

Department of Communication
Assessment of Student Academic Achievement
May 1, 2016

According to the guidelines provided by the National Communication Association (NCA) concerning curricula, communication programs should provide course offerings enabling students to fulfill learning outcomes through their coursework providing a balanced approach of theory, research, and skills with attention paid to diversity issues and ethical decision-making.

The Department's goal is to familiarize students with the breadth of the communication discipline and the applicability of communication across a variety of settings. To this end, we ask students in our classes to (1) develop basic communication skills, (2) understand the theory and research methods of our discipline, and (3) apply their knowledge and skills to historical and contemporary settings. To that end, our Mission Statement is:

The Department of Communication is committed to excellence in scholarship, instruction, and expression of human communication. We nurture a thriving intellectual community by bridging the humanities and social sciences. Discovery, learning, diversity and engagement are the hallmarks of this community.

Measurement of the achievements of these outcomes has occurred through the use of (1) the Department's Senior Writing Requirement; (2) student internships and enrollment in independent study courses; (3) exit surveys with students upon their graduation, and (4) following of students' success in work and graduate programs. Currently, no standardized capstone experiences are used at the B.A. level. However, beginning fall 2016 a capstone experience is being incorporated for all M.A. students.

Our B.A. and M.A. programs continue to be strong and productive. We attract a relatively diverse and well qualified population of undergraduate and graduate students. As of the fall 2015 semester, we have approximately 478 undergraduate majors and 31 graduate students enrolled in the program. In the last five years (2011-2015), we have graduated 530 B.A. and 66 M.A. students, a number that places us as one of the most productive programs in Fulbright College. In particular, our graduate students remain active in research and have published their scholarship in academic journals and regularly presented papers at regional and national conventions. It is the professional activity and success of our students that is one of the primary reasons why this program is viewed so highly by peers in the profession.

Learning Outcomes: B.A. in Communication

Our learning objectives for the both the B.A. and M.A. in Communication are:

- (1) To develop basic communication (speaking and writing) skills;
- (2) To familiarize students with the breadth of the communication discipline; and
- (3) To demonstrate the applicability of communication across a variety of settings.

Learning Outcomes: M.A. in Communication

- (1) To develop a mastery of speaking and writing skills;
- (2) To gain a basic understanding of both quantitative and qualitative research methods used in research and/or scholarship in the discipline;
- (3) To demonstrate sophistication in the applicability of communication theory and research across a variety of communication settings: and

- (4) To integrate and synthesize the primary research literature in our field.

Assessment Techniques for the B.A. in Communication

Direct Assessment Methods:

- Departmental Undergraduate Program Committee whose charge includes the development, application and review of assessment techniques;
- Departmental Senior Writing Requirement;
- Student participation in internship and independent study courses;
- Exit surveys of graduating seniors

Indirect Assessment Methods:

- Course grades and average GPAs of communication majors;
- Honors and awards earned by communication majors;
- Social media communication following graduation; and
- Student participation rates in honors societies, academic conventions, etc.

Assessment Techniques for the M.A. in Communication

Direct Assessment Methods:

- Departmental Graduate Program Committee whose charge includes the development, application and review of assessment techniques;
- Successful completion of two paradigm courses in the discipline;
- Successful completion of a graduate plan of study approved by the student's graduate committee;

- Student participation in internship and independent study courses;
- Exit surveys of graduating M.A. students

Indirect Assessment Methods:

- Course grades and average GPAs of communication M.A. students;
- Honors and awards earned by communication graduate students;
- Social media communication following graduation; and
- Student participation rates in the academic life of the department (seminars, guest lectures, etc.).

Appendix A

Exit Interview Survey Questions—B.A. Graduating Students Department of Communication

Questions 1-10 ask you to indicate your response using the following scale:

SA = *Strongly agree*
A = *Agree*
N = *Neutral*
D = *Disagree*
SD = *Strongly disagree*

1. The quality of advising in the department is excellent. SA A N D SD
2. The quality of teaching in the department is excellent. SA A N D SD
3. Faculty members in the department are supportive. SA A N D SD
4. Faculty members in the department are committed to academic excellence.
SA A N D SD
5. The staff in the departmental office is helpful and approachable.
SA A N D SD
6. I seldom got the “run-around” when seeking information from the staff in the departmental office. SA A N D SD
7. Faculty members in the department are available after class and during office hours
SA A N D SD
8. Faculty members in the department are concerned about my success as an individual.
SA A N D SD
9. The department offers a good variety of courses. SA A N D SD
10. On the whole, I am very satisfied with my educational experience in the department. SA A
N D SD
11. What are your future plans? (Please be specific if possible).
12. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make about the department (please provide any further comments you would like to make about your responses to Questions 1-10 as well)?

Appendix B

Exit Interview Survey Questions—M.A. Graduating Students Department of Communication

Questions 1-10 ask you to indicate your response using the following scale:

SA = *Strongly agree*
A = *Agree*
N = *Neutral*
D = *Disagree*
SD = *Strongly disagree*

1. The quality of teaching in the department is excellent. SA A N D SD
2. The quality of advising in the department is excellent. SA A N D SD
3. Faculty members in the department are supportive. SA A N D SD
4. Faculty members in the department are committed to academic excellence.
SA A N D SD
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8. Faculty members in the department are concerned about my success as an individual.
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9. The department offers a good variety of courses. SA A N D SD
10. On the whole, I am very satisfied with my educational experience in the department. SA A
N D SD
11. What are your future plans? (Please be specific if possible).
12. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make about the department (please provide any further comments you would like to make about your responses to Questions 1-10 as well)?