

Weber State University
Biennial Report on Assessment of Student Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Master of Professional Communication
Academic Year of Report: 2019/20 (covering Summer 2017 through Spring 2020)
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We have updated the Institutional Effectiveness website, which includes an update for each program page. All Biennial Assessment and Program Review reports will now be available on a single page. Please review your page for completeness and accuracy, and indicate on the list below the changes that need to be made. Access your program page from the top-level [results](#) page. Select the appropriate college and then your program from the subsequent page.

A. Mission Statement

Information is current; no changes required.

Update if not current:

B. Student Learning Outcomes

Information is current; no changes required.

Update if not current:

At the end of their study at WSU, students in this program will:

1. ... Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.
2. ... Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.
3. ... Demonstrate critical thinking and cultural competence in applied communication contexts.
4. ... Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.
5. ... Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – strategic communication, organizational communication and media.

C. Curriculum (please note, we are using Google Sheets for this section so that updates are easier to make)

Information is current; no changes required.

We updated with your office while working on this report. Thank you!

D. Program and Contact Information

Information is current; no changes required.

Update if not current:

E. Assessment Plan (please see our website for details on how to develop a [program assessment plan](#))

Information is current; no changes required.

Update if not current: (this update can be via a Google Sheet if that is easiest; we can then embed the Google Sheet on your program web page, as we do with the curriculum grid) **See attached as a second file on this email. Happy to put this in a Google Sheet if the Committee Prefers.**

New: [High Impact Educational Experiences](#) in the Curriculum

In response to the recent USHE requirement that all students have at least 1 HIEE in the first 30 credit hours and 1 HIEE in the major or minor we are asking programs to map HIEEs to curriculum using a traditional curriculum grid. This helps demonstrate how and where these goals are accomplished.

NOTE: this formula only fits us in some ways as a Master's Program. For instance, our entire program is 33 credit hours, so of course our students take at least one HIEE in their first 30 credits. In addition, some of our practices (like Graduate Research Projects) don't perfectly fit these definitions (e.g. I'm not sure why "undergraduate research" is listed as a HIEE, but "graduate research" is not). But, we do engage in high impact practices.

For instance, if we use Kuh (2008)'s definitions¹, all of our students are required to engage in at least one writing intensive course (MPC 6150 Professional Writing) and to produce at least one original research experience (in MPC 6700 Research Methods). Beyond those classes, we feel

¹ https://apps.weber.edu/wsuiimages/oie/Support%20Documents/Kuh_HighImpactActivities.pdf

strongly that as a professional communication program, our students are “encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences” and our classes are structured to encourage “early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research” (Kuh, 2008).

In addition, our program is very applied and students are regularly asked to complete projects with and for real-world community partners. For instance, in MPC 6150 (Professional Writing) not only do students have to produce professional writing projects for real community clients, students are required to find a professional reviewer who writes in their chosen communication genre to provide them professional feedback on their client product. Similarly, in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation), students are regularly required to conduct focus groups in partnership with community partners: they design the focus groups in collaboration with those partners and deliver a feedback report to the partner upon the project’s completion. As a result, we strongly believe our students are given “direct experience [application] with issues they are studying in the curriculum” and that they “have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences” (Kuh, 2008).

Many of our courses require intensive, scaffolded, semester-long projects in which students receive consistent formative feedback across the course of the semester. One example is MPC 6010/6700 (Theory and Research Methods) where students complete a semester-long project designing, collecting, analyzing and writing an original research project. Other examples include MPC 6300 (New Media) and 6350 (Visual Communication) in which students produce visual and digital communication products using multimedia tools through semester-long hands on projects with consistent feedback. These products are frequently disseminated publicly as well.

Finally, though not all students complete a final project/thesis, we do make that option available to students. These experiences “require students nearing the end of their [graduate program] years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned” (Kuh, 2008). Our students have produced a wide array of professional final projects including training & development programs, technical writing manuals, branding packages, PR campaigns, and other products. In all cases, students are combining skills in professional writing, research and analysis, visual communication, strategy, etc. to create these culminating works.

Courses	Department/Program use of High Impact Educational Experiences						
	HIEE 1 Writing Intensive Course	HIEE 2 Community-Engaged	HIEE 3-Project Based Learning	HIEE 4-Graduate Research	HIEE 5-Capstone		
<u>MPC 6100</u>		X	X				
<u>MPC 6150</u>	X	X	X				
<u>MPC 6300</u>			X				
<u>MPC 6350</u>			X				

Courses	Department/Program use of High Impact Educational Experiences							
	HIEE 1 Writing Intensive Course	HIEE 2 Community-Engaged	HIEE 3-Project Based Learning	HIEE 4-Graduate Research	HIEE 5-Capstone			
<u>MPC 6450</u>			X					
<u>MPC 6600</u>		X	X					
<u>MPC 6700 (especially in combination with MPC 6010)</u>	X		X	X				
<u>MPC 6900/MPC 6950</u>			X	X	X			

HIEEs include capstone courses or experiences, community-engaged learning, evidence-based teaching practices, internships, project-based learning, study abroad/away, supplemental instruction, team-based learning, undergraduate research, pre-professional/career development experiences.

