

Academic Assessment Plan
BA/School of Journalism and Strategic Media - May 15, 2024

Program Goals: The School of Journalism and Strategic Media is an accredited program from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) with the following goals:

1. The program recognizes the importance of diversity and aims to prepare students to accurately represent and include voices from various economic backgrounds, ages, races, genders, and religions. This goal emphasizes the need for inclusive and unbiased coverage of our pluralistic society, ensuring that diverse perspectives and experiences are accurately portrayed in the media.
2. The program aims to equip students with the necessary skills and mindset to become innovative and ethical media professionals in the digital age. This involves fostering critical thinking, mastering cutting-edge technology, and instilling a strong sense of ethical principles and practices in journalism.
3. The program empowers aspiring media professionals with the skills to verify information as factual and foster truth, accuracy, and credibility in news reporting. Students cultivate media literacy by learning to recognize and refute disinformation, equipping themselves and future news consumers with tools to navigate the evolving media landscape responsibly and ethically.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Graduates of the School of Journalism and Strategic Media are expected to be able to:

1. Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
3. Demonstrate culturally proficient communication.
4. Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
5. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
7. Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

**Student learning outcomes are based on standards from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC).*

Assessment of Student Learning:

The assessment plan outlines a comprehensive approach to evaluate the learning outcomes and competencies of students in the Advertising/Public Relations (ADPR) and Journalism (JOUR) Bachelor's programs over a five-year period from 2021 to 2025.

- Direct Measures:
 - Midpoint assessments comparing entry-level assignments to final assignments in core courses like JOUR 2013, ADPR 3723, and ADPR 3743 to measure student progress within the program.
 - Capstone course assignments evaluated using rubrics to assess mastery of learning objectives and professional competencies.
- Indirect Measures:
 - Pre and post-tests on grammar, writing skills, and assessment surveys to gauge student learning.
 - Senior exit surveys and internship supervisor evaluations to gather feedback on student preparedness.
 - Alumni and employer surveys to assess program effectiveness in preparing graduates for careers.

3. Assessment Timeline:

- Year 1 (2021-2022): Establish baseline with pre-tests and entry-level assignments.
- Years 2-3 (2022-2024): Conduct midpoint assessments and analyze results.
- Year 4 (2024-2025): Administer post-tests, capstone assessments, and gather internship evaluations.
- Year 5 (2025-2026): Analyze findings, identify areas for improvement, and plan curriculum changes.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

- Faculty in each concentration assess student work using developed rubrics.
- Assessment Committee analyzes data and prepares reports with recommendations.
- School administration and staff coordinate surveys and data collection.

Use of Results:

The plan aims to continuously evaluate and strengthen the curriculum to ensure students master the ACEJMC values and competencies, preparing them for success in their professions.

- Analysis of Findings: In Year 5 (2025-2026), the key focus will be analyzing the findings from the previous four years of data collection and assessments for the 2021-2025 cohort.¹ This will involve:

- Evaluating if the cohort has mastered the learning objectives and professional competencies at an appropriate level across core and concentration courses.
- Identifying weaknesses or areas where student performance did not meet expectations.
- Determining if the curriculum changes introduced for this cohort overcame previously identified weaknesses.
- Curriculum Revisions:
 - Addressing areas where assessment results indicated gaps in student learning or mastery of competencies.
 - Outlining specific changes to courses, assignments, or instructional approaches to enhance student outcomes.
 - Creating a timeline for implementing the proposed curriculum revisions.
- Ongoing Evaluation:
 - Annual alumni surveys to assess how well the program prepared graduates for their careers.
 - Employer surveys conducted every three years to gather feedback from professionals on the job performance of graduates.