

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROGRAM: Communication

SUBMITTED BY: Kimberly Meltzer

DATE: September 27, 2017

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHERE AND HOW ARE DATA AND DOCUMENTS USED TO GENERATE THIS REPORT BEING STORED:

Documents on which this report is based are kept by the assessment report preparer/department co-chair as electronic files in a secure, password protected computer file and drive. Individual faculty members within the program also maintain electronic files and hard copies of the data they've provided from their courses for this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program description from the Course Catalog: Please copy and paste the current year's catalog description of this program. This is generally a one-two paragraph description immediately following the name of the program. Please be sure to include the listing of program outcomes as printed.

The Department of Communication and Media Design offers a cross-disciplinary course of study leading to a bachelor's degree in either communication or media design. The curriculum is grounded in design and communication theory and supports the development of research, writing, critical thinking, and creative practice skills. Students develop the conceptual and practical skills that enable them to create design and communication solutions for the contemporary media environment.

Graduates are prepared for entry-level positions in a range of communication media and design organizations. In addition, the major in communication provides excellent preparation for graduate study in communication, public relations, corporate communication, law, and journalism.

Upon successful completion of the communication major, students will be able to

- demonstrate the effective use of research skills and the ability to gather data from diverse sources;
- demonstrate an understanding of concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve;
- demonstrate oral communication skills and an ability to articulate ideas, feelings, and attitudes to a target audience; and
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

NOTE: The catalog listing and description of the Communication B.A. program needs to be edited to reflect that the Communication program, and the Media Design program, while housed in the same administrative department, are two separate and distinct B.A. programs. To this end, the Communication and Media Design faculty have discussed this with the Dean of Arts & Sciences, the Associate and Assistant Deans, and the Registrar, and changes are planned for the next Catalog year (18-19).



List all of the program’s learning outcomes: (regardless of whether or not they are being assessed this year)

Learning Outcome	Year of Last Assessment	Assessed This Year	Year of Next Planned Assessment
Demonstrate the effective use of research skills in the communication discipline and the ability to gather data from diverse sources such as scholarly, trade, and popular publications and databases.	2015-16	no	20-21
Apply communication concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information	2015-16	no	20-21
Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve	2015-16	no	18-19
Demonstrate oral communication skills and an ability to articulate ideas, feelings and attitudes to a target audience	2014-15	yes	18-19
Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work	No record	yes	18-19

Describe how the program’s outcomes support Marymount’s mission, strategic plan, and relevant school plan:

The Communication major—in support of the university’s mission as well as the strategic plan and the A&S school plan—is designed to foster engagement and intellectual curiosity through active learning and community resources for students seeking a program emphasizing writing, speaking, and relevant technological skills. Graduates complete the Liberal Arts Core as a foundation for developing intellectual as well as practical skills. Our students become critical thinkers who value, pursue, and apply knowledge. The curriculum promotes career preparation and is grounded in communication theory and application of theory and skills to research and professional work. It supports the development of research, writing, and critical thinking. Students develop the conceptual and practical skills that enable them to create, design, and communicate solutions for the contemporary media environment. Students are prepared for career opportunities in mass media (print, broadcast and digital journalism), corporate communications, public relations, and related fields (law, politics, business) as well as graduate studies. The program also offers courses designated as Inquiry (INQ) and Writing Intensive (WI) which support the University’s core competencies. The program also regularly enrolls students in the Internship course (CMD 400) which enables students to gain practical industry experience and apply their academic knowledge in a professional communication setting. The program supports the university’s emphasis on ethical development through courses that educate, and provide opportunities for, students to apply ethical principles related to their work in communication and journalism.

NOTE: The reference for these LOs is the ACEJMC (<https://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/2012%20Assessment%20Guide.pdf>) and the National Communication Association (NCA) LOs in Communication. Following the suggestion in the 15-16 Assessment Plan and report, in Spring 2017, the COM faculty discussed the current learning outcomes, and compared the AEJMC and NCA LOs to consider which LOs are the best fit for the COM curriculum going forward. The COM faculty decided to continue to use the existing LOs for one more cycle (16-17) in order to assess LOs 4 and 5. The AEJMC and NCA LOs will be revisited again in Spring 2018 to determine which LOs to use for the 17-18 assessment cycle. Since the composition of the COM faculty changed greatly



with 2/3 new faculty in the 16-17 year, it was thought best to wait a year before deciding any new direction for the program. **The Comparison Chart of the current COM LOs, NCA LOs, and AEJMC LOs, is attached.**