See notes above chart

F. Report of assessment results since the last report:

There are varieties of ways in which departments can choose to show evidence of learning. This is one example. The critical pieces to include are 1) learning outcome being assessed, 2) method(s) of measurement used, 3) threshold for 'acceptable – that is, the target performance, 4) actual results of the assessment, 5) interpretation/reflection on findings 6) the course of action to be taken based upon the interpretation, and 7) how that action will be evaluated.

A. Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major

(this is a sample page for purpose of illustration only; a blank template can be found on the next page or at [this site](#))

Below you will find the Evidence of Learning Chart compiled for our 2019-2020 program review. As we are still completing the program review cycle, this is where we focused most of our attention this last year.

However, before the 2019-2020 chart, I have also included assessment data from four sections of three of our summer courses using our newly-refined program learning outcomes & Canvas three-point scale assessment mechanism. This reflects refinements to our assessment process based on our reflection as a faculty in our 2019-2020 program review process. It also reflects some curriculum changes we've made (e.g. emphasizing low stakes presentation opportunities in other courses, re-emphasizing the preferred order of course in the first year). We look forward to continuing to refine assessment and to making needed changes to assessment practice as we continue responding to the program review this year and as we collect more data relevant to these changes.

The interpretations of findings columns and the action plan/use of results columns also demonstrate how we are working to think through data and we are actively making changes (to the overall program's curriculum – for instance splitting the methods course, to the curriculum within classes –e.g. teaching skills differently, and to the suggested order of the program – e.g. strongly encouraging students to take writing in their first two semesters) to try and foster deeper learning for our students. We feel that we are continuing to use data to improve both learning and assessment.

Summer 2020 data:

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 2: Present information orally and in visual form at a level	Measure 1: Final Projects in MPC 6210 (Professional Speaking). 2 sections Summer 2020	Measure 1: This skill is emphasized in this class. E – 85% of the students will complete the course	Measure 1: Section 1 0 rated at 1 9 rated at 2 (64%) 5 rated at 3 (36%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 1: Most students take this class (6210) during their first year in the program. Based on previous year's data wherein we were not hitting our threshold, we asked instructors to add a few more opportunities for students to practice	See notes below each learning outcome

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.		demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	Section 2: 2 rated at 1 (15.5%) 3 rated at 2 (32%) 8 rated at 3 (61.5%) 84.5% rated at 2 or better. Overall Numbers: 92% rated at 2 or better.	low-stakes presentations in other courses (6010/6700) students take in the first year. This seems to be helping, at least in this single data point. Students are meeting threshold across the two sections in this class this summer.	
	Measure 2: Final Projects in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 2: This skill is emphasized in this class. E – 85% of the students will complete the course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	Measure 2: 0 rated at 1 8 rated at 2 (44%) 10 rated at 3 (55%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 2: More explicitly adding both visual and oral communication skills to this learning outcome better fits this class's learning objectives AND the program's goal to produce more well-rounded professional communicators (see notes below). Students are meeting threshold in this class this summer.	
	Measure 3: Final Projects in MPC 6300 (New Media). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 3: This skill is emphasized in this class. E – 85% of the students will complete the	Measure 3: 0 rated at 1 7 rated at 2 (54%) 6 rated at 3 (46%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 3: More explicitly adding both visual and oral communication skills to this learning outcome better fits this class's learning objectives AND the program's goal to produce more well-rounded professional communicators (see notes	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.		below). Students are meeting threshold in this class this summer.	
<p>Summary of Learning Outcome 2 (Summer 2020)- We took the year of 2019-2020 and the context of our program review to make alterations to how we measure student assessment (because one of our reflections was on a previous inconsistency in measurement) and alterations to our outcomes themselves to better emphasize student learning. So, for instance, we altered our previous Learning Outcome 2 which said: “Present information orally at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.” And changed it to our new Outcome 2 which says: “Present information orally <i>and in visual form</i> at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.” Though we had been measuring presentation skills in the visual communication and new media classes before (and we had included visual skills as part of oral presentation in the presentation class), adding visual skills explicitly to the learning outcome served to both remind faculty of the key role of teaching and assessing this skill in our production- and presentation-focused classes and helps our assessment better reflect the key skills students are expected to learn.</p> <p>We also tweaked our measurement system to use a three-point assessment process (which going forward will incorporate Canvas rubrics functionality). In this system, faculty felt that the definitions for “Does not meet = 1”; “Meets expectations = 2”; and “Exceeds expectations = 3” were clearer and that we would get more consistent data across classes.</p> <p>In terms of the actual skills, we see students meeting the threshold in all three of these courses. This may be because of smaller changes we’ve made to curriculum --e.g. Based on previous year’s data wherein we were not hitting our threshold, we asked instructors to add a few more opportunities for students to practice low-stakes presentations in other courses (6010/6700) students take in the first year. This seems to be helping, at least in this single data point.</p> <p>Obviously, more data points are needed to know if this is a trend, but we do continue to explore how to embed visual and oral communication skills across the curriculum.</p>					
	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate critical thinking and cultural competence in applied communication contexts.	Final Projects in MPC 6210 (Professional Speaking). 2 sections Summer 2020	This skill is introduced in this class. I – 75% of students will complete the course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	<p>Section 1 2 rated at 1 (14%) 7 rated at 2 (50%) 5 rated at 3 (36%) 86% rated at 2 or better.</p> <p>Section 2: 2 rated at 1 (15.5%) 4 rated at 2 (31%) 7 rated at 3 (54%) 84.5% rated at 2 or better.</p> <p>Overall Numbers: 85% rated at 2 or better.</p>	This class is taken in the first year in the program (typically) and so our program intended to “introduce” critical thinking and cultural competence skills. We are meeting the threshold our program set for introduction across these two classes. However, with 15 percent of students rated at “1” or “does not meet”, we plan to meet to discuss whether a specific cultural competence unit needs to be added to the class (rather than embedding it more throughout the class).	See notes below each learning outcome
	Measure 2: Final Projects in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 2: This skill is introduced in this class. I – 75% of students will complete the course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	Measure 2: 0 rated at 1 5 rated at 2 (28%) 13 rated at 3 (72%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 2: More explicitly adding cultural competence along with critical thinking skills to this learning outcome better fits this class’s learning objectives AND the program’s goal to produce more well-rounded professional communicators (see notes below). Students are meeting threshold in this class this summer.	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Measure 3: Final Projects in MPC 6300 (New Media). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 3: This skill is introduced in this class. 1 – 75% of students will complete the course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	Measure 3: 0 rated at 1 6 rated at 2 (46%) 7 rated at 3 (54%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 3: More explicitly adding cultural competence along with critical thinking skills to this learning outcome better fits this class’s learning objectives AND the program’s goal to produce more well-rounded professional communicators (see notes below). Students are meeting threshold in this class this summer.	

