

General Education Student Learning Report

Revised June 2017

Department of Communications For 2020-2021 Academic Year

PART 1

Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes

A. State the school, department and degree program missions.

University Mission	School Mission	Department Mission	General Education 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 Science and Arts is the preparation of students to achieve professional and personal goals in their respective disciplines and to enable their success in dynamic local and global communities.	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.	General Education at Rogers State University provides a broad foundation of intellectual skills, knowledge, and perspectives to enable students across the University to achieve professional and personal goals in a dynamic local or global society.

B. Align each of the program student learning outcomes with the institutional purposes and 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, creativity, empirical and evidence-based inquiry, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena and innovative technology.	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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Think critically and creatively. 2) Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world. 3) Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively. 4) Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
			<p>diverse perspectives and values.</p> <p>5) Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The School will educate its majors to think independently and have the knowledge, skills, and vision to work in all types of situations and careers and communicate with all types of people.</p>	<p>Foster the values of scholarship, creativity, appreciation of diversity, and community service.</p>	
<p>To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic program and prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.</p>	<p>The School will offer general education courses of high quality and purpose that provide a foundation for life-long learning.</p>	<p>This will be accomplished via quality general education classes, co and extra-curricular activities, and professional internship and scholarly activities.</p>	
<p>To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits and continuous improvement of programs.</p>	<p>The School will foster a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.</p>	<p>Through a concerted effort of engaging students in teacher/mentor scholarship, students experience scholarship both inside and outside the classroom.</p>	
<p>To provide university-wide student services, activities and resources that complement academic programs.</p>	<p>The School will offer and promote artistic, scientific, cultural, and public affairs events on the campus and in the region.</p>		
<p>To support and strengthen student, faculty and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.</p>	<p>The School will foster a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.</p>		
<p>To promote and encourage student, faculty, staff and community interaction in a positive academic climate that creates opportunities for cultural, intellectual and personal</p>	<p>The School will offer and promote artistic, scientific, cultural, and public affairs events on the campus and in the region.</p>	<p>Our department will sponsor cultural events for our students, area high school students, and the community via the RSU Theatre Program and RSU Radio.</p>	

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
enrichment for the University and the communities it serves.			

PART 2
Follow-Up on Proposed Changes Made in Previous Assessment Cycle

Follow up on each instructional/assessment change proposed in Part 5 of the degree program SLR for the preceding year. Any changes the department implemented for this academic year, but which were not specifically proposed in the preceding report, should also be reported here. Indicate whether the proposed change was implemented and comment accordingly. Please note if no changes were either proposed or implemented or this academic year.

Proposed Change	Implemented? (Y/N)	Comments
The faculty has not returned to the question mentioned in the 2018-2019 SLR of whether its general education classes could be used to measure additional student learning outcomes.	N	COVID-19 conditions have created greater teaching workloads and more meeting restrictions that have prevented the faculty from revisiting and revising student learning outcomes. If students are learning material applicable to general education learning outcomes beyond those we are measuring, we might want to assess that learning. Discussion among faculty members has indicated that measuring three of five general education student learning outcomes may be enough.

PART 3
Response to University Assessment Committee Feedback

The University Assessment Committee provides written feedback on departmental assessment plans through a regular peer review process. This faculty-led oversight is integral to RSU's commitment to the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. UAC recommendations are not compulsory and departments may implement them at their discretion. Respond below to each UAC recommendations from last year's peer review report. Indicate whether the recommendation was implemented and comment accordingly. Please indicate either if the UAC had no recommendations or if the program was not subject to review in the previous cycle.

Peer Review Feedback	Implemented (Y/N)	Comment
No peer review feedback on general education courses has been provided to the department in several years.	N/A	

PART 4
Evidence of Student Learning

Provide evidence of student progress for each of the student learning outcomes associated with the degree program. See the *Appendix* for a detailed description of each component. Note: The table below is for the first program learning outcome. A copy of the table should be inserted below for each additional outcome. SLO numbers should be updated accordingly.

