

Assessment of Majors/General Education Competency Template for 2005

Program/Department: Communication Studies Submitted by: Rachel Tighe

Period Covered by Report: Date Completed: February 28, 2006

Key Learning Outcomes: What should students be able to do AFTER completing this program? State learning outcomes simply and in measurable terms. Please limit the number of outcomes to five or fewer. If your department reports on General Education competency areas (writing, foreign language, quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning), please use this form to report on those areas in a separately generated document.

1. To gain the ability to research and support one's ideas in written and oral presentations.
2. To gain increased competence in verbal communication in both interpersonal and public speaking.
3. To gain an understanding of the effect that historical, cultural, societal, situational, and psychological variables have on communication.

Please link learning outcomes to the College's Desired Accomplishments/Goals.

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8

Through what courses/assignments will you ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn this? List key courses, capstones, internships, experiences, etc.

COMM 100 – Public Speaking
COMM 310 – Intro. to Journalism and Media Writing
COMM 320 – Media Studies
COMM 330 – Interpersonal Communication
COMM 340 – Business and Professional Communication
COMM 491 & 492 – Senior Seminar

Please list all tools used for assessing student achievement (CRTs, MFTs, capstones, exit interviews, external reviews, etc.). Choose a minimum of three tools

Original research paper, formal presentation of original research, portfolio of writing samples, and exit interviews

How will you assess how well your students are learning? List standards/performance indicators, etc., taking care to provide quantifiable means (for example, all students should earn a minimum 50% on exit exam; 65 % should earn a minimum 70%; with a rubric, indicate the scale used, the levels of competence, what is identified as “competent,” and what constitutes competence for each outcome measure, what percentage of students you would expect to see at each level, etc.). Be sure to spell out criteria.

Original research project – To assess research, writing, and understanding of the variables that affect communication, the student must receive a score of 70% or 3.5 to be rated as competent.

Presentation of research project – To assess public speaking, student must receive an average score of 70 % or 3.5 from faculty evaluators on Public Speaking Rubric to be competent.

Writing portfolio – To further assess research and writing skills, student must show improvement in ability to construct and support an argument. Improvement is assessed by determining if the student improved on early errors that were noted by instructors on writing samples.

Exit interviews – Students are asked to respond in writing and orally to questions about the program. See attached questionnaire for exit interview. Interview assesses a student’s ability to clearly explain and support their comments and criticisms about their program of study.

How often, when, and under what circumstances will you gather the relevant data?

Data will be gathered once a year, at the end of spring semester. All students in the major will deliver the presentation, submit a research paper, a portfolio, and attend an exit interview.

Summarize what has been learned about how well students are achieving desired outcomes.

Last year we learned that students were exceeding our expectations for presentation and writing skills with the exception of proper citation formats. This was revealed in all writing samples. As this issue relates to not only effective but also ethical writing standards, we have begun providing more concrete training on proper citation format and are utilizing only one format in the classes that require papers within the major.

Action Plan: What plans have you for the future based on the data gathered that will aim to improve student learning/achievement? Should students perform at less than the standard expected, what steps will the department take to improve their learning/performance? What steps does the department anticipate to improve the program otherwise?

Student exit interviews have revealed that students have an interest in more training (both theoretical and applied) in public relations/advertising. In order to respond to this interest, the Communication program has proposed expanding by adding an additional faculty position.

Such a change will strengthen the program but will increase the challenges for ensuring that students are proficient in the invariant standards of written and oral communication and not simply proficient in one writing standard (journalism versus critical/analytical versus social scientific versus advertising).

If we discover that students are becoming too specialized and not generally proficient, revisions will be made to existing courses as well as the possible addition of a general communication studies course to overview the invariant standards that are necessary for proficiency.

Comments

Please return this document by April 1, 2006