

General Education Student Learning Report

Revised May 2024

Department of Communications

2023-2024 AY

PART 1

Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes

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

University Mission	College 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. *College mission isn't yet available	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	College 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	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	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.

University Commitments	College Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
reasoning, and critical and creative thinking.	explanation of natural phenomena and innovative technology.		3) Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively. 4) Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values. 5) Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.
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 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.		
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.		
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.		
To provide university-wide student services, activities and resources that complement academic programs.	The School will offer and promote artistic, scientific, cultural, and public affairs events on the campus and in the region.		

University Commitments	College Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
To support and strengthen student, faculty and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.	The School will foster a community of scholars among the faculty and students 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.	<p>The School will offer and promote artistic, scientific, cultural, and public affairs events on the campus and in the region.</p> <p>*Using former School mission because College mission isn't yet available.</p>		

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
In the case that a true, dedicated head for the Department of Communications is hired, that person should arrange for faculty members who regularly teach or provide curriculum for general education courses to 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.	N	The Department of Communications has not been able to hire a dedicated department head and has experienced the retirements of several faculty members, and thus is understaffed. It is unrealistic to think that this change can be implemented in the near future.
The department faculty still needs to reassess current grade thresholds for assignments.	N	The department needs to do this, but with shake-ups in the department, the department hasn't met to discuss this. The department needs to meet to discuss this and other assessment concerns.
The department faculty should consider dropping the Theatre Appreciation pre-test/post-test as an assessment measure for SLO #1.	N	The department hasn't met to discuss this proposed change, but this likely non-controversial change could be easily implemented. The pre-test/post-test hasn't been given for years.
The description of SPCH-1113: Speech Communication in the Bulletin should be revised to say that online sections require students to gather in-person audiences of at least three adults for the graded speeches that students record.	N	Again, the department hasn't met to discuss any of the proposed changes from last year's SLR. This change still seems important for reasons discussed in Part 4.
An institutional requirement or incentive must be provided to ensure that all faculty to provide data from general education courses for assessment.	N	This isn't something that's in the department's control, and the process of attrition through retirement may be addressing the problem.

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. It is unclear what, if anything, happens with the reports we submit.	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)																				
1a. In SPCH 1113, Speech Communication, student understanding of constructs by which a speech is evaluated will be measured by assessing students' mid-term exam scores in both on-ground and online formats.	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 speech sections in both the fall and spring semesters.	All instructors submit data from one of their sections of speech communication.	N = 214 (on-ground) N = 120 (online)	On-ground: 95% met threshold. Online: 88% met threshold. Speech Midterms On-ground <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">19-20</td> <td style="width: 20%;">20-21</td> <td style="width: 20%;">21-22</td> <td style="width: 20%;">22-23</td> <td style="width: 20%;">23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">86%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">90%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">95%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">95%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">97%</td> </tr> </table> Speech Midterms Online <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">19-20</td> <td style="width: 20%;">20-21</td> <td style="width: 20%;">21-22</td> <td style="width: 20%;">22-23</td> <td style="width: 20%;">23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">94%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">85%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">89%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">88%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">86%</td> </tr> </table>	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	86%	90%	95%	95%	97%	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	94%	85%	89%	88%	86%	Y
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																					
86%	90%	95%	95%	97%																					
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																					
94%	85%	89%	88%	86%																					

**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)										
1b. 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 = 10	100% of students met the threshold requirement Theatre Final Exams <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>19-20</th> <th>20-21</th> <th>21-22</th> <th>22-23</th> <th>23-24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>71%</td> <td>95%</td> <td>67%</td> <td>No data</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	71%	95%	67%	No data	100%	Y
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24											
71%	95%	67%	No data	100%											
1c. In HUM 2413, Theatre Appreciation, a pre-post-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 = 0 N = 0	The growth threshold could not be assessed Pre-/Post-Test Growth <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>19-20</th> <th>20-21</th> <th>21-22</th> <th>22-23</th> <th>23-24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>43%</td> <td>21%</td> <td>No data</td> <td>No data</td> <td>No data</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	43%	21%	No data	No data	No data	N/A
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24											
43%	21%	No data	No data	No data											

**G.
Conclusions**

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)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student exam scores in both on-ground and online sections of Speech Communication were consistent with previous years' scores, and exceeded the threshold. 2. Online students as an aggregate continue to score lower on every measure than on-ground students, and this is of concern. 3. Giving strictly timed open-book exams that emphasize students' general familiarity with information and ability to find it and apply it rather than just memorizing facts has been helpful in some sections. 4. Using tools like "Jeopardy" and Kahoot to review for exams also proved helpful. 5. All of the students in the single section of Theatre Appreciation taught during the academic year got As or Bs on their final exams, demonstrating their mastery of the material. 6. The pre-test/post-test hasn't been administered in this class for several years, and with the impending retirement of the faculty member who oversaw the now-defunct Theatre Program and who is the person who has this test, we might want to remove this measure. 					

