Degree Program Student Learning Report (rev. 7/14)

Fall 2015 – Spring 2016

The Department of Communications in the School of Liberal Arts

Communications, B.A.

Effectively assessing a degree program should address a number of factors:

1) Valid student learning outcomes should be clearly articulated;
2) Valid assessment measures should be used, consistent with the standards of professional practice;
3) There should be evidence that assessment data are being used by faculty to make necessary instructional or assessment changes; and there should be evidence that instructional or assessment changes are being implemented to improve student learning.

PART 1 (A & B)

Relationship of Degree Program Learning Outcomes to Departmental and University Missions

A. Clearly state the school, department and degree program missions.

University Mission	School Mission	Department Mission	Degree Program Mission
Our mission is to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve professional and personal goals in dynamic local and global communities.	The mission of the School of Liberal Arts is to further the study and practice of the arts, humanities, and social sciences at Rogers State University, in the community, and in the region.	The Department of Communications supports the mission of RSU and the School of Liberal Arts by fostering the skills of critical thinking, writing, research, and oral communication among our students.	The overall mission is to develop in students the general and specific knowledge and skills to function as effective citizen-leaders and to serve in a variety of careers associated with the discipline of communications.

B. Clearly state school purposes, department purposes and degree program student learning outcomes. Align student learning outcomes with their appropriate school and department purposes, and these outcomes and purposes with their appropriate university commitments.

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning and critical and creative thinking.	The School will offer innovative degrees which focus upon developing skills in oral and written communication, critical thinking, and creativity.	Our department will provide a BA degree with a strong focus on oral and written communication, critical thinking and creativity, as well as extra-curricular activities, internships and scholarly activities.	Students completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications will demonstrate proficiency in their written and oral communication skills, as well as the ability to think creatively and critically.
To promote an atmosphere of academic and intellectual freedom and respect for diverse expression in an environment of physical safety that is supportive of teaching and learning.	The School will educate liberal arts majors to think critically, creatively, and independently and have the skills to work in all types of situations and communicate with all types of people.	Foster the values of scholarship, creativity, appreciation of diversity, and community service.	
To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic program sand prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.	The School will offer general education courses of high quality and purpose that provide a foundation for life-long learning.	This will be accomplished via quality general education classes, co and extra-curricular activities, and professional internship and scholarly activities.	Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in communication principles.
To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits and continuous improvement of programs.	The School will foster a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.	Through a concerted effort of engaging students in teacher/mentor scholarship, students experience scholarship both inside and outside the classroom.	Graduating seniors will report that they are prepared to enter and perform satisfactorily in entry-level communication positions.
To provide university-wide student services, activities and resources that complement academic programs.			
To support and strengthen student, faculty and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.			

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
To promote and encourage student, faculty, staff and community interaction in a positive academic climate that creates opportunities for cultural, intellectual and personal enrichment for the University and the communities it serves.	The School will offer and promote art, cultural, and public affairs events on the campus and in the region.	Our department will sponsor cultural events for our students, area high school students, and the community via the RSU Theatre Program and RSU Radio.	Students will indicate they are satisfied with the instruction they have received in this program.

PART 2

Discussion of Instructional Changes Resulting from 2014-2015 Degree Program Student Learning Report

List and discuss all instructional or assessment changes proposed in Part 5 of last year's Degree Program Student Learning Report, whether implemented or not. Any other changes or assessment activities from last year, but not mentioned in last year's report, should be discussed here as well. Emphasis should be placed on student learning and considerations such as course improvements, the assessment process, and the budget. If no changes were planned or implemented, simply state "No changes were planned or implemented."

Instructional or Assessment Changes	Changes Implemented (Y/N)	Impact of Changes on Degree Program Curriculum or Budget
For the first time, no changes were proposed by the department faculty last year.		

PART 3

Discussion About the University Assessment Committee's 2013-2014 Peer Review Report

The University Assessment Committee in its Degree Program Peer Review Report provided feedback and recommendations for improvement in assessment. List or accurately summarize all feedback and recommendations from the committee, and state whether they were implemented or will be implemented at a future

date. If they were not or will not be implemented, please explain why. If no changes were recommended last year, simply state "No changes were recommended."

Feedback and Recommended Changes from the University Assessment Committee	Suggestions Implemented (Y/N)	Changes that Were or Will Be Implemented, or Rationale for Changes that Were Not Implemented
No changes were recommended by the UAC last year.		

