

Weber State University
Biennial Report on Assessment of Student Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Communication
Academic Year of Report: 2021 and 22 (covering Summer 2020 through Spring 2022)
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The Institutional Effectiveness website hosts a page for each program that displays assessment reports and information. All available biennial assessment and program review reports are located at the bottom of the program's page on our site. As a part of the biennial report process, we ask that you please review your page for completeness and accuracy, and indicate below the changes that need to be made.

Program page link: <https://www.weber.edu/ie/Results/Communication.html>

A. Mission Statement

Information is current; no changes required.

B. Student Learning Outcomes

Information is current; no changes required.

C. Curriculum Grid

Information is current; no changes required.

D. Program and Contact Information

Information is current; no changes required.

E. Assessment Plan

Information is current; no changes required.

Update if not current:

We are in a transitional process of collecting data and changing the scale so this report is not as robust. Furthermore, the transition of department chairs and the impact of covid with more remote work added to challenges of assessment in a transitional time. Two main changes have been made with regard to the assessment plan. First, we are no longer using a 5-point scale and tying assessment to just one class assignment with regard to the student learning outcomes. Instead, we are using a 3-point scale (3-Exceeds expectations, 2-Meets expectations, 1-Does not meet expectations). Instead of tying assessment to just one final class assignment, faculty are expected to assess each student with this new scale once the semester ends. Faculty, may draw on the final assignment. However, we found this might be a little narrow to find one assignment to assess all the student learning outcomes connected to the course. Second, we are attempting to identify courses that can act as

an early benchmark in each emphasis area in the department and then more of a capstone course. For example, COMM 1130 Media Writing would act as a benchmark for the Multimedia Journalism emphasis area and COMM 4130 In-depth & Investigative Journalism is the capstone course. We hope to compare the assessment data from those two courses as a bit of a pre/posttest model to measure improvement. In each emphasis area, entry benchmark classes have been identified and capstone courses have been identified. We still plan to use COMM 3000 Communication Theory, a course all emphasis areas take, and COMM 4990 Senior Seminar as the capstone course for all majors as central to the assessment plan. These two courses will be the main focus of this assessment report as well as COMM 1020 Principles of Public Speaking and COMM 2110 Small Group and Interpersonal Communication. Ultimately, we hope to assess each emphasis area based on this benchmark and capstone data. However, COMM 3000 and COMM 4990 provide a strong analysis of the program.

Timeline/Plan

Faculty were asked to follow [the screen capture](#) of how to upload the rubric into their canvas course in Fall of 2021. In the past faculty were expected to create the rubric themselves. Over the Summer of 2021 the Office of Institutional Effectiveness created the pre-loaded rubrics to match our student learning outcomes so faculty just needed to upload the rubric. The following courses were identified: 1020, 1130, 1140, 2110, 3000, 3350, 3650, 4890, 4990, 3130, 4130, 4760, 3550, 2250, 3400, 4400, 3050, 3750, 3060, 3085, 3120, and 3820.

Future Plan

The data from the above courses was not as consistent to create large enough sample sizes for degree emphasis level assessment. Enough data was present from COMM 3000 and COMM 4990 along with COMM 1020 and COMM 2110. Moving forward, a faculty meeting/workshop time will be implemented to verify that faculty have indeed uploaded the rubric. Also, reminders for faculty to complete the assessment at the end of the semester will also be completed. Faculty were honest that at the end of the semester once grades are submitted completing additional assessment was easy to forget. Furthermore, discussion about how to evaluate on a three-point scale will be discussed for each course. This will help to create stronger intercoder reliability.

F. Student Achievement

Additive Program Unit Percentages

Data for the most recent three years reflect in-progress students and may change over time

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
In 1 Year or Less	58%	45%	44%	58%	50%	52%	10%
In 2 Years or Less	80%	69%	68%	81%	73%	57%	10%
In 3 Years or Less	83%	73%	74%	84%	76%	57%	10%
At Any Point	86%	80%	79%	84%	76%	57%	10%
Has Not Graduated	14%	20%	21%	16%	24%	43%	90%

From 2015-16 through 2019-20, this program has a 74.2% completion within 2 years of 90 CH. Starting Fall 2021 the program has begun an advising week called “shark week,” where faculty do outreach to engage advising and staying on track. This event happens each Fall and Spring to promote registration. Furthermore, recruit efforts are underway to do outreach to students who have 90 credits and have stopped out.