Summary of Learning Outcome 3 (Summer 2020)- We took the year of 2019-2020 and the context of our program review to make alterations to how we measure student assessment (because one of our reflections was on a previous inconsistency in measurement) and alterations to our outcomes themselves to better emphasize student learning. So, for instance, we altered our previous Learning Outcome 3 which said: “Demonstrate critical thinking in applied communication contexts.” And changed it to our new Outcome 3 which says: “Demonstrate critical thinking and **cultural competence** in applied communication contexts.” Though we had already valued cultural competence in our program previously (and we had generally considered it part of critical thinking), adding cultural competence explicitly to the learning outcome served to both remind faculty of the key role of teaching and assessing this skill in our classes and helps our assessment better reflect the key skills students are expected to learn. This was especially noted as a goal in our program review process.

As above, we also tweaked our measurement system to use a three-point assessment process (which going forward will incorporate Canvas rubrics functionality). In this system, faculty felt that the definitions for “Does not meet = 1”; “Meets expectations = 2”; and “Exceeds expectations = 3” were clearer and that we would get more consistent data across classes.

In terms of the actual skills, when we revised this learning outcome in Fall 2019, the faculty in the 6300 and 6350 classes in particular described new or revised units their classes would incorporate on audience analysis/cultural competence in messaging. In those classes, students appear to be meeting program expectations in those competencies. Though our students are also meeting thresholds set in 6210,

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>there appears to be room for student growth there. We will explore adding a more specific unit on cultural competence to those classes as well.</p> <p>Obviously, more data points are needed to know if this is a trend, but we do continue to explore how to embed visual and oral communication skills across the curriculum.</p>					
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (Design & Production)	Measure 1: Final Projects in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 1: This skill is emphasized in this class. E – 85% of the students will complete the course demonstrating a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.	Measure 1: 0 rated at 1 6 rated at 2 (33%) 12 rated at 3 (67%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 1: In this single data point, students are meeting the threshold for design and production skills.	See notes below each learning outcome
	Measure 2: Final Projects in MPC 6300 (New Media). 1 section Summer 2020.	Measure 2: This skill is emphasized in this class. E – 85% of the students will complete the course demonstrating	Measure 2: 0 rated at 1 6 rated at 2 (46%) 7 rated at 3 (54%) 100% rated at 2 or better.	Measure 2: In this single data point, students are meeting the threshold for design and production skills.	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		a 2 or better proficiency at the skill.			

Summary of Learning Outcome 5 (Summer 2020)- Learning Outcome 5 is: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas

We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:

(1) In general, students are often doing well at strengthening their knowledge in cognate areas in our field (e.g. design & production; etc.). We can and will work to continue to strengthen those competencies in those classes specifically and by weaving shared themes across the curriculum.

(2) Given that visual communication had historically been the cognate skill that is most challenging for our students, we have updated our five core program learning outcomes (as of Fall 2019) to place visual communication more centrally in our program. Our new updated Learning Outcome #2 is “Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.” That outcome was assessed as part of Outcome 2 above, but at least this summer, there is some evidence that new emphasis is helpful.

(3) As a result, we are now investigating more narrow cognate skills of design and production in these two classes (in addition to visual communication, now in Outcome 2). This is a better, more specific fit for the more specific learning outcomes of these two classes. As this was our first semester assessing those competencies specifically, we are happy with how students performed to this point. However, more data is needed to determine trends. In the meantime, we will continue our focus on integrating visual skills, design skills and production skills in other relevant classes (e.g. 6600; 6500) to continue to build those competencies in students.

