Degree Program Student Learning Report

Revised August 2017

Communications

Bachelor of Arts

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

PART 1
Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes

A. 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.	Central to the mission of the School 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. Our strategy is to foster an academic setting of diverse curricula that inherently incorporates an environment of service and collegiality:	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. Align school purposes, department purposes, and program student learning outcomes 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 offers innovative degrees, which focus upon developing skills in oral and written communication, critical thinking, creativity, empirical and evidenced-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.	Students completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications will: 1) Demonstrate proficiency in their written and oral communication skills; 2) Demonstrate the ability to think creatively and critically;

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
			3) Demonstrate proficiency in principles of communication theory and research; 4) Demonstrate proficiency in principles of media production; and 5) Demonstrate readiness to perform satisfactorily in professional communication jobs.
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.			
To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic programs and prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.			
To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits and continuous improvement of programs.			
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.			

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.			

PART 2
Revisit Proposed Changes Made in Previous Assessment Cycle

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

Proposed Change	Implemented? (Y/N)	Comments
The department will revise existing student learning outcomes and/or formulate new ones because	Y	Some of the departmental student learning outcomes encompassed too many outcomes and or were too general, while others depended on indirect measures. The department addressed these issues.
COMM 4163 Global Communication will no longer be used to measure the first learning outcome.	N	This proposed change may no longer seem relevant or useful, although using Global Communication means that two courses taught by Dr. Evusa are included in program course assessment, while no courses taught by Dr. Blakely and Mr. Crowley are included. A change might better reflect outcomes produced by the entire faculty. Two full-time faculty members, Professors Williams and Hartley, retired during or at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, so the department will need to revisit this question for all of its courses.
The department will examine the performance standards for student learning outcome measures that are regularly and easily surpassed.	N	The department did not discuss this during an academic year that involved a significant amount of department personnel change.

The mid-point satisfaction survey will no longer be administered in COMM 3253 Argumentation and Persuasion but will instead be administered in Writing for the Media.	Y	The mid-point survey is now being administered in Writing for the Media; but also, it is no longer used as an instrument for collecting assessment data.
Revise departmental purpose.	N	The faculty weren't able to work on this because of a focus on revising student learning outcomes and addressing curriculum issues this academic year.

PART 3
Response to University Assessment Committee Peer Review

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. Nevertheless, 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
The Department of Communications didn't undergo University Assessment Committee peer review in the 2021-2022 academic year, so all of these suggestions and responses are based on the previous peer review. Therefore, some comments duplicate comments on last year's student learning report.		
Part 1, section B: Divide this into the appropriate SLOs by number to match the rest of the document.	Y	Implemented on the previous year's SLR.
Part 1, section B: There's only one department purpose? Rewrite the department purpose.	N	The department still needs to rewrite its purpose to fit its revised curriculum and perhaps in the manner suggested by the UAC peer reviewers. Presumably the authors of the existing department purposed were mirroring the one-paragraph style of the School purpose.
The SLOs have been surpassed easily since 2016. Has there been discussion of changing the measure or criteria?	Y & N	As noted in Part 2, the faculty has not yet discussed changing criteria. Some measures have been changed, however. Student presentations in Digital Design are now used to assess oral

		communication skills rather than assessing a debate in argumentation and persuasion, and the midterm exam is now the measure used to assess student performance in Global Communication. It should be noted that SLOs 3a and 3b have not consistently been easily surpassed since 2016. The professors who teach Communication Research Methods and Media Theory have undertaken steps to improve student learning in those classes as a result of poor performance in some years.

PART 4
Evidence of Student Learning

Evidence and analyze student progress for each of the student learning outcomes (same as listed in Part I B above) for the degree program. See the *Appendix* for a detailed description of each component. <u>Note</u>: The table below is for the first program learning outcome. Copy the table and insert it below for each additional outcome. SLO numbers should be updated accordingly.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="7" align="center">A.
Student Learning Outcome</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">SLO #1:   Communications majors will demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication skills.</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>B.
Assessment Measure</td>
<td>C.
Performance Standard</td>
<td>D.
Sampling Method</td>
<td>E.
Sample Size (n)</td>
<td colspan="2">F.
Results</td>
<td>G.
Standard Met (Y/N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Student learning in written communication will be measured by assessing all students' performances on their research papers</td>
<td>75% of students will demonstrate written skills and critical /creative thinking, by achieving a grade of C or higher in their major research paper.</td>
<td>All participating students' final research papers were counted.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td colspan="2">100% of participating students met or exceeded the C threshold.