Provide a brief description of the assessment process used including strengths, challenges and planned improvements and provide evidence of the existence of a culture of continuous improvement based on assessment:

Faculty provide the assessment report preparer/department co-chair with evaluations of research papers and projects and employer evaluations of internships. Per the Director of Institutional Assessment’s recommendation, this report ensures outcomes are assessed in upper division (sophomore through senior level) classes where it is appropriate for students to demonstrate mastery. In addition, the results of a survey of program alumni are evaluated. The report preparer then compiles numerical summaries of the data used in preparing this report. The decision of which course data to use to assess learning outcomes is based on the learning outcomes that were selected for assessment in that academic year’s previous student learning assessment plan, and reflect a decision at the time of the plan to either re-assess the same learning outcomes that were assessed the previous year, or to prioritize and select different outcomes for assessment. The decision to assess different outcomes this year – the two outcomes that were not assessed in 15-16 -- was reached in consultation with the Director of Institutional Assessment.

The 16-17 year was the second in which the new reconfiguration of the department was in effect. The previously separate programs/departments of Communication and Graphic Design merged into a single department of Communication and Media Design with two distinct B.A. majors and programs of study. The 16-17 year was the first for the Communication program and CMD department with two new full-time tenure-line Communication faculty. As mentioned above, with the new faculty composition of the Communication program, and with the new curriculum in its second year, during the 16-17 year, the COM faculty discussed and compared learning outcomes with regard to which ones best reflect the goals of the program. The COM faculty decided to continue to use the existing LOs for one more cycle (16-17) in order to assess LOs 4 and 5. The AEJMC and NCA LOs will be revisited again in Spring 2018 to determine which LOs to use for the 17-18 assessment cycle.

Describe how the program implemented its planned improvements from last year:

Outcome	Planned Improvement	Update <i>(Indicate when, where, and how planned improvement was completed. If planned improvement was not completed, please provide explanation.)</i>
Demonstrate the effective use of research skills and the ability to gather data from diverse sources.	CMD 209 Contemporary Journalism is being taught by a new faculty member this year, with some adjustments to assignments and instruction from last year.	Some of the specific changes to the assignments in the journalism class have included the assignment of two substantial length (1750 word) news articles using the active voice that each follow a process of

		<p>article proposal, drafting, peer review, and revision. Students must interview at least 3 relevant sources for each article. They are instructed about gathering data, conducting research, and interviewing, for stories, and are given opportunities in class to practice.</p>
<p>Demonstrate an understanding of concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eventually a portfolio can be evaluated for the application of theories in the use of images and information. Currently, no COM majors take portfolio (not required yet) • A senior capstone exit survey or a supplemental Graduating Student Survey could be created to be used as a measure for the LO 	<p>The three communication faculty have discussed the option of the formal portfolio course for majors, and have decided to make it optional in the curriculum going forward, although it is still required through the 17-18 academic year. The rationale for this is that students have ample opportunities to create a professional portfolio, both online and offline, through their coursework in Career and Professional Communication, Writing for Digital Media, Contemporary Journalism, and other courses in the major. The materials created from these courses can be used to show prospective employers and graduate schools. The portfolio materials created in these courses can be evaluated in the future for this LO, as well as for LO 5.</p>
<p>Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.</p>	<p>In the 16-17 year, the COM program is seeking approval for two additional courses to be designated Writing Intensive (WI). These courses are CMD 209 (Contemporary Journalism) and CMD 315 (Writing for Digital Media). It is the department's belief that these courses should carry the designation as they meet the WI requirements and support LO3.</p>	<p>The COM program received approval from UCIC during the 16-17 year to designate these two courses as writing intensive (WI). In addition, a new course, CMD 304 Media Criticism, was also approved as WI. The change went into effect in the Fall 2017 semester, and was included in the Catalog.</p> <p>As the UAC review stated, "it will be interesting to see how the inclusion of more WI courses in the major affect both performance and perception of confidence on the part of students in the future."</p>

Provide a response to last year's University Assessment Committee review of the program's learning assessment report:

In response to the UAC's comments on last year's report regarding storage of data, we have streamlined and centralized the data collection and storage process this year, as described above.

UAC 15-16 Comments: *Storage of data seems to be somewhat scattered; as the assessment process matures, perhaps data storage could become more centralized*



This year's report also responds to the UAC's comments from last year with regard to explaining more clearly how our program connects to the university's emphasis on ethical development. Please see description above. We will continue to look for and create service opportunities for our students as well.