G: Evidence of Learning

G.A: Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major

G.B Evidence of Learning Worksheet: Courses within the Major – Copy as needed (see appendix for alternative format)

Course:

Semester taught:

Sections included:

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	“Closing the Loop”
Learning Outcome 1: Writing	<p>Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p> <p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p> <p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>COMM 3000 Rubric across 5 sections (Sp 21-2 sections, Su-21, Sp-22) N=109 students</p>	Measure 1: Students will be at a 70% mastery level	Measure 1: 80.7% Mastered level (meets or exceeds expectations)	Measure 1: See below for summary	See below for summary	See below for summary
	<p>Measure 2: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p>	Measure 2: Students will be at a 80% mastery level	Measure 2: 81.0% Mastered level (meets or exceeds expectations)	Measure 2:		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	"Closing the Loop"
	<p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p> <p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>COMM 4990 Rubric across 3 sections (Sp 21, Fa 21, Sp 22) N=58 students</p>					
Learning Outcome 2: Diversity	<p>Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p> <p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p> <p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>3000 Rubric across 5 sections (Sp 21-2 sections, Su-21, Sp-22)</p>	Measure 1: Students will be at a 70% mastery level	Measure 1: 93.5% Mastered level or above	Measure 1:		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	"Closing the Loop"
	N=109 students					
	<p>Measure 2: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p> <p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p> <p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>COMM 4990 Rubric across 3 sections (Sp 21, Fa 21, Sp 22) N=58 students</p>	Measure 2: Students will be at a 80% mastery level	Measure 2: 91.3% Mastered level or above	Measure 2:		
Learning Outcome 3: Critical Thinking	<p>Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p> <p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p>	Measure 1: Students will be at a 70% mastery level	Measure 1: 90.8% Mastered at meets or exceeds	Measure 1:		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	"Closing the Loop"
	<p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>3000 Rubric across 5 sections (Sp 21-2 sections, Su-21, Sp-22) N=109 students</p>					
	<p>Measure 2: COMM 4990 Rubric across 3 sections (Sp 21, Fa 21, Sp 22) N=58 students</p>	<p>Measure 2: Students will be at a 80% mastery level</p>	<p>Measure 2: 82.7% Mastered at meets or exceeds</p>	<p>Measure 2:</p>		
<p>Learning Outcome 4: Speaking</p>	<p>Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p> <p>Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas.</p> <p>The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then</p>	<p>Measure 1: Students will be at a 70% mastery level</p>	<p>Measure 1: 91.6% Mastered at meets or exceeds</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p>		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	"Closing the Loop"
	<p>pulls the data for analysis.</p> <p>Rubric across COMM 1020 Principles of Public Speaking (Fa 21 1 section), Sp 22, 3 sections)</p> <p>COMM 2110 (Fa 21, 4 sections), (Sp 22, 4 sections)</p> <p>N=312 students</p>					
	<p>Measure 2: COMM 4990 Rubric across 3 sections (Sp 21, Fa 21, Sp 22)</p> <p>N=58 students</p>	<p>Measure 2: Students will be at a 80% mastery level</p>	<p>Measure 2: 86.2% Mastered at meets or exceeds</p>	<p>Measure 2:</p>		
Learning Outcome 5: Career Readiness	<p>Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.</p>	<p>Measure 1: Students will be at a 70% mastery level</p>	<p>Measure 1: 85.7% Mastered at meets or exceeds expectations</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p>		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major						
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	"Closing the Loop"
	Faculty assess the assessment rubric in Canvas. The Office of Intuitional Effectiveness then pulls the data for analysis. Rubric COMM 3150 Research Methods (one section, Sp 21) COMM 3400 Introduction to PR (one section, Fa 21) N=28 students					
	Measure 2: COMM 4990 Rubric across 3 sections (Sp 21, Fa 21, Sp 22) N=58 students	Measure 2: Students will be at a 80% mastery level	Measure 2: 84.4% Mastered at meets or exceeds	Measure 2:		

*Direct and indirect: at least one measure per objective must be a direct measure.

Additional narrative (optional – use as much space as needed):

Overall, the plan was to find benchmark courses at which students would be at a 70% threshold of mastery of meeting and exceeding expectations. Then, the measure two would be later in the program and students would be at a 80% threshold of mastery of meeting and exceeding. This data showed that for the most part at measure 1 students were well above the 70% threshold and the growth from measure 1 to measure 2 was not in an increase by 10%. Rather, the measurement between measure 1 to measure 2 was about the same or slightly lower at measure 2. Thus, to close the loop we need to discuss how to assess students more clearly with faculty. Perhaps, students

maintaining a 80% threshold throughout the program with an understanding that expectations increase from lower-division to upper-division courses would provide a better measure compared to expecting a 10% increase form 70% to 80%.

Also, we need to vary some of the measurements to include more indirect measures from internship surveys and exit surveys. This is another area for data gathering that is in a transitional period with faculty retirements. In the past ePortfolio data was also used in COMM 4990 and this may be revisited to evaluate the learning outcomes.