	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	9	8	5	6
B	10	16	2	8
C	3	4	0	1
D	0	0	0	0

</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</table>

in COMM 4163 in Global Communication				F	0	1	0	0		
				Total	22	29	7	15		
				Success	100%	97%	100%	100%		

| 1b. Oral communication will be measured by assessing all students' major presentations in COMM 3313 Digital Design. | 75% of students will demonstrate oral skills by achieving a grade of C or higher on their presentations in COMM 3313 Digital Design | All participating students' presentation scores in COMM 3313 were counted.

(The data for years prior to the 2020-2021 academic year is from students' debates or presentations in Argumentation and Persuasion, which is now an elective.) | 12 | 100% of students met or exceeded the C threshold | | | | | | Y |

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	10	8	9	24	11
B	5	5	0	0	0
C	1	0	0	0	1
D	0	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	1	0	0
Total	17	13	9	0	12
Success	100%	100%	89%	100%	100%

H.
Conclusions

All students enrolled in Global Communication met or exceeded the performance threshold for the final research paper. This is the second time in several years that only one section was offered due to low enrollment. The professor attributes the students' success can to the cumulative approach of assignments leading up to their final research paper. Also note that this year the final research paper performance exceeded last year's. The instructor still intends to change the name of this course to "The Globalization of Popular Culture and News Media."

The students in Digital Design demonstrated knowledge in designing and presenting a professional PowerPoint in this course. Students view a range of examples on MyRSU and use that to help them achieve strong grades. The instructor goes over the examples in class as well. The final presentation requires the students to showcase 16-weeks of work in a PowerPoint presentation. Included among their presentations were those that featured edited photos, infographics, a variety of social media web and desktop apps, social media posts, and more. As has historically been the case, the professor was impressed with the presentations.

A. Student Learning Outcome

SLO #2: Communications majors will demonstrate the ability to think creatively and critically through successfully executing Capstone projects.

B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)
Creative and critical thinking will be measured by assessing all students' capstone projects in COMM 4913 Senior Capstone.	75% of students will demonstrate critical thinking and oral communication skills by achieving a grade of C 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 faculty.	20	100% of students earned a C or higher on their capstone projects.	Y

Results table (within column F):

	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	9	9	9	16
B	6	3	5	4
C	4	3	6	0
D	0	1	0	0
F	0	1	0	0
Total	19	17	20	20
Success	100%	88%	100%	100%

H. Conclusions

The professor found that holding committee Zoom meetings that included both faculty and Capstone students helped the students a lot with their projects. He also found that having them do resumes, sizzle reels and portfolios helped them be more ready to enter the job market upon graduation.

A. Student Learning Outcome

SLO #3: Communications majors will demonstrate proficiency in principles of communication theory and research.

B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)
3a. Student-learning in Media Theory (COMM 3833) will be measured by assessing all student test scores.	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 Media Theory were counted.	16	88% of the students earned a C or better on their combined midterm and final exams.	Y
3b. Student-learning in research methodology will be measured by assessing all students' midterm examination performance in COMM 3713 Communication Research Methods.	75% of students will earn a C or higher on their midterm examination in this course.	All participating students' midterm exams in COMM 3713 were counted.	18	89% of students earned a C or better on the final examination.	Y

Results for 3a:

	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	0	2	4	2
B	2	11	11	9
C	5	6	2	3
D	8	2	2	0
F	9	0	0	2
Total	24	21	19	16
Success	33%	90%	89%	88%

Results for 3b:

	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	0	1	3	2
B	10	5	9	5
C	8	3	3	9
D	3	3	1	1
F	1	2	0	1
Total	22	14	15	18
Success	81%	64%	93%	89%

H.
Conclusions

Students in Media Theory demonstrated their success at understanding fundamental concepts on exams again this academic year, easily surpassing the threshold. The continued combination of weekly quizzes over the readings; study guides for the exams; and highly challenging, timed, open-book and open-note exams likely accounts for this success. The professor inverted the order of theories this semester, started with culture-based theories and then moving to behavioral theories, but that didn't seem to affect student understanding of cultural theories, so more changes need to be made. In Communication Research Methods, this was the second time that students exceeded the 75% learning threshold on their mid-term exam. The professor gave students chapter quizzes, used Kahoot, and Jeopardy tools to study for the exam. Another factor can be attributed to students using the text's study tools (quizzes, flashcards, etc.) to study for the exam.