A. Student Learning Outcome																				
SLO #1:	Think critically and creatively.																			
A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)															
In SPCH 1113, Speech Communication, student understanding of constructs by which a speech is evaluated will be measured by assessing students' mid-term exam	At least 75% of students will earn a C or better on their mid-term speech exam. All instructors will submit the scores on the mid-term for all students enrolled in one of their	All instructors submit data from one of their sections of speech communication.	N = 160 (on-ground) N = 188 (online)	On-ground: 90% met threshold. Online: 85% met threshold. Speech Midterms On-ground <table border="1" data-bbox="1187 306 1336 926"> <thead> <tr> <th>16-17</th> <th>17-18</th> <th>18-19</th> <th>19-20</th> <th>20-21</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>82%</td> <td>91%</td> <td>93%</td> <td>86%</td> <td>90%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21						82%	91%	93%	86%	90%	Y
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A.
Student Learning Outcome

SLO #1: Think critically and creatively.

A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)										
scores in both on-ground and online formats.	speech sections in both the fall and spring semesters			<p align="center">Speech Midterms Online</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>88%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>93%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>85%</td> </tr> </table>	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	88%	97%	93%	94%	85%	
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G.
Conclusions

During this pandemic year there were fewer in-person Speech Communication sections, and considerably more online and blended sections than in the past. In addition, for the first time there were Zoom sections. There were several sections in which students received high marks on their speeches but noticeably lower marks on their exams. Some instructors who previously had given mostly in-person proctored exams gave unproctored open-book exams. The threshold for this measure was met and passed despite the variety of course delivery modes. More students took midterm exams (348 in total across all sections) than attempted informative speeches (336) or persuasive speeches (307), indicating that the ease of taking exams in online and blended classes might invite less prepared students to take the midterm while not preparing and completing the demanding major speech assignments.

A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)										
In HUM 2413, Theatre Appreciation, students will complete a final exam over salient aspects of theatre.	At least 75% of students will earn a C or better on theatre-appreciation final exams.	All students' final exam scores on theatre history, literature, and practices related to theatre were counted.	N = 58	<p>95% of the students met the threshold.</p> <p align="center">Theatre Final Exams</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>92%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>78%</td> <td>71%</td> <td>95%</td> </tr> </table>	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	92%	82%	78%	71%	95%	Y
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A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)
G. Conclusions					
Students in this year's Theatre Appreciation sections met and greatly exceeded the threshold of 75% earning a grade of C or higher on the final exam. This result represents a reversal in the downward trend in exam scores in the preceding three years. Despite the challenges of teaching Theatre Appreciation at a time when live theatre has gone dark, and the difficulty of engaging students in theatre through remote learning, hybrid teaching modes may contribute to greater student success on exams.					

A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)										
In HUM 2413, Theatre Appreciation, a pre-test will be administered to all enrolled online students to ascertain entry and exit level knowledge related to theatre.	Student scores on theatre pre/post-tests will demonstrate growth of at least 25%.	All available students' theatre pre -and post-test scores class were counted.	N = 13 (pre-test) N = 14 (post-test)	<p>Student post-test scores were 32% higher than pre-test scores.</p> <p>Pre-/Post-Test Growth</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="906 317 1003 894"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>75%</td> <td>67%</td> <td>35%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>32%</td> </tr> </table>	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	75%	67%	35%	43%	32%	Y
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Once again only one instructor, who has been teaching Theatre Appreciation at RSU for several years, administered a pre-test and post-test. In those two sections, students demonstrated significant growth in their theatre-related knowledge, although not as much as in the single section for which that instructor reported scores last year.															

A.
Student Learning Outcome

SLO #3: Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively.

A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)																																								
<p>In SPCH 1113, Speech Communication, evaluations of informative and persuasive speeches will be conducted in all sections in both on-ground and online formats.</p>	<p>At least 80% of the students should earn at least a C on both the informative and persuasive speech assignments, which are common to all sections of speech communication.</p>	<p>All instructors submitted the scores on the informative and persuasive speeches for one of their sections of speech communication course in both the fall and spring semesters.</p>	<p><u>On-ground</u> Informative: N = 156 Persuasive: N = 146</p> <p><u>Online</u> Informative: N = 180 Persuasive: N = 161</p>	<p>On-ground informative: 94% met threshold. Online informative: 94% met threshold.</p> <p>On-ground persuasive: 94% met threshold. Online persuasive: 93% met threshold.</p> <p align="center">INFORMATIVE SPEECHES</p> <p>Informative Speech On-Ground</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="727 327 833 884"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>94%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Informative Speech Online</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="902 327 1000 884"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>89%</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> </table> <p align="center">PERSUASIVE SPEECHES</p> <p>Persuasive Speech On-Ground</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1141 327 1239 884"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>87%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>94%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Persuasive Speech Online</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1308 306 1406 884"> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>17-18</td> <td>18-19</td> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>88%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>98%</td> <td>93%</td> </tr> </table>	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	94%	96%	96%	97%	94%	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	100%	97%	96%	89%	94%	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	87%	97%	96%	96%	94%	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	88%	100%	94%	98%	93%	<p align="center">Y</p>
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A. Student Learning Outcome					
SLO #3: Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively.					
A. Assessment Measure	B. Performance Standard	C. Sampling Method	D. Sample Size (n)	E. Results	F. Standard Met (Y/N)
G. Conclusions					
<p>Even though there were few fully in-person sections of Speech Communication during the 2020-2021 academic year, grades indicate that whatever the format of the class – in-person, blended, via Zoom, or fully online – a large majority of students learn the principles of effective speaking and can employ them. Student success at reaching the threshold for this measure is remarkably similar and high across course delivery formats. A uniform online class taught across most online sections may well have contributed to this consistency, as well as the continuing emphasis on cumulative assignments leading up to speeches. Several instructors noted that their students were negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways. Instructors' attention to their students' personal challenges was undoubtedly a key factor in helping many students succeed on difficult speech assignments during this challenging year.</p>					

