

**Assessment Process:**  
**Dept. of Communication Undergraduate Degree Program**

**Identifying Information**

**School/College:** Liberal Arts & Sciences

**Undergraduate Degree/Major Program Name:** Bachelor of Arts/Communication

**Faculty Director Contact/Title:** John Caughlin, Acting Head

**Contact Information:** caughlin@illinois.edu, 217-333-4340

**Step 1: Assessment administration in the department**

1. **Who will lead the assessment work?**

The department head will assign a faculty member to be the Outcomes Assessment Coordinator. This faculty member will ensure that assessment activities occur as planned. The actual work will involve combined effort from the Outcomes Assessment Coordinator, Head, Associate Head, Advisory Committee (elected from among the faculty), and Academic Advisors.

2. **How will assessment information be shared within the department/program?**

The information gathered from the assessment will first be shared with the department Advisory Committee, including the Associate Head, who has primary responsibility for decisions about undergraduate course offerings, scheduling, and curriculum. A summary of main findings will be discussed annually at a faculty meeting.

3. **What is the plan for production of an annual summary report?**

The faculty member assigned to lead the assessment will produce a report annually for review at a faculty meeting. This faculty member will consult with the department head, advisory committee, and academic advisors when preparing the report.

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**Step 2: Student Learning Outcomes**

In this section, please **list** the program's student learning outcomes.

- Look to the campus student learning outcomes as a resource for program-level outcomes. Not all campus learning outcomes need to be present in the program outcomes, and a program may have more than one outcome under a campus outcome.
- The learning outcomes should represent what students are able to do or know as a result of the program.
- Most programs have 3 to 5 learning goals. Space to list the program learning outcomes is available below; add rows as necessary.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate competence in oral and written communication, including public speaking, argumentation and reasoning, deliberation, and media analysis and critique.
2. Students will have broad knowledge of communication research and theory and understand how to apply theoretical concepts in practical settings.
3. Students will understand the political and social import of communication and develop competencies required to engage productively with discourses related to all aspects of public and private life.
4. Students will understand the communicative implications of human diversity, including issues related to race, culture, class, religion, gender, sexual identity, and disability.
5. Students will gain communication competencies that afford them rewarding opportunities, such as satisfying employment or post-graduate study.

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**Step 3: Undergraduate Degree Program Curriculum Mapping**

This worksheet, or similar document, **must be included** with the submission of the program's assessment plan.

- **Learning Outcomes** – Enter the academic degree program learning outcomes identified in the assessment plan on the top row of the following chart. Feel free to add columns if the academic degree/major program has more than five learning goals.
- **Degree/Major Program Courses/Experiences** – List all degree requirements (in some cases co-curricular experiences may also be included if required by every student). Feel free to add rows as needed.
- Indicate where the course or learning experience contributes to each of the learning goals. Courses may contribute to multiple learning goals.
  - May indicate with an X
  - Or, A= Attained; R= Reinforced; M= Mastered, (F) = Formal Feedback w Graded work and rubric

<b>Curriculum Map</b>					
<b><u>Degree Program Courses or Experiences</u></b>	Learning Outcome #1	Learning Outcome #2	Learning Outcome #3	Learning Outcome #4	Learning Outcome #5
CMN 101	X				
CMN 102		X	X		
CMN 111/112	X				
CMN 115	X				X
CMN 210			X	X	
CMN 211	X				X
CMN 212		X			X
CMN 213					
CMN 220	X		X		
CMN 230		X	X		
CMN 231		X	X		
CMN 232		X		X	
CMN 260		X		X	
CMN 275		X	X	X	
CMN 277		X	X		
CMN 280		X	X		
CMN 310		X	X		
CMN 320		X	X		
CMN 321		X	X		
CMN 323	X		X		
CMN 325		X	X		