A. Student Learning Outcome					
SLO #2: 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)
In SPCH 1113, Speech Communication, evaluations of informative and persuasive speeches will be conducted in all sections in both on-	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.	All instructors submitted the scores on the informative and persuasive speeches for one of their sections of speech communication course in both the	<u>On-ground</u> Informative: N = 205 Persuasive: N = 226 <u>Online</u> Informative: N = 131 Persuasive: N = 130	On-ground informative: 97% met threshold. Online informative: 85% met threshold. On-ground persuasive: 98% met threshold. Online persuasive: 82% met threshold.	Y

ground and online formats.		fall and spring semesters.		<p>I</p> <p>INFORMATIVE SPEECHES</p> <p>Informative Speech On-Ground</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1203 256 1774 362"> <tr> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> <td>21-22</td> <td>22-23</td> <td>23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>97%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>97%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Informative Speech Online</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1203 431 1774 529"> <tr> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> <td>21-22</td> <td>22-23</td> <td>23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>89%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>87%</td> <td>90%</td> <td>85%</td> </tr> </table> <p>PERSUASIVE SPEECHES</p> <p>Persuasive Speech On-Ground</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1203 740 1774 837"> <tr> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> <td>21-22</td> <td>22-23</td> <td>23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>96%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>94%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>98%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Persuasive Speech Online</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1203 907 1774 1005"> <tr> <td>19-20</td> <td>20-21</td> <td>21-22</td> <td>22-23</td> <td>23-24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>98%</td> <td>93%</td> <td>76%</td> <td>93%</td> <td>82%</td> </tr> </table>	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	97%	94%	97%	96%	97%	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	89%	94%	87%	90%	85%	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	96%	94%	94%	96%	98%	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	98%	93%	76%	93%	82%	
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																									
97%	94%	97%	96%	97%																																									
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																									
89%	94%	87%	90%	85%																																									
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																									
96%	94%	94%	96%	98%																																									
19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																									
98%	93%	76%	93%	82%																																									

G.
Conclusions

1. Students in on-ground speech sections did quite well as a whole on their major speeches, easily exceeding the thresholds set for them.
2. Instructors reported that using real-life examples in discussing speaking skills in class and giving copious feedback were helpful as aids to student learning.
3. Assigning cumulative assignments that are designed to help students gain proficiency in transitional steps in crafting their informative and persuasive speeches remains extremely helpful.

4. Having students participate in peer-editing assignments in small groups prior to major speech assignments during which students can workshop their outlines and speeches also seemed helpful in improving the quality of speeches.
5. Introducing students to, and strongly encouraging them to use, institutional resources like RSU Library and Writing Center in person and/or virtually also aids student success.
6. Providing online students with a calendar of assignment due dates and with assignment reminder messages is crucial in ensuring that students do the assignments that build the skills they need to become proficient at preparing and delivering informative and persuasive speeches.
7. Students in Speech Communication come from diverse backgrounds and live in a range of situations, and they sometimes struggle with letting their instructors know about problems that are affecting their class performance. Instructors are trying to be attentive to these students.
8. Students in online sections seem especially challenged by the speech assignments, perhaps because they think that online speech sections are easier than on-ground sections. The department should better communicate to prospective students the expectations of students in online sections so that they are better prepared when they enroll.

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 improving 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
<p>For the most part these changes are repeats from last year:</p> <p>The Department of Communications person should consider arranging for faculty members who regularly teach or provide curriculum for general education courses to 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.</p>	<p>As this department has remained without a true department head for several years, our consistency across our general education courses has suffered. Grades on speech assignments vary greatly from section to section, indicating that instructors view and/or apply speech criteria quite differently, and that is a situation of serious concern.</p>
<p>The department faculty still needs to reassess current grade thresholds for assignments.</p>	<p>In recent years the thresholds for most SLOs have has been easily surpassed, usually by at least 10-15%. This may mean that the threshold needs to be raised in order to better challenge students and instructors, or to counterbalance possible grade inflation.</p>
<p>The department faculty should officially drop the Theatre Appreciation pre-test/post-test as an assessment measure for SLO #1.</p>	<p>This data hasn't been collected for the past several years, and with the demise of the theatre program at RSU and the impending retirement of its former director, it's not clear who would provide this test to instructors.</p>
<p>The description of SPCH-1113: Speech Communication in the Bulletin should be revised to say that online sections require students to gather in-person audiences of at least three adults for the graded speeches that students record.</p>	<p>This revision is remains urgent. Many students who enroll in online speech sections are surprised to learn that they must have in-person audiences for their speeches. Even when the requirement is emphasized in the syllabus, in speech assignments, in email messages to the class, and in posted announcements, many students upload videos of themselves alone in their bedrooms, whispering into a phone or laptop camera. This is nothing like public speaking.</p>

