

Degree Program Student Learning Report

Revised May 2024

Department of Communications

BA in Communications

For 2023-2024 Academic Year

PART 1

Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes

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

University Mission	College 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.	<p>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:</p> <p>*College of Arts & Sciences mission statement not available.</p>	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	College Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational	The School* offers innovative degrees, which focus upon developing skills in oral and written communication, critical		

University Commitments	College Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning and critical and creative thinking.	<p>thinking, creativity, empirical and evidenced-based inquiry, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena, and innovative technology.</p> <p>*College of Arts & Sciences mission statement not available.</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.			
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.			

University Commitments	College Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
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
<p>The department still needs to revise the description of department that appears in the Bulletin. It currently reads, "<i>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.</i>"</p>	N	<p>In the past year-and-a-half, the department has lost two full-time faculty members and has gotten a new department head. Another full-time faculty member is planning to retire after the Fall 2024 semester.</p> <p>The department has been focused on staffing required classes and conducting a search for full-time faculty member to teach strategic communication classes. During the coming academic year we will conduct a search to fill the full-time broadcasting and new media faculty position. We should also endeavor to meet more regularly as a faculty.</p> <p>During this transitional time, the proposed changes have been tabled and will be revisited once things have stabilized.</p>

Revise departmental purpose. The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team reiterated the need to revise the purpose.	N	See above.
Decide on an institutional mechanism for storing and reporting data from the mid-point and Capstone student surveys.	N	See above.
The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team recommended that the department review performance standards for SLO measures to ensure proper program and purpose fit.	N	See above.
Utilize course assessment data from a variety of faculty members. The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team reiterated the need to do this.	Y	With a reduced number of faculty members this past academic year, all full-time faculty members in the Department of Communications have taught classes included in this student learning report.

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)	Comments
Department didn't undergo peer review in 2023-2024 academic year.	N/A	See comments in Part 2 and Part 5 regarding the most recent peer review recommendations.

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. Note: 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.

SLO #1: Communications majors will demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication skills.																																																					
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)																																																
1a. Student learning in written communication will be measured by assessing all students' performances on their research papers in COMM 4163 in Global Communication	75% of students will demonstrate written skills and critical /creative thinking, by achieving a grade of C or higher in their major research paper.	All participating students' final research papers were counted.	21	90% of participating students met or exceeded the C threshold. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <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>A</td> <td>9</td> <td>8</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>10</td> <td>16</td> <td>2</td> <td>8</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>22</td> <td>29</td> <td>7</td> <td>15</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td>100%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>90%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	A	9	8	5	6	11	B	10	16	2	8	5	C	3	4	0	1	3	D	0	0	0	0	1	F	0	1	0	0	1	Total	22	29	7	15	21	Success	100%	97%	100%	100%	90%	Y
	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																																
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F	0	1	0	0	1																																																
Total	22	29	7	15	21																																																
Success	100%	97%	100%	100%	90%																																																
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	12	92% of students met or exceeded the C threshold <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <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>A</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>24</td> <td>11</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>13</td> <td>9</td> <td>0</td> <td>12</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td>100%</td> <td>89%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		19-20*	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24**	A	8	9	24	11	5	B	5	0	0	0	5	C	0	0	0	1	1	D	0	0	0	0	1	F	0	1	0	0	0	Total	13	9	0	12	12	Success	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%	Y
	19-20*	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24**																																																
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Total	13	9	0	12	12																																																
Success	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%																																																

SLO #1: Communications majors will demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication skills.					
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)
		<p>presentations in Argumentation and Persuasion.</p> <p>**The data for 2023-2024 is from final project presentations in COMM 3883, New Media & Society, a core class required of all majors like Digital Design. Digital Design wasn't offered during the academic year.</p>			
H. Conclusions					
<p>Most students enrolled in Global Communication class met or exceeded the performance threshold in both the final research paper and mid-term exam. Students performed slightly less well than last year's class. Only one student did not attempt the final research paper. This student's grade was not counted. Once again, student success can be attributed to the cumulative approach of assignments leading up to their final research paper. The instructor intends to change the title of this course to "The Globalization of Popular Culture and News Media."</p> <p>As did students last year in Digital Design, students this year in New Media & Society demonstrated knowledge in designing and presenting a professional slideshow. The professor discusses basic principles of effective slide show design, including showing examples. The slides must effectively communicate the background of the case study undertaken by the student in their term paper project, the key relevant research, and the student's preliminary conclusions. The slides must be simple and rely on graphics more than text, and students must demonstrate effective, professional extemporaneous speaking skills. Students excelled at the task.</p>					

**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.	16	100% of students earned a C or higher on their capstone projects.	Y				
						20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24
				A		9	9	16	15
				B		3	5	4	1
				C		3	6	0	0
				D		1	0	0	0
				F		1	0	0	0
				Total		17	20	20	16
Success	88%	100%	100%	100%					

**H.
Conclusions**

The department assessment coordinator was unsuccessful in collecting grades from final capstone projects from the professor who taught the class, so she used final grades in COMM 4913 as a proxy. Those final grades are in line with capstone project presentation grades in previous years, and therefore they seem likely to accurately reflect project presentation grades. Communications students continue to present their semester-long capstone projects professionally and successfully.