PART 5

Proposed Instructional or Assessment Changes

Learning outcomes assessment can generate actionable evidence of student performance that can be used to improve student success and institutional effectiveness. Knowledge of student strengths and weakness gained through assessment can inform faculty efforts to improve course instruction and program curriculum. Below discuss potential changes the department is considering aimed at improving student learning or the assessment process. These proposals will be revisited in next assessment cycle.

Proposed Change	Rationale
Faculty members who regularly teach or provide curriculum for general education courses should meet to discuss consistency across sections of these classes and possibly reintroduce a required training session for all speech instructors before the beginning of the academic year.	As this department has remained without a true department head for several years, our consistency across our general education courses has suffered. The Theatre Appreciation pre-test and post-test may not be provided to all instructors who teach the course, even though it remains one of the department's general education assessment measures. Adjunct grades on

Proposed Change	Rationale
	speech assignments vary greatly from section to section, indicating that instructors view and/or apply speech criteria quite differently.
The department faculty should reassess current grade thresholds for assignments and possibly raise some of them.	In recent years the threshold for, for instance, SLO 3 has been easily surpassed, usually by at least 10-15%. This may mean that the threshold needs to be raised to better challenge students and instructors, or to counterbalance possible grade inflation.
Response papers in Theatre Appreciation should be used in our department's general education assessment.	Apparently, Theatre Appreciation response papers were once included, but for some reason they are no longer an assessment measure.
The department should seriously discuss whether a pre-test and post-test should be administered in Theatre Appreciation and used as an assessment measure.	Over the past two years only one instructor, an adjunct, has administered a pre-test and post-test. While the faculty seems to agree that this is a good measure that would be nice to keep, it isn't given on a consistent basis in the class. It's difficult to draw conclusions for assessment based on one or two sections taught by an adjunct instructor.
Revise department purpose.	The departmental purpose includes a lot of items, and they should be separated and listed accordingly. Also, the departmental purpose on our SLRs doesn't match the one listed in the Bulletin.

PART 6
Assessment Measures and Faculty Participation

A. Summary of assessment measures:

- 1) How many different assessment measures were used? 4
- 2) List the direct measures (see appendix): Pre/Post Test, Informative and Persuasive Speeches, Midterm Exam, Final Exam
- 3) List the indirect measures (see appendix): N/A

B. Provide the names and signatures of all full time and adjunct faculty who contributed to this report.

Faculty Name	Assessment Role	Signature
David Blakely, Associate Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	<i>David Blakely</i> ^{TT} <i>see email</i>
Thomas Crowley, Instructor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	<i>TT Crowley</i>
Juliet Evusa, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	<i>Juliet Evusa</i> ^{TT} <i>see email</i>
Bruce Hartley, Assistant Professor	Report/plan analysis	<i>Bruce Hartley</i> ^{TT} <i>see email</i>
Holly Kruse, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis, report writing	<i>Holly Kruse</i> ^{TT}
Lee Williams, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	<i>Lee Williams</i> ^{TT} <i>see email</i>

Reviewed by:

Titles	Name	Signature	Date
Department Head	Mr. Steven Rosser	<i>Steven Rosser</i>	<i>6.7.21</i>
Dean	Dr. Keith Martin	<i>Keith V. Martin</i>	<i>6/8/21</i>