UAC 15-16 Comments: *more strongly connect to the university's emphases on service and ethical development*

Without changing the goals and meanings of our learning outcomes, we have made minor wording changes to respond to the UAC's comments:

UAC 15-16 Comments: *#1 - Is there a way to word this outcome so that it references research skills specific to the program? #2- It is possible to drop off the phrase "demonstrate understanding of" because in applying concepts and theories that understanding will (or won't) be apparent. Again, is it possible to word the outcome in such a way as to be specific to the program?*

Outcomes Assessment 2016-2017

Learning Outcome 4: Demonstrate oral communication skills and an ability to articulate ideas, feelings and attitudes to a target audience

Assessment Activity

Outcome Measures <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i>	Performance Standard <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i>	Data Collection <i>Discuss the data collected and student population</i>	Analysis <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i>
CMD 310 Professional and Career Communication: Persuasive presentations in which the students persuade the board/their bosses at their workplaces to change/implement a policy. Evaluated by faculty (direct)	75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented Monroe's Motivated Sequence • PowerPoint slides followed guidelines for effective visual aids given in class • Delivery: effective gestures, movement, pitch, volume, etc. • Research: Use of stats, facts, and citation of sources to back up presentation 	The faculty evaluations of the 12 students who took the course were analyzed.	Four criteria were used in assessing student performance on this LO. Please see detailed breakdown below. 11/12 (92%) students were rated 'Average' or above on the criteria.

<p>CMD 403 Principles of Communication Law: legal brief presentation evaluated by faculty (direct)</p>	<p>75% of students should score above a 'C' or (Average) on the legal brief presentation (see assignment description attached) using the following criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content • Logic • Research and citations • Demonstrated presentation skills 	<p>The legal brief presentation grades of the 14 students who took the course were analyzed.</p>	<p>Four criteria were used in assessing student performance on this LO.</p> <p>14/14 (100%) students scored above a 'C' on the legal brief presentation.</p>
<p>CMD 400 Internship: Performance evaluation by site supervisor; (indirect)</p>	<p>75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the COM Internship Evaluation Sheet for: Oral Communication</p>	<p>The performance evaluations by the internship site supervisors for the 11 students who completed internships were analyzed.</p>	<p>9/11 students (82%) who took the internship course were evaluated as Excellent or Good (6 excellent, 3 good, 2 neutral) on the performance standard "Oral Communication."</p>

Interpretation of Results

Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students (Use both direct and indirect measure results):

CMD 310 Professional and Career Communication - Persuasive Presentations evaluated by faculty (direct)

Please provide your assessment rubric here:	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Implemented Monroe's Motivated Sequence	6	5	1
PowerPoint slides followed guidelines for effective visual aids given in class	6	5	1
Delivery: effective gestures, movement, pitch, volume, etc.	7	4	1
Research: Use of stats, facts, and citation of sources to back up presentation	6	5	1

According to the CMD 310 faculty instructor: Area(s) of strength: Students overall excelled in gaining attention at the beginning of their presentations. Many also had great delivery skills, appearing quite comfortable in front of the class. The students also did an above-average job citing sources/facts/stats to support their claims.

Area(s) of improvement: The most common area of improvement for students was the organization of PowerPoint slides and adhering to guidelines for effective visual aids given in class (e.g., no more than six lines, size 36 font or larger, make sure you don't read off the slides, refer to everything on the slides, etc.).

Additional Comments: Ideally, students would take this class AFTER they had taken CMD 101: Public Speaking, as it builds very well off of concepts taught in that class, and I found myself having to teach CMD 101 concepts again (instead of reviewing them) because so many students hadn't taken it yet. However, because requiring CMD



101 would disqualify non-Communication majors from taking the class, we have chosen not to make it a pre-requisite. Perhaps this can be caught in the advising stage of registration.

The performance standard was that 75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the above criteria (see Assessment rubric above). The performance standard was met and exceeded (92% rated Average or above). However, the faculty instructor's suggestion of having students take CMD 310 after having taken CMD 101 Public Speaking when possible should be discussed by the CMD faculty and recommended when advising students.

