

Course Assessment Summary Report
COMM 1023: Communication in a Diverse World

COMM 1023 is an option in the university social sciences core. Starting in the Fall 2016 semester, the department assigned a new instructor to teach both sections of the course. The instructor spent the fall semester developing course examinations (and the rest of the course), so was unable to develop a valid pretest of student outcomes. The assessment items were written and pilot tested in the fall semester exams, then used in the Spring 2017 assessment. Hence, the assessment plan for this course will not be fully implemented until the Fall 2017 semester.

Spring 2017 Assessment

Students in both Spring 2017 sections completed the pretest (15 items drawn from the course's final exam) during the first week of class. Overall, both sections showed positive gains in student achievement:

Sec 001 (N = 78)	pretest avg score = 64%	posttest avg score = 85%
Sec 002 (N = 148)	pretest avg score = 66%	posttest avg score = 79.9%

No item analyses were conducted, though the instructor did record the percentage of students answering each item correctly. In both sections, the percentage of students answering each item correctly ranged from 16% to 99% on the pretest; on the posttest, these scores ranged from 53% to 99%. All items showed gains in the percentage of correct answers. However, 85+% of students answered five items correctly in both pre- & posttests. These items have been flagged for more detailed analysis in Fall 2018.

Based on these data and feedback from the instructor, the goals listed below have been set for course assessment in COMM 1003 during the 2017 – 2018 academic year. Implementation should ensure a more meaningful comparison of student outcomes across sections of the course.

- Assess only those learning objectives common to all sections of the course. Course instructors wishing to measure section-specific outcomes should do this by adding to the instrument, not by substituting items.
- Develop a larger pool of assessment questions for each objective. Instructors will approve these items for use, then choose a common set for each semester's assessment instruments.
- Analyze data on the same units of analysis to permit comparisons across sections/semesters. This should include overall scores, scores for item-sets in each course objective, and item analyses (both difficulty and discrimination index scores).
- Implement a report template for the reporting of results and conclusions of each assessment.

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Ron Warren, Director of Undergraduate Studies