PART 4

Analysis of Evidence of Student Learning Outcomes

For all student learning outcomes (as listed in Part 1 B above), describe the assessment measures and performance standards used, as well as the sampling methods and sample sizes. For each measure, document the results of the activity measured and draw relevant conclusions related to strengths and weaknesses of their performance.

A. Student Learning Outcomes	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. N	F. Results						G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
1. Students completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Comm. will demonstrate proficiency in	1a. Student learning in written communication will be measured by assessing all	1a. 75% of students will demonstrate written skills and critical /creative thinking, by	All participating students' final research papers were counted.	21	97% of students met or exceeded the 70% threshold. 		11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	7	2	19	10	16
B	3	3	0	5	14
C	4	13	1	4	4						Students exceeded last year's performance, and only one failed to turn in the research paper. The success rate was very high once again,	Y

their written and oral communication skills, as well as the ability to think creatively and critically.	students' performance in their research paper in COMM 4163 in Global Comm.	achieving a score of 70% or higher in their major research paper.									likely due to the extensive coaching throughout the semester on effective research and writing by both instructors.	

Top-right grade table:

D	0	0	0	2	0
F	0	0	0	0	1
Total	14	18	20	21	35
Succ	100%	100%	100%	90%	97%

1b. Oral communication will be measured by assessing all students' major debate presentation in COMM 3253 Argumentation & Persuasion.

1b. 75% of students will demonstrate oral skills by achieving a score of 70% or higher on their major oral debate presentations in COMM 3253 Argumentation & Persuasion.

All participating students' two debate scores in COMM 3253 were counted.

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97% of the students met or exceeded the 70% threshold.

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	0	8	6	14	21
B	10	30	14	17	36
C	8	4	15	13	5
D	3	0	3	0	2
F	0	0	2	2	0
Total	21	42	40	46	64
Succ	86%	100%	88%	96%	97%

The unprecedentedly-large number of students served in F15 continued to match the success of previous years. Although both classes performed well, section 1 scored significantly higher than section 2. This could be because section 2 was an overflow class made up of later-enrollers.

Y

1c. Creative and critical thinking will be measured by assessing all students' capstone projects in COMM 4913 Senior Capstone.

1c. 75% of students will demonstrate critical thinking and oral communication skills by achieving a score of 70% or higher on their capstone projects in COMM 4913 Senior Capstone.

All participating students' capstone projects presentations scores in COMM 4913 were counted.

The oral presentations were reviewed by the entire department

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100% scored a "C" or higher on their capstone projects.

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	5	3	10	10	12
B	7	9	5	4	7
C	5	1	5	0	9
D	1	2	0	0	0
F	1	2	0	0	0
Total	19	17	20	14	28
Succ	89%	76%	100%	100%	100%

The class proved successful this year despite being twice as large as last year's. However, we had a much higher rate of "C" grades on capstone projects. The instructor surmises that this may related to how few students took advantage of the early-start opportunity this year compared to last.

Y

			faculty.				

| 2. Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in communication principles. | 2a. Student-learning in Comm. Theory (COMM 3833) will be measured by assessing all student test scores. | 2a. 75% of the student will earn a C grade or higher on their overall examination grade in this course. | All participating students' midterm and final exam scores in Comm.Theory were counted. | 53 | 89% of the students scored a "C" or better on their midterm and final examinations. | Although both sections met the threshold, section 2 was added late and populated by students who added late. Their performance was not as high, likely due to the fact that the original section had a higher proportion of juniors and seniors. | Y |

Table for 2a:

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	11	9	4	14	5
B	8	15	24	14	11
C	7	8	10	16	4
D	8	9	6	8	1
F	12	3	6	1	3
Total	46	44	50	53	38
Succ	57%	73%	76%	83%	89%

| 2b. Student-learning in research methodology will be measured by assessing all students' final examination performance in COMM 3713 Communication Research Methods. | 2b. 75% of students will earn a C or higher on their final examination in this course. | All participating students' final exams in COMM 3713 were counted. | 18 | 55% met the standard on the final exam. | It was encouraging that 87% of all students scored 70% or higher on the midterm, but they performed poorly on the final exam.