**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.	28	88% of the students earned a C or better on their combined midterm and final exams.	Y																																			
				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">20-21</th> <th style="text-align: center;">21-22</th> <th style="text-align: center;">22-23</th> <th style="text-align: center;">23-24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: center;">21</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> <td style="text-align: center;">28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td style="text-align: center;">90%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">89%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">88%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">93%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	A	2	4	2	4	B	11	11	9	17	C	6	2	3	5	D	2	2	0	0	F	0	0	2	2	Total	21	19	16	28
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A	2	4	2	4																																				
B	11	11	9	17																																				
C	6	2	3	5																																				
D	2	2	0	0																																				
F	0	0	2	2																																				
Total	21	19	16	28																																				
Success	90%	89%	88%	93%																																				
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	78% of students earned a C or better on the final examination.	Y																																			
				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">20-21</th> <th style="text-align: center;">21-22</th> <th style="text-align: center;">22-23</th> <th style="text-align: center;">23-24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td style="text-align: center;">64%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">93%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">89%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	A	1	3	2	1	B	5	9	5	7	C	3	3	9	6	D	3	1	1	1	F	2	0	1	3	Total	14	15	18	18
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24																																				
A	1	3	2	1																																				
B	5	9	5	7																																				
C	3	3	9	6																																				
D	3	1	1	1																																				
F	2	0	1	3																																				
Total	14	15	18	18																																				
Success	64%	93%	89%																																					

**H.
Conclusions**

Students in Media Theory demonstrated their success at understanding fundamental concepts on exams again this academic year, 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. Students in both the fall on-ground section and the spring online section (offered because the professor will be on research leave in Fall 2024) have a better grasp of individual behavioral theories than broader cultural theories, so the course requires further revisions.

In Communication Research Methods, 78% exceeded the 75% learning threshold in their mid-term exam. The instructor 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.	8	100% demonstrated proficiency by securing a grade of C or better on the project.		Y			
					20-21		21-22	22-23	23-24
				A	5		3	7	8
				B	6		9	3	0
				C	4		6	1	0
				D	1		1	0	0
				F	1		2	0	0
				Total	17		21	11	8
Success	88%	86%	100%	100%					

**H.
Conclusions**

According to the professor, students in the class progressed nicely from not knowing much at all about video production to producing video features of sports, tutorials, and personality profiles.

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.	80% of students will earn a B grade or higher on the final reports written for them by their supervisors in COMM 4913 Communication Internship	All final reports from internship students' supervisors in COMM 4913 during the Spring 2024 semester were counted.	4	100% demonstrated proficiency by earning a grade of B or better on their supervisor's final evaluation. <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">23-24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Success</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		23-24	A	3	B	1	C	0	D	0	F	0	Total	4	Success	100%	Y
	23-24																				
A	3																				
B	1																				
C	0																				
D	0																				
F	0																				
Total	4																				
Success	100%																				
H. Conclusions																					
This measure was implemented for the first time during the Spring 2024 semester when the department's assessment coordinator was also responsible for the internship class. We hope to consistently include this data in future student learning reports.																					

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
<p>These are all carry-overs from last year's report, for reasons explained in Part 2 above:</p> <p>The department still needs to revise the description of department that appears in the Bulletin. It currently reads, "<i>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.</i>"</p>	N/A	The department curriculum has changed since this description was written.
<p>Revise departmental purpose.</p> <p>The Spring 2023 UAC peer-review team reiterated the need to revise the purpose.</p>	N/A	The departmental purpose includes a lot of items, and they should be separated and listed accordingly.
<p>Decide on an institutional mechanism for storing and reporting data from the mid-point and Capstone student surveys.</p>	N/A	<p>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.</p> <p>Moreover, the current faculty need to communicate better, perhaps through regular</p>

Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
		meetings, about whether we will or should continue to collect this data.
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	<p>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.</p> <p>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 those classes as a result of poor performance in some years.</p>
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	<p>Using Global Communication for an assessment measure means that two courses taught by Dr. Evusa are included in program course assessment, and this year two classes taught by Dr. Kruse were included – Media Theory and New Media & Society – because Digital Design wasn't offered. The term paper project presentation in New Media & Society was substituted as a measure for the Digital Design presentation. Both Professors Blakely and Mr. Crowley taught Capstone this year, which meant all full-time faculty in the department taught classes included in this assessment data report.</p> <p>Furthermore, the inclusion of the internship as a measure of a learning outcome creates an opportunity for another faculty member to</p>

Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
		<p>contribute data to the program assessment process.</p> <p>The retirement of Professors Williams and Hartley, during or at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year created an unusual situation, so the department will need to return to this question for all of its courses.</p>

PART 6
Summary of Assessment Measures

- A. How many different assessment measures were used? 7
- 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.
- 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	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Thomas Crowley, Assistant Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Juliet Evusa, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Hugh Foley, Professor, Department Head	Data collection, report/plan analysis	
Holly Kruse, Professor	Data collection, report/plan analysis, report writing	<i>Holly Kruse</i>

B. 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 particular 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?