Appendix A

Most departments or programs receive a number of recommendations from their Five/Seven-Year Program Review processes. This page provides a means of updating progress towards the recommendations the department/program is enacting.

Date of Program Review: Feb. 2020	Recommendation	Progress Description
Recommendation 1	Increase graduation rate	This topic will be revisited. Overall, university course enrollment has declined so we are also working on recruitment. We have created advising outreach events in the week to get students registered to stay on track.
Recommendation 2	Increase recruitment	Created an ambassador program for current students to discuss the major in general education courses and in the high school.
Recommendation 3	Better track students after graduation	This program review was completed just as the campus was being hit head on with Covid and closures. This will be revisited.
Recommendation 4	Many general education courses taught by adjuncts and could have more instructor or tenure-track instructors for consistency.	Starting Fall 2021, a 3-year instructor line was created to cover course release and to cover general education. We hope to maintain this instructor line. Starting Fall 2022, an additional instructor line was added at a 5/5 teaching load to

		cover primarily general educational courses.
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Appendix B

Please provide the following information about the full-time *and adjunct faculty* contracted by your department during the last academic year (summer through spring). Gathering this information each year will help with the headcount reporting that must be done for the final Five-Year Program Review document that is shared with the State Board of Regents.

Faculty Headcount	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)				
Full-time Tenured	7	9	9	9
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	8	9	8	9
Part-time and adjunct	3	3	3	4
With Master's Degrees				
Full-time Tenured				
Full-time Non-Tenured	8	6	7	6
Part-time and adjunct	22	22	22	22
With Bachelor's Degrees				
Full-time Tenured	0	0		0
Full-time Non-tenured	0	0		0
Part-time and adjunct	0	0		0
Other				
Full-time Tenured				
Full-time Non-tenured				
Part-time				
Total Headcount Faculty				
Full-time Tenured	7	7		9
Full-time Non-tenured	16	16		15
Part-time	25	25		26

Please respond to the following questions.

- 1) Looking back at your previous biennial report where you identified strategies for improvement, what progress has been made in implementing improvements?

We have started to shift away from a singular course model to a more comprehensive approach. The goal is to look at progression in each emphasis area and the program as a whole.

- 2) Please take a few minutes to review the new DFWI dashboard in the Report Gallery. This dashboard allows you to see the percentage of students in each course who earn a D+, D, D-, E, W, UW, or NC grade. The data can be filtered by several parameters. Reflect on the DFWI rates overall and of your underserved minority students versus your Caucasian students:

- a. What are you seeing?

COMM 4890 Communication Internship comes up with a high Inc rate, but this is not problematic as we want to be flexible to students who need more time to complete the internship hours. Often students spread the 150 hours over two semesters. COMM 3130 News Reporting & Writing had 20% with a grade of C- or lower. This was the highest percentage. As a writing course, this could be a struggle for some students. A follow up meeting with instructors for this course will be completed.

- b. What concerns you?

Gen Ed courses like COMM 1020 and 2010 had rates of 23.6% and 25% at C- or lower for Black or African American. This is the highest rate for any demographic. This is still lower compared to some other general education courses across campus. Rates for C- or lower trend slightly higher for online delivery compared to face to face for some courses.

- c. What additional data could be beneficial?

Not sure what more data would be beneficial, but resources on support for diverse students and online delivery methods. Roughly 8 faculty are completing the ACUE Inclusive Learning for Equitable Teaching and we hope to reflect on some of the tools in the training to address these issues. Summer 2022 a workshop for concurrent and adjuncts instructors focused on inclusive teaching practices so hopefully these supportive measures will be reflected in future data.

3) We have invited you to re-think your program assessment. What strategies are you considering? What support or help would you like?

We need to reflect on the amount of student learning outcomes. We could scale back and eliminate some that are more minor like history. We need to do a better job to reflect at what point the student learning outcome is introduced, emphasized, and mastered. Then, make sure the courses used in assessment are appropriate as pre/posttest models. Also, we need to revisit “varies” with course content when labelled on the curriculum grid to gather more data.

It might also be a bit ambitious to measure all 7 emphasis areas every 2 years. We should still capture data points from COMM 3000 and COMM 4990 along with entry level courses like COMM 1020 Principles of Public Speaking and COMM 2110 Small Group and Interpersonal Communication. However, program assessment could be conducted on a rotating basis to analyze a few emphasis areas so that by the time the more extensive report is due we have a solid working assessment system.

In the past we have used ePortfolios as an assessment piece in COMM 4990 Senior Seminar. It would be beneficial to revisit this assessment instrument. As we revisit assessing these Portfolios, any additional feedback on best practices in ePortfolio use and assessment would be very welcome.