Because of the newness of the Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and Public Rhetorics, we are submitting only an assessment plan rather than a report. A comprehensive assessment has not yet been conducted.

Academic Program Assessment Plan
Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and Public Rhetorics

Student Learning Outcomes
Students in the graduate certificate program should be able to demonstrate the following skills upon their graduation from the program:

- Analyze the rhetorical situation of professional and public writing tasks through theory-driven audience research and analysis
- Produce high-quality texts that meet the audience, medium, and genre needs of a given writing task
- Oversee and manage large-scale writing projects in the professional and public writing workplace
- Utilize industry-standard technology and techniques to produce texts for online and paper-based audiences
- Compile a portfolio of professional-quality texts from their coursework as evidence of their skill in technical writing
- Analyze technical information and synthesize texts that relay that information to audiences of varying levels of skill and proficiency in the subject matter
- Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to write in a variety of styles
- Leverage user-centered usability testing and textual editing skills to tailor a text for specific audiences and their needs

Assessment Tools
The Graduate Certificate program assesses students in two ways as they make their way towards graduation:
- End-of-semester assessment via capstone project
- End-of-certificate assessment via portfolio defense

Portfolio Defense
Each certificate student is required to present and defend a professional portfolio before graduation. The defense is normally chaired by the program director and assessed by the director and two members of the Rhetoric and Composition faculty. Students present and defend a minimum of four of their projects from the certificate program, explaining why the pieces presented are effective and the choices behind their creation.

End-of-semester Assessment
At the end of each semester, students are required to finish a capstone assignment for each major course. These capstone assignments are designed to be candidates for the final portfolio defense and to test students' ability to apply the content of the course in a professional setting. Through

these end-of-semester submissions faculty in the program are able to check student's progress towards the certificate and offer guidance when necessary.

Use of Assessment Results

Results from end-of-semester and end-of-program assessment are used by the program director to plan the regular revision of certificate coursework. As professional and technical writing is a technologically-driven field, courses are scheduled for revision every three years, though smaller-scale revisions are made on a regular basis due to information gained through assessment.