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CMN 326		X	X		
CMN 336		X	X		
CMN 338		X	X		
CMN 340		X	X		
CMN 345		X	X		
CMN 361		X		X	
CMN 362		X		X	
CMN 368		X	X	X	
CMN 370		X	X	X	
CMN 375		X		X	
CMN 377		X	X		
CMN 396 (varies)		X			
CMN 410		X			X
CMN411		X			X
CMN 412		X	X		X
CMN 413		X	X		
CMN 415		X	X		
CMN 416		X	X		
CMN 417		X	X		
CMN 421		X	X		
CMN 423	X	X	X		
CMN 424	X	X	X		
CMN 427		X	X		
CMN 429		X	X	X	
CMN 432		X	X	X	
CMN 435		X	X		
CMN 437		X	X		
CMN 450		X	X		
CMN 462		X	X	X	
CMN 463		X	X		
CMN 464	X	X	X		
CMN 465	X	X	X		
CMN 467		X	X	X	
CMN 476		X	X		
CMN 496 (varies)		X	X		
Teaching Internships/ CMN 204	X				X

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Professional Internships/CMN 304		X			X
Research Internships/CMN 199 & CMN 390		X			X

*\*Add additional rows as needed to capture all requirements.*

*Minimally, all of the courses required to complete the major degree program should be listed. Optionally, elective courses may be included in addition to the required courses.*

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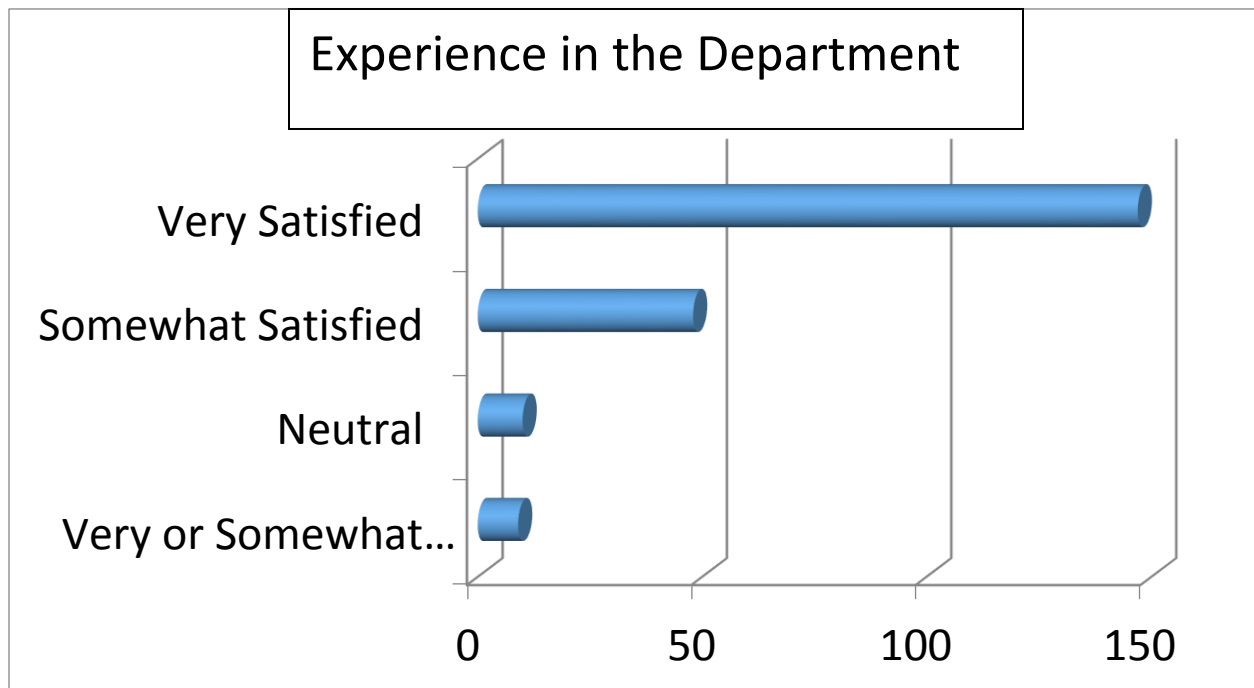
### Step 4: Previous Assessment Activities

What use has your program made of assessment evidence (formally or informally collected) in the last 5 years? Please outline what actions (if any) that your program has taken in the last five years that responded to assessment evidence. The actions may include: any changes that impact the degree program, such as changes to curriculum, instruction strategies, or co-curricular activities (such as internships, study abroad) **and** any decision to continue a current practice that evidence shows is effective. Please also explain what evidence was used to inform your department's practice.