CMD 403 Principles of Communication Law – Legal Brief Presentations evaluated by faculty (direct)

14/14 (100%) students scored above a 'C' on the legal brief presentation. 5 students scored 'A,' 5 scored 'A-,' 2 scored 'B+,' 1 'B,' and 1 'B-'

The performance standard was that 75% of students should score above a 'C' or (Average) on the legal brief presentation. The performance standard for the legal brief presentation for LO4 was met and exceeded at 100%. Students who take CMD 403 are mostly seniors, with some juniors. The performance on the briefs presentation assignment in this class demonstrates mastery.

CMD 400 Internship: Performance evaluation by site supervisor; (indirect)

The performance standard (75% rated average or above) for the internship was met and exceeded with 9/11 students (82%) who took the internship course evaluated as Excellent or Good (6 excellent, 3 good, 2 neutral) on the performance standard "Oral Communication." There is room for improvement for this outcome measure.

Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:

All three measures used to assess this LO showed that the performance standard was met and exceeded. However, the faculty instructor's suggestion of having students take CMD 310 after having taken CMD 101 Public Speaking when possible should be discussed by the CMD faculty and recommended when advising students.

Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:

The CMD faculty will advise students when possible to take CMD 310 after having taken CMD 101 Public Speaking, but this is not meant to restrict non-majors and students within the department from taking CMD 310 out of sequence when needed or desired.

Learning Outcome 5: Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

Assessment Activity

<p>Outcome Measures <i>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</i></p>	<p>Performance Standard <i>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</i></p>	<p>Data Collection <i>Discuss the data collected and student population</i></p>	<p>Analysis <i>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</i></p>
<p>CMD 307 Broadcast Writing and Delivery: Voiceover evaluated by faculty; (direct)</p>	<p>75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the following criteria (see Assessment rubric):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures were of good quality/resolution • Timing & Transitions: transitions between pictures was not too rushed or too slow, complimented script • Voiceover was of professional quality—good, clear sound 	<p>The faculty evaluations of the 7 students who took the course were analyzed.</p>	<p>Three criteria were used in assessing student performance on this LO.</p> <p>Please see detailed breakdown below. 7/7 (100%) were rated 'Average' or above on the criteria.</p>
<p>CMD 405 Portfolio: Online Portfolio Assignment (final project) evaluated by faculty (direct)</p>	<p>75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design: creative, polished, communicates clearly about who student is as a professional/person, appropriate images (and resolution) • Navigation: Easy to navigate, all links work, user-friendly • Writing: clear, concise, proper grammar • Information: includes important documents such as resume and writing samples, as well as contact information and social media 	<p>The faculty evaluations of the 7 students who took the course were analyzed.</p>	<p>Four criteria were used in assessing student performance on this LO.</p> <p>Please see detailed breakdown below. 7/7 (100%) were rated 'Average' or above on the criteria.</p>

	links (if relevant)		
2016 Alumni Survey (indirect)	A response rate of 75% agree for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology effectively in a workplace environment 	16 responses to this item on the 2016 Alumni Survey Results for Communication majors were analyzed.	81.3% of alumni who answered this question on the survey said “good or excellent.”

Interpretation of Results

Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students (*Use both direct and indirect measure results*):

CMD 307 Broadcast Writing and Delivery- Voiceover evaluated by faculty (direct)

Please provide your assessment rubric here:	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Pictures were of good quality/resolution	4	3	
Timing & Transitions: transitions between pictures was not too rushed or too slow, complimented script	3	4	
Voiceover was of professional quality—good, clear sound	4	3	

According to the CMD 307 faculty instructor:

Briefly describe project(s) being evaluated: Students will create and voiceover 1.5-minute still picture videos. Students must interview a Marymount University student and create a human-interest piece. The video should use images and voiceover to present someone’s achievements or how someone has overcome a major obstacle. The goal of human interest pieces is to present the story in a way that motivates the audience and/or invites them to become interested in the story. Students must come up with an interesting and compelling story about their interviewee.

Area(s) of strength: Students were quick to learn how to use iMovie in the lab to make their voiceover/audio slideshow projects. All of them successfully combined audio files with jpegs to produce short movies. Their use of the technology to edit their voices and the photos was impressive.

Area(s) of improvement: Some students struggled to find/use photos that were high resolution/good quality, which makes the projects appear less professional. Some of the students also had some rough transitions or lingered on certain photos too long.

Additional Comments:

Overall, I was generally impressed with how quickly students were able to combine their audio recordings with iMovie, a platform that most of them had never used before. With the exception of some low-resolution images that were a bit too pixelated (especially when viewed on the large screen in class), the students successfully used technology to enhance their storytelling.