2019-2020 Program Review Data:

NOTE: This is the chart that we turned in with our 2019-2020 program review that just finished this year.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 1: Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.	Measure 1: Sample of MPC theses and projects from 2014-15	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 1: 78% of student theses and projects scored "strong" and 22% scored adequate	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong writing skills, although there are some students who could improve in this area	2014-15: Look at grading rubrics in classes to see how writing is evaluated. See if we are giving enough weigh to things like organization of ideas, ability to write a persuasive argument, ability to demonstrate and apply conceptual knowledge.
	Measure 2: Papers in MPC 6500 Special Topics Gender and Comm in the Workplace 2014-15	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 2: 60% of students scored "strong" and 40% scored "adequate"	Measure 2: This year several first year students took the class, in addition to students who were nearing completion of the program. We believe the mix of students skewed the results to be lower than epected.	
	Measure 1: Final written paper and Final Exams in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on both a final writing	Measure 1: 10/21 (48%) of students scored as strong. 11/21 (52%) scored as adequate.	Measure 1: Students are under the desired threshold (48% strong). Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this	Measure 1: Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this writing intensive class is taken typically in one of their first two semesters to prepare them for writing in other courses.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Communication) 2016-2017	project and an exam in this course—students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	0/21 (0%) scored as inadequate.	writing intensive class is taken typically in one of their first two semesters.	We are making changes to improve student writing performance in this course and scaffold additional writing learning opportunities into other courses. For example, writing is currently taken in a student’s first two semesters in the program. But, starting Spring, 2018, we will require students take intro to graduate study/theory and research methods in their first semester and not take writing until their 2 nd or 3 rd semester. This will allow the other classes to actually serve as scaffolding for writing instruction in a way that they hadn’t previously.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis & Masters’ Projects (MPC 6900) 2016-2017	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on faculty advisors’ assessment of final thesis/project—students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	Measure 2: 8/10 (80%) students scored strong 2/10 (20%) students scored adequate 2 additional students dropped out of the projects/thesis process mid-course (e.g. did not complete)	Measure 2: Here students did meet the established threshold (80% scored “strong”). Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate “strong” writing by the end of the program.	In addition, we also need to have a conversation about the appropriate “threshold for learning”. AND more specific common definitions about what those measures “Strong” or “Adequate” for example are. Previous assessment plans were based on the assumption that everyone had the same definition of “strong” (which is the category on the assessment rubric), but this year I have evidence that we do not all share the same definition. One faculty member told me that students only

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					<p>receive a “strong” on the rubric in that faulty member’s course if the students receive a 95% on the assignment. But, we would not reasonably expect 75% of students to score a 95%, so we need a better alignment between definitions of “strong” and our threshold.</p> <p>We do have buy-in from the Master’s program faculty to develop a more specific set of assessment thresholds for next year (mirroring the much more specific work the undergraduate program in Communication has done), as discussion among faculty indicates that perhaps part of our issue this year is that different faculty are defining “strong” and “adequate” differently.</p> <p>Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.</p>
	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1: 2018-2019

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Final written paper and Final Exams in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional Communication) 2018-2019	75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on both a final writing project and an exam in this course—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	Across 2 sections 28/41 students (68.3%) were rated strong, 11/41 (26.8%) were rated adequate and 2/41 (4.8%) were rated inadequate.	<p>Students are under the listed threshold (68.3% strong). Changes to the program have likely been helpful (this is significant improvement over the 48% strong last time students were assessed in 6150). Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this writing intensive class is now taken typically in their second semester.</p> <p>See action plan for more details</p>	<p>We used the data this year in two ways. (1) We take it as confirmation that changes to writing (e.g. better aligning assignments with rubrics; having most students take the writing course in their second semester rather than letting them choose between 1 & 2 semester, enforcing the MPC 6010 pre-req for the writing course) has helped improve student's writing performance. We are encouraged to see the larger percentage of students achieving a "strong" rating and we will continue refining curriculum to build on these outcomes.</p> <p>However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of "strong"). As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively</p>

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					(end with 87% proficiency at skill). See more details in summary below.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900) 2018-2019	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis/project—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	Measure 2: 10/12 (83.3%) students scored strong 1/12 (8.3%) students scored adequate 1/12 (8.3%) students completed the projects/thesis class with inadequate work.	Measure 2: Here students did meet the established threshold (83% scored "strong"). Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" writing by the end of the program.	Measure 2: 2018-2019 Those students who choose to write a Master's Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 3: 75% of students will "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the MPC program improved their	Measure 3: On Q13 – "My MPC Courses enhanced my ability to communicate clearly in writing," 36/48 (75%) Strongly Agreed; 7/48	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 89.5% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program enhanced	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their writing skills have strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		professional writing ability.	(14.5%) Agreed; 4/48 (8.3%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 1/48 (2 %) Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	their ability to communicate clearly in writing.	
<p>Summary of Learning Outcome 1- Learning Outcome 1 is: Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong writers in those culminating projects.</p> <p>However, students in the classes taken earlier in the program (like MPC 6150 – Professional Writing) have often NOT been meeting our previously established threshold of 75% students being “strong” writers at the end of the course.</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) Until 2018, students were generally allowed to take MPC 6150 either their first or second semester in the program. We have altered that such that our students are expected to take MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) in their first semester and are expected to take MPC 6150 in their second semester. This gives them more practice writing at a graduate level in other courses. We, additionally, have refined the major assignments in the writing course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6150 writing course. We are excited to continue that path.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who</p>					