A majority of students in this course were also enrolled in senior capstone. This competition for their focus made it somewhat difficult to grasp the course's concepts. The instructor suggests advising students to take Comm Research Methods during the junior year. However, the bulk of workload | N |

Table for 2b:

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	1	11	0	6	4
B	2	2	1	4	8
C	8	9	5	4	9
D	2	0	3	3	7
F	6	3	7	1	10
Total	19	25	16	18	38
Succ	58%	88%	38%	72%	55%

					in Senior Capstone took place in the first half of the semester, which helped.	
	2c. Student-learning in media production will be measured by assessing all final projects in COMM 2003 Video Production.	2c. 80% of students will earn a C grade or higher on their final project in COMM 2003 Video Production	All participating students' final projects scores in COMM 2003 were counted.	27	93% demonstrated proficiency by securing a grade of "C" or better on the project.	The two instructors collaborated on their due-dates to reduce conflicts over camera check-out. That and the four new field cameras we acquired (deriving from previous assessment reports) benefitted all students. Giving students more in-class time for shooting & editing proved helpful in early instruction of the computers & software. Some students benefitted by using their own Adobe Premiere software which has become more affordable.	Y
3. Students will indicate they are satisfied with the instruction	3a. Students will respond to a satisfaction survey at the mid-point in	3a. 75% of students surveyed in the mid-point in their program	All participating communication majors student surveys	39	92% indicated agreement that they are satisfied with the instruction they have received mid-way through the program.	A large majority of students indicated satisfaction with the BA program at the mid-point of their careers.	Y

Table within cell 2c:

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
A	13	7	9	13	15
B	11	8	10	7	10
C	3	3	8	6	0
D	5	0	0	1	1
F	1	0	0	0	1
Total	34	18	27	27	27
Succ	82%	100%	100%	96%	93%

they have received in this program.	their program of instruction.	(COMM 3253 Argumentation and Persuasion) will report that they are satisfied with their undergraduate coursework.	responses were counted.	

	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
SA	6	6	12	5	14
A	10	10	11	5	22
Neu	5	6	1	2	3
D	1	1	0	1	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0
Total	22	23	24	13	39
Succ	73%	70%	96%	77%	92%

This figure was substantially higher than last year's.

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4. Graduating seniors will report that they are prepared to enter and perform satisfactorily in entry-level communication positions.

4a. Student preparation and satisfaction will be measured through a survey conducted in COMM 4913 Senior Capstone.

4a. 75% of the students surveyed in Senior Capstone (COMM 4913) will indicate that they are satisfied with their undergraduate coursework (Q1), that their coursework has effectively prepared them for their future career (Q2), and that they were satisfied with the quality of technology (Q3).

The survey was directed to all students enrolled in the senior capstone class. There were 3 open-ended follow up questions accompanying each Likert Scale question.

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86% agree that their courses were effective, 93% agree that they are prepared for the future, and 75% are satisfied with the technology used in the program.

15-16 Capstone Results			
	Courses	Future	Techn.
Agree	24	26	21
Neutral	4	2	7
Disagree	0	0	0
Total	28	28	28
Success	86%	93%	75%

14-15 Capstone Results			
	Courses	Future	Techn.
Agree	5	5	3
Neutral	1	1	2
Disagree	0	0	1
Total	6	6	6
Success	83%	83%	50%

13-14 Capstone Results			
	Courses	Future	Techn.
Agree	14	16	12
Neutral	3	0	4
Disagree	0	1	1

Each score is near or above the best results recorded during the five years we have asked these questions. Particularly encouraging was the 75% approval of our program technology. This is the first time this figure has met the threshold and well above last year's score.

The improvement in technology rating is likely the result of the cumulative effect of continued improvement in our studio facilities and field equipment. For example, we now use memory-card cameras exclusively—no more sluggish video tape that takes a long time to ingest into the computer. This milestone was possible with the acquisition of

Y

Total	17	17	17
Success	82%	94%	71%

four new field cameras, which we had identified as a need in a previous assessment report.

12-13 Capstone Results			
	Courses	Future	Techn.
Agree	11	12	5
Neutral	3	3	5
Disagree	2	1	6
Total	16	16	16
Success	69%	75%	63%

11-12 Capstone Results			
	Courses	Future	Techn.
Agree	12	13	5
Neutral	3	3	7
Disagree	4	3	7
Total	19	19	19
Success	63%	68%	26%

4b. Student satisfaction with the program's ability to help prepare them for their chosen career will be measured through a survey conducted via their graduation application.

85% of the students surveyed will agree or strongly agree that program has prepared them for their chosen career.

The survey was directed to all graduating seniors. The answers were very satisfied (VS), somewhat satisfied (SS), somewhat dissatisfied (SD) and very dissatisfied (VS).

28

86% of students indicated that they are satisfied with the program's ability to help prepare them for their chosen career.