The performance standard was that 75% of students should be rated ‘Average’ or above on the above criteria. The performance standard was met and exceed 7/7 (100%).



CMD 405 Portfolio- Online Portfolio Assignment (final project) evaluated by faculty (direct)

Please provide your assessment rubric here:	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Design: creative, polished, communicates clearly about who student is as a professional/person, appropriate images (and resolution)	4	3	
Navigation: Easy to navigate, all links work, user-friendly	4	3	
Writing: clear, concise, proper grammar	4	3	
Information: includes important documents such as resume and writing samples, as well as contact information and social media links (if relevant)	4	3	

According to the CMD 405 faculty instructor:

Briefly describe project(s) being evaluated: As the final project in this senior year course, students were to create an entry-level online portfolio using a site such as WiX, Squarespace, BLUE Domain, or WordPress.com. Sites are to contain relevant information (e.g., name, contact info, social media links, resume, projects, writing samples, relevant skills, etc.) that potential employers would like to access when looking at job candidates. The skills necessary to create an online portfolio demonstrate students' expertise in communicating on online platforms.

Area(s) of strength: Students were quite comfortable with the online platforms, wrote very well, and had many outstanding samples of their work (e.g., linked videos, blogs, write-ups).

Area(s) of improvement: Some of the site layouts were lacking in design, including: choice of font/background, placement of contact info, placement of headshot. Some of the buttons/links were not active on their sites, and many of the students uploaded Word docs instead of PDFs.

Additional Comments: Overall, I was very impressed with these portfolios. The students did a great job creating very unique, personalized, and professional portfolios. The areas of improvement are minor compared to their strengths, and the skills obtained to make an online portfolio will make them very marketable.

The performance standard was that 75% of students should be rated 'Average' or above on the above criteria. The performance standard was met and exceeded: 7/7 (100%).

2016 Communication Alumni Survey - Use technology effectively in a workplace environment

The Alumni survey results met and exceeded the 75% performance standard (81.3%)

Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:

All three measures for this LO met and exceeded the performance standard.

Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:



As communication technology continues to improve and change, as does its application in the workplace, the CMD faculty, and Communication faculty in particular, will continue to evaluate and discuss the skills students should be developing and mastering in their courses in order to apply the appropriate tools and technologies in their current and future work.

Appendices (attached as separate electronic files)

The Comparison Chart of the current COM LOs, NCA LOs, and AEJMC LOs

CMD 310 Persuasive Presentations Evaluation

CMD 403 Legal Brief Assignment Description

CMD 400 Internship Site Supervisor Evaluation Spreadsheets (FA '16, SP '17, SU '17)

CMD 307 Voiceover Evaluation

CMD 405 Online Portfolio Evaluation

2016 Communication Alumni Survey



Curriculum Map

These will be sent for review and feedback to the Liberal Arts Core Committee.

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM MAP

Degree Program: Communication

Year: 2016-17

Program Outcomes:

Program Outcome	Critical Thinking	Inquiry	Information Literacy	Written Communication
Demonstrate the effective use of research skills in the communication discipline and the ability to gather data from diverse sources such as scholarly, trade, and popular publications and databases.		X	X	
Apply communication concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information	X	X	X	
Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve				X
Demonstrate oral communication skills and an ability to articulate ideas, feelings and attitudes to a target audience	X			
Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work			X	

Curriculum Map:

For each course, indicate which competencies are included using the following key. Please refer to the director of assessment in Planning and Institutional Effectiveness if you need more detailed explanation of the four core competencies.

Level of instruction: I – Introduced, R-reinforced and opportunity to practice, M-mastery at the senior or exit level

Assessment: PR-project, P-paper, E-exam, O-oral presentation, I-internship, OT-other (explain briefly)

Required Course	Critical Thinking		Inquiry		Information Literacy		Written Communication	
	Level	Assess	Level	Assess	Level	Assess	Level	Assess
CMD 100 Intro to Media Comm.	I	P, E			I	P	I	P
CMD101 Public Speaking	I	O						

CMD 102 Visual Communication & Design	I	PR						
CMD206 Intro. Public Relations	R	PR			R	PR	R	PR
CMD209 Contemporary Journalism	R	PR, P	R	PR, P	R	PR, P	R	P
CMD 425 Sr. Seminar In Communication	M	P, E	M	P	M	P	M	P
CMD 400 Internship	M	I	M	I	M	I	M	I