administered for the first time in May 2011. A score of 70 and above will be considered passing. The dean will compile the data and share the results with chairs and faculty during a college meeting.

Alumni Surveys (indirect measure): We administer an alumni survey every three years to the most recent graduating classes. The questionnaire includes evaluative and demographic questions. The questionnaire serves two functions: to allow alumni to evaluate their educational experiences and to gather placement and contact information. The data are collected and analyzed by the dean's office – and shared with chairs and faculty members for use in programmatic decisions. Survey responses also provide some of the information used by chairs to assess placement success and career paths for alumni. Other sources for

this information include interactions between faculty members and alumni, replies to college and alumni communications, conversations with employers and systematic phone calls to alumni.

Employer Surveys (indirect measure): At the suggestion our university director of assessment, we added an employer survey to our assessment effort in Fall 2010. The employer survey will be administered every three years to employers hiring the most recent graduating classes, beginning in Spring 2011. The questionnaire will include evaluative and demographic questions. The questionnaire will serve two functions: to allow employers to evaluate how the educational experiences of our alumni are being utilized in their employment. The data will be collected and analyzed by the dean's office – and shared with chairs and faculty members for use in programmatic decisions. Survey responses also provide some of the information used by chairs to assess placement success and career paths for alumni. Other sources for this information include interactions between faculty members and alumni, replies to college and alumni communications, conversations with employers and systematic phone calls to alumni.

Course Level Assessment

Curriculum Mapping: The unit developed a curriculum matrix in 2004-2005 to illustrate where ACEJMC values, competencies fit into the curriculum. After experience with the matrix and with four more years assessment (particularly with embedded and STOUT assessment tools), the faculty refined the matrix in December 2010. A curriculum map was developed. The courses comprising our curriculums were cross-tabulated with the 12 outcomes, and labels were placed appropriately as follows: X –not applicable to this course, A- Awareness, U – Understanding, AP – Application. The curriculum map is attached at the end of this document.

Course syllabi (direct measure) – Faculty and chairs work together to design syllabi that reflect an appropriate values and competencies and appropriate levels of achievement. Chairs are charged with analyzing each semester's syllabi. Discussions in group and individual meetings between chairs and faculty members are intended to improve the writing of objectives and to remind faculty about the values and competencies specified for courses in the college matrix.

Student evaluations of teachers and classes (indirect measure) – Students are given the opportunity to respond to the pedagogical styles of teachers and content in each class through a standardized evaluation instrument. The instrument includes 18 objective questions and five open-ended questions. The evaluations are conducted in courses at the end of each semester. Evaluation reports are provided to individual faculty members and discussed with them as appropriate during annual merit reviews.

Retention and Graduation Rates (indirect measure) – ASU's Office of Institutional Research provides continuing information about university retention and graduation rates and periodic data about individual programs. Dean and chairs informally track students who don't return from academic year to the next by contacting them when they do not register for the fall semester. The OIR information provides comparisons with the campus as a whole. (The college's rates are higher than the university as whole.) The non-registrant information provides information insight into non-retention (students who don't return either have financial or significant grade problems). The retention and graduation information is used by chairs and the dean in designing retention activities.