RSU Graduate Exit Survey Results					
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
VS	8	3	8	12	13
SS	3	2	3	9	11
SD	1	1	2	1	3
VS	0	0	0	0	1
Total	12	6	13	22	28
Succ	92%	83%	85%	95%	86%

The high threshold for success (85%) was achieved for the third year-in-a-row. Also positive was the 100% participation among students enrolled in senior capstone. We were concerned that the large size of the class (28%) would affect student learning or satisfaction, but this was not the case.

PART 5

Proposed Instructional Changes Based on Conclusions Drawn from Evidence Presented Above

State any proposed instructional or assessment changes to be implemented for the next academic year. They should be based on conclusions reported in Part 4 (above) or on informal activities, such as faculty meetings and discussions, conferences, pilot projects, textbook adoption, new course proposals, curriculum modifications, etc. Explain the rationale for these changes and how they will impact student learning and other considerations, such as curriculum, degree plan, assessment process, or budget. If no changes are planned, simply state "No changes are planned."

Student Learning Outcomes	Instructional or Assessment Changes	Rationale for Changes	Impact of Planned Changes on Student Learning and Other Considerations.
2. Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in communication principles.	Rather than assess all test grades we will use only the midterm examination.	We feel that the midterm exam is a better measure of proficiency in communication principles, rather than including the final examination. Near the end of the semester they tend to "switch off" as soon as they receive their research method project grade.	The new measure will more accurately gauge student mastery of communication principles.

PART 6

Shared Pedagogical Insight that Improves Student Learning or Classroom Engagement

(OPTIONAL) If your department or a faculty member has developed a method or technique of teaching that seems especially effective in improving student learning or student engagement in the classroom, please provide a brief description below. More detail can be communicated during the face to face peer review session.

Description
New in 2015-16 (1) Instructors in our multi-section production course (video production) note that such classes can benefit from instructor collaboration on due dates. By off-setting the due dates, students experience less competition for cameras and editing-lab stations. Perhaps multi-section production/lab courses in Fine Arts and other departments would benefit from this type of coordination.

Description

From Previous Years:

Assessment reporting improvement: This report attempts to increase readability by indicating success rates across years in percentages, not merely the raw totals. It also labels more categories semantically rather than "Q1," etc.

Capstone advance preparation: Rather than place the senior capstone project in the latter part of the semester, the instructor puts it in the first half so students can start off strong instead of working on projects they may consider busy work. To facilitate this strategy, the instructor provides the syllabus to students six-weeks early (in November). This way they can ask any questions about the class, especially the capstone project, in advance. They can also complete their capstone prospectus early (in December for a January semester start). If their prospectus is approved in December they have several weeks, including winter break, in which to develop the actual capstone project if they choose.

Video production: For best practices Ms. Coomer did a few more group in-class projects before having them do it again on their own. Another example was to break the class into 4 groups. They wrote a story a sentence at a time and then they had to go out and shoot it in match action sequence. It was a lot of fun and they really had to think about it... good for group dynamics. Mr. Williams notes that immediate feedback improves student understanding and performance. Providing feedback, critiques, and sometimes grades as soon as students have completed their assignments leads to higher performance.
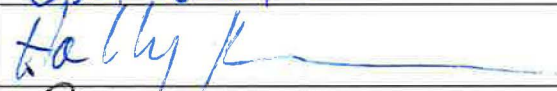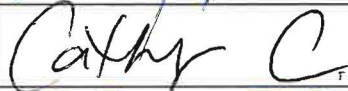
PART 7 (A & B)

Assessment Measures and Faculty Participation

A. Assessment Measures:

1) How many different assessment measures were used? 9

2) List the direct measures (see rubric): 6 (1a: written communication; 1b: oral communication; 1c: creative and critical thinking; 2a: test scores; 2b: final examination performance; and 2c: final projects

3) List the indirect measures (see rubric): 3a: mid-point satisfaction survey, 4a: senior capstone survey and 4b graduate exit survey)

B. Contributors to Report:

1) Provide the names and signatures of all faculty members who contributed to this report and indicate their respective roles: 6

Faculty Members	Roles in the Assessment Process (e.g., collect data, analyze data, prepare report, review report, etc.)	Signatures
Juliet Evusa, Associate Professor	Data collection and analysis.	
David Blakely, Associate Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Lee Williams, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis.	
Holly Kruse, Associate Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Cathy Coomer, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Jeffery Gentry, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis, anchoring report.	

2) Reviewed by:

Titles	Names	Signatures	Date
Department Head	Jeffery Gentry		9/22/16
Dean	Keith Martin		9/22/16