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>responded (N=48), 89.5% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					
Learning Outcome 2: Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.	Measure 1: Quality of presentation in MPC 6900 and 6950 Thesis/Project in 2014-2015	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area	Measure 1: 86% of students scored “strong” in this area. 14% scored adequate.	Measure 1: Most students graduate with strong presentation skills, appropriate to a professional context.	2014-2015: Continue to emphasize presentations in MPC classes. Lower the enrollment cap in MPC 6210 Presentation Speaking so students have more opportunities to be graded on in-class presentations. (Note: we are pleased with the assessment results, but were already planning to make this change to the course cap.)
	Measure 2: Quality of presentation in MPC 6500 Special Topics Gender and Comm in the Workplace 2014-2015	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area	Measure 2: 70% scored “strong” and 30% scored “adequate”	Measure 2: Most students have developed strong speaking skills, although first year students who took the class as an elective may have skewed the data.	
	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	2016-2017 The faculty members both said they felt the students performed very well in

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Final speaking project in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce) 2016-2017	75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	Combined across two classes: 23/34 (67.6%) scored as strong. 11/34 (32.3%) scored as adequate. 0/34 (0%) scored as inadequate.	Here students were near to (but did not meet) the threshold. The faculty members both said they felt the students performed well in speaking in general.	<p>speaking in general. We may, however, want to introduce a major speaking component into an earlier course (like introduction to graduate studies) to help students more fully achieve in this area. We will call a meeting of the instructors who teach both the intro class and the speaking class to determine what that might look like.</p> <p>As above, we also need to have a conversation about the appropriate "threshold for learning". AND more specific common definitions about what those measures "Strong" or "Adequate" for example are. Previous assessment plans were based on the assumption that everyone had the same definition of "strong" (which is the category on the assessment rubric), but this year I have evidence that we do not all share the same definition.</p> <p>We have buy-in from the Masters program faculty to develop a more specific set of assessment thresholds for next year (mirroring the much more specific work the undergraduate program in Communication has done),</p>

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					as discussion among faculty indicates that perhaps part of our issue this year is that different faculty are defining “strong” and “adequate” differently.
	Measure 1: Final speaking project in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce) 2018-2019	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	Measure 1: Combined across two classes: 22/31 (71%) scored as strong. 9/31 (29%) scored as adequate. 0/31 (0%) scored as inadequate.	Measure 1: Here students were near to (but did not meet) the threshold. The students are, overall, slightly closer to the threshold in 206-2017. The faculty members both said they felt the students performed well in speaking in general.	2018-2019 Measure 1: We do have some evidence that we have made some improvements in speaking skills (e.g. more students are “strong” in 2018-2019 than they were in 6210 in 2016-2017. We also have recognized that our scale for assessment is inadequate (e.g. we currently have the same standards for the Speaking class, which they take in their first year, and the projects class, which they take in their last year. So, we have done significant development of our assessment thresholds which are now reflected in this program review (updated) document. See also some explanation under Learning Outcome 1 above. Using the new thresholds will better help us see how students are progressing through our program from first year to second, etc.
	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2: Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Final oral presentation of project in Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900) 2018-2019	75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	10/12 (83.3%) students scored strong 1/12 (8.3%) students scored adequate 1/12 (8.3%) students completed the projects/thesis class with inadequate work.	Here students did exceed the threshold. Obviously we have a smaller subset of students here, but there is some evidence that students are becoming stronger in their speaking skills as they progress through the program.	their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 3: 75% of students will "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 3: On Q12 – "My MPC Courses Enhanced my ability to create and deliver an oral presentation," 31/48 (64.5%) Strongly Agreed; 15/48 (31.25%) Agreed; 2/48 (4.2%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 0/48 Somewhat	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 95.8% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program enhanced their ability to communicate clearly in writing.	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their oral communication skills have strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
			disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.		
<p>Summary of Learning Outcome 2- Learning Outcome 2 is: Present information orally at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong speakers in those culminating projects.</p> <p>However, students in the classes taken earlier in the program (like MPC 6210 – Presentational Speaking) have often been close to but not quite at our previously established threshold of 75% students rated as strong.</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) We continue to refine the major assignments in the presentational speaking course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6210 course. We are excited to continue that path. We have also begun a conversation about adding more speaking opportunities into the 6010 and 6700 classes most students take in their first semester to give students more practice speaking in advance of 6210.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their speaking overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 95.8% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their professional oral communication ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate critical thinking in applied communication contexts	Measure 1: Final papers in MPC 6600 Strategic Communication 2014-2015	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 1: 72% of students scored "strong" in this area; 28% scored "adequate"	Measure 1: Generally well done. Students may need a little more practice learning how to apply theoretical concepts in applied communication situations	2014-2015: Look at term projects in classes and see if students are getting adequate "building block" assignments along the way
	Measure 2: Final papers and rubric in MPC 6500 Gender and Comm in the Workplace in 2014-2015	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 2: 60% scored "strong" and 40% scored "adequate"	Measure 2: Students may need a little more practice learning how to apply theoretical concepts in applied communication situations	
	Measure 1: Final written paper in MPC 6010 2015-2016	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: 76% were strong (n = 16); 19% were adequate (n = 4) and 5% (n = 1) were inadequate.	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong applied critical thinking skills, though there are some students who could improve in this area.	2015-2016 Measures 1&2: Pairing 6010 and 6700 appears to be a helpful progression in our program because it allows students to continue refining applied critical thinking to an in-depth project across two courses. We may want to look at pairing other courses in the curriculum.
	Measure 2: Final written project in MPC 6700 2015-2016	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong"	Measure 2: 81.8% were strong; 18.2% were adequate	Measure 2: This is now the second course in a sequence (we have paired it with MPC 6010,	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		in this area (based on final assignment rubric)		so that students take 6010 first and 6700 second). It is nice to see that students have improved in their critical thinking skills as they progress through the sequence of courses	
	Measure 3: Final Thesis & Masters' Projects 2015-2016	Measure 3: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 3: 80 % of students (n = 4) scored "strong" in this area. 20% (n = 1) scored adequate.	Measure 3: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in critical thinking by the end of the program.	2015-2016 Measure 3: Students who choose to complete a project/thesis do appear to have "strong" general skills in this area. Continue to emphasize applied/critical thinking skills throughout program.
	Measure 1: Final written paper in MPC 6010 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: Across three sections, 32/42 students were rated strong (76.19%), 9/42 (21.4%) were rated adequate and 1/42 (2.3%) was rated inadequate	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong applied critical thinking skills, though there are some students who could improve in this area.	Measure 1 & 2 (2017-2018) Pairing 6010 and 6700 appears to be a helpful progression in our program because it allows students to continue refining applied critical thinking to an in-depth project across two courses. We are encouraged to see the threshold met in 6010 and almost met in 6700. We will continue to explore ways to improve critical thinking in 6700. However, we will also refine our measurement /

