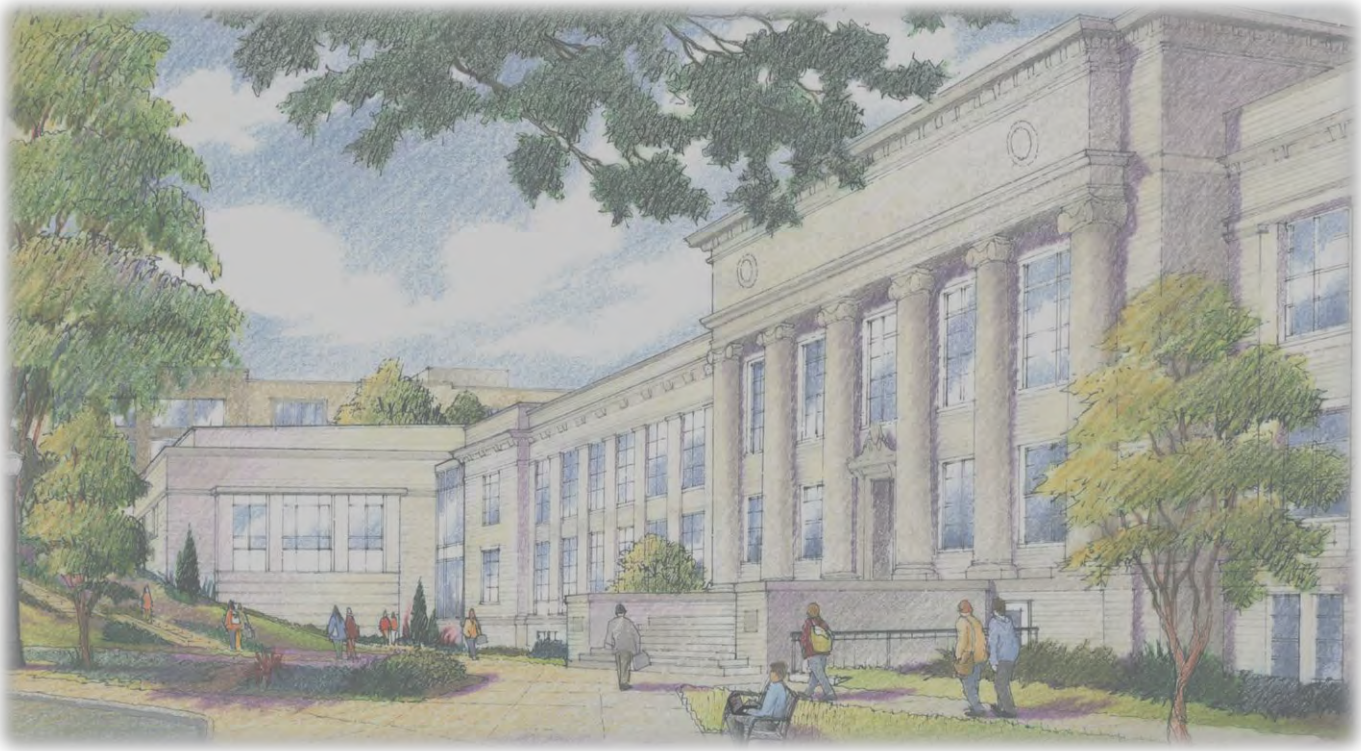
KSU SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION



Student Learning Assessment Plan

Approved August 19, 2013

I. Overview

The overarching goal of the process is to assess student learning to improve curricula, instruction and learning. Student learning outcomes must be assessed annually. The goals for learning are drawn from the professional values and competencies of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). They are:

Professional Values and Competencies

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

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

II. Objectives of Assessment

This assessment plan is designed to evaluate *student learning outcomes* related to the School's objectives. We want to assess whether our students are mastering the professional values and competencies outlined by ACEJMC and adopted by the School and, whether our graduates have mastered them. Specifically, this SLA is designed to examine student learning by major or concentration: Journalism (Multimedia News, Magazine, Broadcast News, Photojournalism) Advertising, Public Relations, Electronic Media (Electronic Media Production, Electronic Media Sports Production, Electronic Media Management).