#### Assessment Evidence Examined in last 5 years

1. Illini Success Survey. (Examined annually.) We have paid close attention to the data on first placement and salary data. In the most recent report (2015-2016), approximately 87% of our graduates had secured a first destination by the time of the survey (with 80% being employed and 7% pursuing further education).
2. Communication Convocation Survey. (Examined annually.) For at least a decade, we have conducted a survey of majors as they graduate. This was a physical questionnaire until three years ago, when we moved the survey online. Students are now asked to complete the survey when they register for convocation. The questions in the survey ask about descriptive information (e.g., year when declared major, plans after graduation) and about student's perceptions of the university and department (e.g., their experience with the Department of Communication).

In our most recent data from May 2016, 3 students reported being very dissatisfied, 6 reported being somewhat dissatisfied, 10 were neutral, 48 were somewhat satisfied, and 147 were very satisfied.



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3. Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES). (Examined each semester.) The Head and Associate Head examine the summary data for every instructor in the department each semester. In instances when an instructor receives subpar evaluations, the Head or Associate Head discusses the scores with the instructor's immediate supervisor to determine what intervention, if any, is warranted. Teaching supervisors in the department often work with instructors on pedagogical improvements, and it is also common for instructors to be encouraged to work with the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) for consultations on ensuring that instructors are fostering student learning.

4. Focus Groups with Majors. (To be conducted in Spring of even numbered years.) We have occasionally conducted focus groups with selected majors, such as students involved in our Communication Leaders group. Going forward, our plan is to conduct the focus groups on a biennial basis. We will continue to draw on the Communication Leaders for some of our focus groups, but we will expand this to include a broader range of students, such as including members of the Communication Association. Unlike our Communication Leaders group (which is competitively selected), the Communication Association is open to all majors who wish to have involvement in the department.

### **Actions Taken Based on Assessment Evidence**

1. Increased focus on Communication Internship Program—Although students can complete internships in a variety of ways, feedback from our student leaders suggested an interest in more opportunities focused on communication. Additionally, the senior survey data revealed that fewer students were completing internships than we thought ideal. Thus, in 2014, we doubled the amount of faculty time devoted to our in-house internship program with the goal of expanding it.

Since 2014, participation in our internship program has increased 45% (to 86 students in the year ending in May 2017). Our most recent communication convocation survey showed that 163 out of 251 (67%) of respondents completed some internship during their time at Illinois.

2. Hired new faculty member in new media and computational social science—In discussions with students, one of the most common requests is for additional coursework in new communication technologies and/or big data approaches to studying communication. Our own assessment of the field and job opportunities also suggested a need for more course offerings in this area. We therefore made hiring in this area a focus in AY 2016-2017 and are pleased to have a new faculty member joining us who studies the fragmentation of new media using computational data analytics. We believe the courses he plans on designing will be crucial to our curriculum going forward.

### **Planned Additions or Modifications to Assessment Practices**

1. Additional items for Communication Convocation Survey. (to be examined annually.) Although we have long asked general questions about students' experiences, we plan to add questions that specifically assess each of our student learning outcomes. We expect that this will provide data that will help us identify areas that need more focus and/or clarity. Specifically, we will use 5-

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point Likert type items (with 1 indicating “disagree strongly,” 2 indicating “disagree,” 3 indicating “neutral,” 4 indicating “agree,” and 5 indicating “strong agree”), and we will ask students to respond to the following: “For the following statements, indicate the degree to which you agree with each now that you are finishing your degree in Communication.” The items will be:

Item	Outcome
1. I am competent in oral communication.	1
2. I am competent in written communication.	1
3. I have a broad knowledge of communication research and theory.	2
4. I understand how to apply communication research and theory to practical settings.	2
5. I have a sophisticated understanding of the political and social import of communication.	3
6. I am capable of engaging productively with discourses related to all aspects of public and private life.	3
7. I understand the communicative implications of human diversity.	4
8. I have communication competencies that will help me find rewarding opportunities (such as employment or further education).	5

2. Utilize Items from Chancellor’s Senior Survey. (to be examined annually.) Our understanding is that the data from the Chancellor’s Senior Survey will soon be made available to us at the department level. Given that several of our student learning outcomes are aligned with the campus student learning outcomes, the campus-level data will be useful for a variety of reasons; for example, the Chancellor’s Senior Survey is likely to capture some of the students who do not complete our survey. Additionally, the Chancellor’s Senior Survey includes several questions relevant to each of the campus student learning outcomes that we anticipate will provide us useful information about more specific aspects of our student learning outcomes. For instance, the questions assessing the fourth campus-level student learning outcome are also relevant to our fourth outcome about communication and human diversity. The specific items related to this outcome respond to the stem “I have learned to...” and include:

- ...work in diverse teams
- ...engage in thoughtful discussions about cultural differences with my friends
- ... explore diverse ideas from various perspectives (e.g., cultures, economics, genders, abilities, and other interests)
- ... appreciate the contributions, issues, and histories of social and cultural groups other than my own

3. Observations of Presentations in Upper Level Courses. (to be conducted biennially in the Spring of even numbered years.) Many of our upper-level courses are populated primarily by majors, and most of them include required presentations. By the time students are in such courses, we expect that most of them will be able to deliver competent presentations. To assess this systematically, we will select upper-level courses that require presentations and independently observe a sample of the presentations. These will be assessed with respect to standard characteristics of good speaking, including: (a) quality of delivery, (b) organizational clarity, (c) quality of argument, and (d) evidence of audience adaptation. Additional criteria will be considered depending on the specific requirements of the assignment. Our expectation is that the majority of students in upper level courses will rated as excellent overall, and at least 75% will be considered satisfactorily competent.



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**Step 5: Assessment Planning**

What questions, issues, or concerns about student learning in the degree program do you want to address? Looking at your program’s student learning outcomes write at *least three questions* you would like to pursue to learn more about student learning at the program level. Describe what information you need to answer the questions and the timeline it would take you to answer the question. While not every learning outcome needs to be assessed every year, all need to be assessed over a 5-8 year period. The expectation is for some assessment work to take place every year, such as collecting evidence, interpreting evidence, or implementing changes. Add more rows if needed.

<b>Question 1:</b>	What percentage of our majors attain competency in oral presentations?	
	Student Learning Outcome:	1
	Sources/Methods for acquiring evidence:	Communication Convocation Survey, Observations of Presentations in Upper Level Courses
	Timeline:	Start Spring 2018, ongoing (will review biennially)
<b>Question 2:</b>	Does the curriculum provide sufficient preparation to afford graduates with rewarding opportunities? How can we enhance this aspect of our major?	
	Student Learning Outcome:	5
	Sources/Methods for acquiring evidence:	Illini Success Survey, Focus Groups with Majors, Communication Convocation Survey
	Timeline:	Start Spring 2018, ongoing (will review biennially)
<b>Question 3:</b>	Do our majors learn to understand the communicative implications of human diversity?	
	Student Learning Outcome:	4
	Sources/Methods for acquiring evidence:	Chancellor’s Senior Survey (see items listed in Step 4), Communication Convocation Survey, Focus Groups with Majors
	Timeline:	Start Spring 2018, ongoing (will review biennially)
<b>Question 4:</b>	Do our majors learn to engage productively with public and private discourses?	
	Student Learning Outcome:	3
	Sources/Methods for acquiring evidence:	Communication Convocation Survey, Focus Groups with Majors
	Timeline:	Start Spring 2018, ongoing (will review biennially)