A.
Student Learning Outcome

SLO #4:   Communications majors will demonstrate proficiency in principles of media production.

B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results					G. Standard Met (Y/N)
Student-learning in media production will be measured by assessing all final projects in COMM 2003 Video Production.	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.	11	100% demonstrated proficiency by securing a grade of C or better on the project.					Y

	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
A	15	5	3	7
B	8	6	9	3
C	3	4	6	1
D	1	1	1	0
F	1	1	2	0
Total	28	17	21	11
Success	85%	88%	86%	100%

H.
Conclusions

Student learning was improved by providing students video that the professor had shot and organized professionally. Students wrote to the professor's video and edited that video. That better prepared them to shoot and edit their own video.

A. Student Learning Outcome						
SLO #5: Communications majors will demonstrate readiness to perform satisfactorily in professional communication jobs.						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results		G. Standard Met (Y/N)
Student-readiness for entry-level communication jobs will be measured by internship supervisors' reports in COMM 4913 Communication Internship.	Undetermined	All _____ reports from internship students' supervisors in COMM 4913 were counted.	N/A	Will begin assessing in 2023-2024 academic year.		N/A
H. Conclusions						
This measure wasn't implemented during the 2022-2023 academic year due to major unexpected events that affected the department faculty during this academic year. We will begin assessing this measuring during the 2023-2024 academic year.						

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 which are aimed at improving student learning or the assessment process. Indicate which student learning outcome(s) will be affected and provide a rationale for each proposed change. These proposals will be revisited in next assessment cycle.

Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
The department still needs to revise the description of department that appears in the Bulletin. It currently reads, ""*The Department of Communications offers dynamic courses in radio-television, corporate communications, and communication arts, including theatre. Its philosophy is that developing one's overall communication skills is paramount for personal success, and that society needs articulate citizens to lead the mass media, corporations, and civic institutions."*	N/A	The department curriculum has changed since this description was written.
Revise departmental purpose. The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team reiterated the need to revise the purpose.	N/A	The departmental purpose includes a lot of items, and they should be separated and listed accordingly.
Decide on an institutional mechanism for storing and reporting data from the mid-point and Capstone student surveys.	N/A	The department has removed data from student surveys from its student learning reports, but this data is valuable and has been used in the past to help the department get funding for much-needed modern equipment. It needs to be formally recorded and reported.
The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team recommended that the department review performance standards for SLO measures to ensure proper program and purpose fit.	All	As mentioned in Parts 2 & 3 above, the faculty has still not yet discussed changing criteria. This past academic year has been one of some upheaval in the department. Some measures had previously been changed, however. And again, it should be noted that SLOs 3a and 3b have not consistently been easily surpassed since 2016. The professors who teach Communication Research Methods and Media Theory have undertaken steps to improve student learning in

Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
		those classes as a result of poor performance in some years.
Utilize course assessment data from a variety of faculty members. The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team reiterated the need to do this.	N/A	As mentioned above, using Global Communication for an assessment measure means that two courses taught by Dr. Evusa are included in program course assessment, while no courses taught by Dr. Blakely and Mr. Crowley are included. A change might better reflect outcomes produced by the entire faculty. Two full-time faculty members, Professors Williams and Hartley, retired during or at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, so the department will need to return to this question for all of its courses.

PART 6
Summary of Assessment Measures

A. How many different assessment measures were used? 6 (7 once internship supervisor score measure is implemented)

B. List the direct measures (see appendix): 1a: written communication; 1b: oral communication; 2: Capstone scores 3a: test scores; 3b: midterm examination score; 4: final project score; (5: internship supervisor report score – beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year).

C. List the indirect measures (see appendix): None

PART 7

Faculty Participation and Signatures

A. 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	Report/plan analysis	
Thomas Crowley, Instructor	Report/plan analysis	
Juliet Evusa, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Bruce Hartley, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Holly Kruse, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis, report writing	*Holly Kruse*

B. Reviewed by:

Titles	Name	Signature	Date
Department Head	Steven Rosser	*signature*	5·31·23
Dean	Keith Martin	*signature*	5/31/23