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Measure 2: Final written project in MPC 6700 2017-2018	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 2: Across 3 sections, 30/42 (71.4%) were rated as strong, 12/42 (28.6%) were rated as adequate and 0/42 were rated inadequate	Measure 2: Though in this semester students were under the 75% threshold, the number was very close (71.4%). The difference may not be statistically significant. That being said, we are committed to studying how this might be improved.	assessment standards as highlighted throughout this document based on new quantifiable standards going forward.
	Measure 3: Final Thesis & Masters' Projects 2017-2018	Measure 3: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 3: 9/11 scored strong (82%), 1/11 (9%) scored adequate, 1/11 (9%) scored inadequate.	Measure 3: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in critical thinking by the end of the program.	2017-2018 Measure 3: Students who choose to complete a project/thesis do appear to have "strong" general skills in this area. Continue to emphasize applied/critical thinking skills throughout program.
	Measure 1: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 1: 75% of students will "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the MPC program	Measure 1: On Q11 – "My MPC Courses developed my critical, analytical thinking skills," 30/48 (62.5%)	Measure 1: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 100% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or	Measure 1: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their critical/analytical thinking skills have strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		improved their professional writing ability.	Strongly Agreed; 18/48 (37.5%) Agreed; 0/48 Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 0/48 Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	strongly agree that the MPC program developed their critical, analytical thinking skills	

Summary of Learning Outcome 3- Learning Outcome 3 is: Demonstrate critical thinking in applied communication contexts.

Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong critical thinkers in those culminating projects.

We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:

(1) Aligning the MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) course such that students must take both; take them sequentially; and generally take them in their first semester in the program has led to improved critical thinking outcomes since our last program review. We are encouraged at this development and we will continue to examine how refining these two courses in tandem might support student outcomes.

(2) Those students who choose to write a Master's Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their critical thinking overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 100% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their critical thinking ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.

(3) However, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of "strong"). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn't make sense to have the same "75% will achieve strong" in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E =