PART 6
Assessment Measures and Faculty Participation

Summary of assessment measures:

- 1) How many different assessment measures were used? 4
- 2) List the direct measures (see appendix): Informative speeches, persuasive speeches, midterm exams, and final exams
- 3) List the indirect measures (see appendix): N/A

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	Data collection/report/plan analysis	
Thomas Crowley, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Juliet Evusa, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Holly Kruse, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis, report writing	<i>Holly Kruse</i>

Reviewed by:

Titles	Name	Signature	Date
Department Head	Dr. Hugh Foley		
Dean	Dr. Susan Willis		

Appendix

Student Learning Outcome

Student learning outcomes are the observable or measurable results that are expected of a student following a learning experience. Learning outcomes may address knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values that provide evidence that learning has occurred. They can apply to a specific course, a program of study, or an institution. Outcomes should be worded in language that clearly implies a measurable behavior or quality of student work. Outcomes should also include Bloom's action verbs appropriate to the skill level of learning expected of students.

Examples:

Students will be able to apply principles of evidence-based medicine to determine clinical diagnoses and implement acceptable treatment modalities.

Students will be able to articulate cultural and socioeconomic differences and the significance of these differences for instructional planning.

Assessment Measure

An assessment measure is a tool or instrument used to gather evidence of student progress toward an established learning outcome. Every program learning outcome should have at least one appropriate assessment measure. Learning outcomes are frequently complex, however, and may require multiple measures to accurately assess student performance. Assessment plans should try to incorporate a combination of direct and indirect assessment measures. Direct provide concrete evidence of whether a student has command of a specific subject or content area, can perform a certain task, exhibits a particular skill, demonstrates a certain quality in their work, or holds a particular value. Because direct measures tap into actual student learning, it is often viewed as the preferred measure type. Indirect measures assess opinions or thoughts about the extent of a student's knowledge, skills, or attitudes. They reveal characteristics associated with learning, but they only imply that learning has occurred. Both types of measures can provide useful insight into student learning and experiences in a program. Each also has unique advantages and disadvantages in terms of the type of data and information it can provide. Examples of common direct and indirect measures are listed below.

Direct Measures

- Comprehensive exams
- Class assignments
- Juried review of performances and exhibitions
- Internship or clinical evaluations
- Portfolio evaluation
- Pre/post exams
- Third-party exams such as field tests, certification exams, or licensure exams
- Senior thesis or capstone projects

Indirect Measures

- Graduate exit interviews
- Focus group responses
- Job placement statistics
- Graduate school placement statistics
- Graduation and retention rates
- Student and alumni surveys that assess perceptions of the program
- Employer surveys that assess perceptions of graduates
- Honors and awards earned by students and alumni.

Performance Standard

A performance standard is a clearly-defined benchmark that establishes the minimally-acceptable level of performance expected of students for a particular measure.

Examples:

At least 70% of students will score 70% or higher on a comprehensive final exam.

At least 75% of students will earn score a “Proficient” or higher rating on the Communicate Effectively rubric.

Sampling Method

Sampling method describes the methodology used for selecting the students that were assessed for a given measure. In some cases, such as most course-embedded measures, it is possible to assess all active enrolled students. In other cases, however, it is not feasible to measure the population of all potential students. In these cases, it is important that a well-designed sampling scheme be used to ensure the sample of students measured is an unbiased representation of the overall population. Where multiple instructors teach a particular course, care should be taken to assess students across all instructors, including adjuncts.

Examples:

All students enrolled in BIOL 4801 Biology Research Methods II

All majors graduating in the 2016-17 academic year.

Sample Size

Sample size is the number of students from which evidence of student learning was obtained for a given assessment measure.

Results

Results are an analytical summary of the findings arising from the assessment of student performance for a particular assessment measure. Typical presentation includes descriptive statistics (mean, median, range) and score frequency distributions.

Standard Met?

This is a simple yes/no response that indicates whether the observed level of student performance for a measure meets or exceeds the established standard. An N/A may be used where circumstances prevented the department from accurately assessing a measure.

Conclusion

The conclusion is a reflective summary and determination of the assessment results obtained for a specific learning outcome. Questions to consider in this section include the following:

- Does the assessment evidence indicate the learning outcome is being satisfactorily met?
- Where multiple measures are used for a single outcome, do the results present a consistent or contradictory pattern?
- What are the most valuable insights gained from the assessment results?
- What strengths and weaknesses in student learning do the results indicate?
- What implications are there for enhancing teaching and learning?
- How can the assessment process be improved?