III. Measures

A. Overview of Direct and Indirect Measures

The most basic measure of student learning is course grades in the set of required courses that includes every one of the 12 professional values and competencies. The Student Learning Assessment (SLA) plan, however, calls for analysis of further direct and indirect measures to assess student learning. Moreover, the plan identifies an assessment role for working professionals in the communications institutions and industries for which we prepare students. Many of the working professionals are alumni of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

B. Direct Measures

- *Faculty/Alumni Team Evaluation of Student Portfolios*. Student work will be assessed by teams composed of faculty, academics and working professionals. The student work itself is a sample drawn from courses across the curriculum, preferably from senior-level or capstone courses. Material will be drawn from lower-level courses, where appropriate. An assessment matrix, matching professional values and competencies with appropriate courses for each program in the college will be used.
- *Direct Assessment by Faculty*
- *Internship Supervisors' Assessment*

C. Indirect Measures

- *Retention rates*
- *Graduation rates*
- *Student performance in national competitions*
- *Results of student surveys of satisfaction and engagement*
- *Alumni Survey results*
- *Student focus group results*

IV. Process

A. Committees and individuals involved

- School Administration
  - Associate Director for Undergraduate and Graduate Education
  - Undergraduate Coordinator
  - Graduate Coordinator (when graduate outcomes are assessed)
  - Coordinator for Career Services
  - Systems Administrator
- Academic Integrity Committee, comprised of faculty members representing each major
- Sequence Coordinators
- Professional Advisory Board
- Student Learning Assessment Teams (one for each program)
- Coordinator of Alumni Relations

B. Overview

The SLA is conducted annually and managed by the Associate Director for Graduate and Undergraduate Education. There are three phases in the process:

- Preparation. With continuous quality improvement in mind, useful recommendations from the previous year's SLA are incorporated into the SLA process.
- Data Collection, Analysis and Report Preparation. The Faculty/Alumni Team Evaluation of Student Portfolio*s* gets underway. Secondary measures data are collected. The annual report is produced and distributed to the directors, sequence coordinators and professional advisory board.
- Application of Findings. Results are used to improve curricula, course development, teaching and learning.

C. Preparation

Appropriate improvements to the plan are made each year, based on feedback from individuals (faculty, reviewers, and administrators) involved in the process. Course selection is made and faculty are contacted with instructions for sampling and submitting student work. In collaboration with Alumni, volunteer assessment team members are recruited. Arrangements are made to collect secondary measures data; activities include planning the internship supervisor survey and the survey for faculty, designing and planning focus groups if needed, and researching means to acquire other secondary measures.

D. Data Collection and Analysis

Staff support is used to collect, organize and store data. Faculty teaching selected courses supply samples of student work – all grading marks removed – along with relevant assignment directions and syllabus.

Direct Measures

Faculty/Professional Team Evaluation of Student Work

Assessment teams are assembled for each program under review:

- Advertising
- Electronic Media
- Journalism
- Public Relations

Each team is comprised of a faculty member and two to three working professionals. Sequence Coordinators, the chair of the Professional Advisory Board, the Associate Director, and the School's undergraduate coordinator collaborate to recruit 10 to 20 professionals. These professionals are trained and placed on teams led by a faculty member.

Each team member receives a portfolio of student work for the program. Portfolios are substantial, containing samples ranging from term papers, films, radio and television productions, photography, web and graphics designs, PowerPoint presentations, media campaigns and research reports. Instructions for analysis are included.

The teams review the assessment material for each program and submit a report to the Associate Director.

Faculty Surveys

Selected faculty participate in an online survey.

Internship Surveys

Internship supervisors participate in a survey about student performance and competence.

Indirect Measures

Retention Rates

Supplied by the KSU Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and Registrar's Office.

Graduation Rates

Supplied by the KSU Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and Registrar's Office.
Student performance in national competitions (source: department heads)

Student surveys (such as the National Survey on Student Engagement and student satisfaction surveys)

This can be in the form of surveys, focus groups or interviews. The School may call on professionals to assist with student focus groups on specific issues of concern in the assessment process.

Alumni Surveys

Occasionally, the College or University survey alumni, and applicable results are considered for assessment.

E. Using Analysis to Improve Curriculum and Instruction (Closing the Loop)

Associate Director's office will create an annual document reporting results of all direct and indirect measures. This report is circulated to the Director, sequence coordinators, Academic Integrity Committee and Professional Advisory Board.

Sequence Coordinators present results to faculty. Changes to improve curriculum and instruction are planned and implemented. Results are reported back to the Associate Director.

Associate Director prepares annual report of changes made to improve curriculum and instruction. Inputs are sequence coordinators reports and results of faculty survey. This document is circulated to the Director, sequence coordinators, Academic Integrity Committee and Professional Advisory Board.