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.					
Learning Outcome 4: Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.	Measure 1: Final written project in MPC 6700 2015-2016	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: 69.2% scored strong; 31.8% scored adequate.	Measure 1: Many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, though not as many as we had hoped. 6700 is taken in the students' first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become "strong" in this difficult skill.	2015-2016: Measure 1: Continue to emphasize applied research skills throughout program. We will need to work to determine how to measure research skills further along in the program for students who select the "coursework" so that we can see progress in this area beyond the first semester.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis Projects 2015-2016	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 2: 80 % of students (n = 4) scored "strong" in this area. 20% (n = 1) scored adequate.	Measure 2: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in applied research method by the end of the program.	2015-2016: Measure 2: Continue to emphasize applied research skills throughout program. We will need to work to determine how to measure research skills further along in the program for students who select the "coursework" track.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Measure 1: Final written project in MPC 6700 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: Across 3 sections, 26/42 (62%) scored strong, 19/42 (45%) scored adequate and 1/42 (2.3%) scored inadequate.	Measure 1: Many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, though not as many as we had hoped. 6700 is taken in the students’ first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become “strong” in this difficult skill.	We also believe that a one-block mixed-methods class may not give students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. Starting in 2020, We are updating our curriculum to split this 6700 into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis Projects 2017-2018	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on faculty advisors’ assessment of final thesis)	Measure 2: 9/11 scored strong (82%), 1/11 (9%) scored adequate, 1/11 (9%) scored inadequate.	Measure 2: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate “strong” in applied research method by the end of the program.	
	Measure 1: Indirect Measure – Graduates	Measure 1: 75% of students will “Agree” or	Measure 1: On Q19 – “My MPC courses developed my	Measure 1: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have	Measure 1: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their ability to problem solve

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Survey 2018-2019	“Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry, 20/48 (41.7%) Strongly Agreed; 19/48 (39.6%) Agreed; 7/48(14.6%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 2/48 (4.2%) Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	81.25% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program developed their ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry.	through research and scientific inquiry has strengthened as a result of the program

Summary of Learning Outcome 4- Learning Outcome 4 is: Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.

Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong in research ability in those culminating projects.

We have taken four important lessons from this that have translated into actions:

(1) Aligning the MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) course such that students must take both; take them sequentially; and generally take them in their first semester in the program has led to improved research outcomes since our last program review. However, though many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, the result was not as many as we had hoped (typically about 60-70% of students were rated “strong” rather than 75%). 6700 is taken in the students’ first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become “strong” in this difficult skill. This supports our

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>decision to both clarify (quantify) and scaffold standards (see item #3 below) such that we would expect higher proficiency from students at the end of the program than at the beginning.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their research ability overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 81.25% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6700 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p> <p>(4) We also believe that a one-block mixed-methods class may not give students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. We are updating our curriculum to split this 6700 into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.</p>					
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2015-2016: MPC 6350 visual communication	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication) 2015-2016	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: Strong - 66.66% (n=8) Adequate - 25% (n=3) Inadequate - 8.33% (n=1)	Measure 1: Students may need more practice learning how to apply visual communication principles in organizational contexts.	2015-2016 Measure 1: Look at integrating more visual communication content in other allied classes (e.g. New Media, below).
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC	Measure 2: 75% of	Measure 2: 93% were strong and	Measure 2: This is an interesting course	2015-2016 Measure 2:

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
& MPC 6300 new media.)	6300 (New Media) 2015-2016	students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	7% were adequate.	because students come in with very different backgrounds. According to the instructor, "30% had some general background in New Media before starting the class, and another 30% had never touched the stuff." So, overall proficiency at the end of course may be higher because some students have a background in the skills, but given that many do not, this class appears to be doing a good job teaching new media skills.	Look at integrating more visual communication content in this course to help students reach proficiency in that allied skill (see above comments on Measure 1). Continue emphasizing both visual communication and new media throughout the curriculum.
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2016-2017)	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation) 2016-2017	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area. Less than 5% will score "inadequate" (based on final	Measure 1: 14/19 (73.6%) scored as strong. 4/19 (21%) scored as adequate. 1/19 (5%) scored as inadequate	Measure 1: Overall, students in the Teambuilding & facilitation course are essentially completing the course demonstrating key teambuilding & facilitation knowledges	2016-2017 On Measure 1: Continue to explore ways to integrate additional teambuilding/facilitation practice earlier in the curriculum to provide a basis for the skills refined in 6100.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
: MPC 6100 Teambuilding/ Facilitation and MPC 6400 Leadership.)		assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)		and skills in their final project. The 73.6% is slightly below 75%, though, so we may want to think about how to integrate additional teamwork opportunities in earlier classes for practice purposes.	On Measures 1 & 2: Continue emphasizing teams and leadership throughout the curriculum. Action plan here still involves the action plans on Writing & Speaking above to develop & refine more precise definitions for thresholds for learning.
	2016-2017 Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6400 (Leadership) – this is actually a two part final project (1) a final paper and (2) a final oral presentation. Assessment was conducted on the entire project.	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5% will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	Measure 2: 16/21 (76%) students were rated as strong 3/21 (14%) students were rated as adequate 2/21 (9.5%) students were rated as “inadequate” (for failing to complete the final assignment)	Measure 2: Overall, students in the Leadership course are completing the course demonstrating key leadership knowledge and skills both in writing and orally.	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2017-2018 : MPC 6600 Strategic Comm & MPC 6450 Organizational Comm)	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6600 (Strategic Communication) 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5% will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	Measure 1: 8/12 students scored strong (66.6%), 1/12 scored adequate (8.3%), 3/12 (25%) failed to complete the course or otherwise scored inadequate.	Measure 1: Overall, students in the Strategic Communication course who finished the course are close to completing the course demonstrating key strategic comm. knowledges and skills in their final project. However, this particular class had a pretty high (3/12) rate of students choosing not to complete the class (withdraw; UW; etc.). This may be an anomaly, but it is something we will certainly watch more closely.	2016-2017 On Measure 1: Continue to explore ways to integrate additional strategic communication practice throughout in the curriculum to provide a basis for the skills refined in 6600. On Measures 1 & 2: Continue emphasizing teams and leadership throughout the curriculum. Action plan here still involves the action plans on Writing & Speaking above to develop & refine more precise definitions for thresholds for learning.
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6450 (Advanced Organizational Communication) 2017-2018	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5%	Measure 2: 11/14 scored strong (78.5%), 2/14 scored adequate (14%) and 1/14 (7%)	Measure 2: Overall, students in the Organizational Communication course are completing the course demonstrating key leadership	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	scored as inadequate.	knowledge and skills both in writing and orally.	
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2018-2019 : MPC 6350 Visual Comm & MPC 6300 New Media)	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication) 2018-2019	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: Across three sections – 19/41 (46%) scored strong, 20/41 scored adequate (49%) and 2/41 (5%) scored inadequate	Measures 1 & 2: Across the three sections of MPC 6350 (Visual Communication) and the two sections of MPC 6300 (New Media) in 2018-2019, we saw a significantly lower number of students rated as “strong” in visual communication skills than we expected. This may be in part because the instructors perceive that we have a much higher rate of people not previously trained in visual communication	Measures 1 & 2: To recognize the key role visual communication plays in our program and industry, our updated program learning outcomes (written and approved in Fall 2019) now include visual communication with oral communication in our “presentation” learning outcome (Outcome 2). This will encourage our program to build visual communication skills more consistently across the curriculum. We also continue to examine how these two courses, which are many students’ first exposures to visual communication principles & technologies, might be taught most effectively.
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6300 (New Media) 2018-2019	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 2: Across two sections: 11/23 scored strong (48%) and 12/23 scored adequate (52%). None were inadequate.		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				skills entering the program. Visual principles (e.g. web design, design for social media) and software (e.g. Adobe Creative Suite) have a pretty high learning curve, and expecting 75% of students to be strong at the end of their first exposure to these skills would not be reasonable.	However, the action plan here also involves refining assessment standards to reflect what is reasonable learning for students newly exposed to visual communication principles in these courses.
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 3: 75% of students will “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 3: Q17 – “My MPC courses developed my ability to use visual communication”, 14/48 (29.2%) Strongly Agreed; 26/48 (54.2%) Agreed; 5/48 (10.4%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 3/48 (6.3%) Somewhat	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 83.3% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program developed their ability to use visual communication.	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their ability to use visual communication has strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
			disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.		
<p>Summary of Learning Outcome 5- Learning Outcome 5 is: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) In general, students are often doing well at strengthening their knowledge in cognate areas in our field (e.g. teamwork; leadership; organizational communication; etc.). We can and will work to continue to strengthen those skills in those classes specifically and by weaving shared themes across the curriculum.</p> <p>(2) Given that visual communication appears to be the cognate skill that is most challenging for our students, we have updated our five core program learning outcomes (as of Fall 2019) to place visual communication more centrally in our program. Our new updated Learning Outcome #2 is “Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.” We will work to ensure this learning outcome means that visual communication is woven more fully through the program.</p> <p>(3) And, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first exposure to visual communication in the program to be judged as strong As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					

Additional narrative (optional – use as much space as needed): See additional narrative under each program learning outcome above.

c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses

(Area-specific EOL grids can be found at http://weber.edu/oie/Complete_Rubrics.html; they can replace this page.)

There are no Gen Ed Courses in the MPC program.

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: Spring 2020	Recommendation	Progress Description
Recommendation 1 - Mission Statement	It is suggested that a line be added that addresses the goal of cultivating professionals who can think critically, who are grounded ethically, and who are culturally aware.	We met as a faculty virtually (Zoom) during Spring 2020 to review these recommendations. We agree to update the mission. We hope to do this work in the 2020-2021 school year.
		2020-2021: We will re-write the mission.
		2021-forward: We will continue to monitor the mission & update as needed to best reflect the program and learning outcomes.
Recommendation 2 - Curriculum	1. Consider reviewing course titles, descriptions, and content to better reflect and represents what appears to be already happening in courses, specifically around ethics.	2019-2020. We met as a faculty virtually (Zoom) during Spring 2020 to review these recommendations. We started the process of updating curriculum in methods in response to student feedback (#2) and we started the curriculum process on the split methods course (#3). We agreed with the other recommendations and started an initial conversation about expectations (#4)
	2. Continue to respond to changing curricular design base upon student feedback for flexibility.	2020-2021. In Fall 2020, our new methods curriculum passed Graduate Council/Faculty senate and will begin 2021 catalog year. We will work on clearly communicating those changes to students.

		We plan to update course titles/descriptions in Spring 2021 (#1). We will continue to hold meetings to discuss expectations/rigor (#4)
	3. Be sure expectations of the split research methods courses are very clear and distinct for both students and instructors.	2021-forward. We will finish any needed curriculum updates (#1) as well as develop syllabi language about expectations (#4)
	4. Consider comparing syllabi among MPC faculty to ensure consistent and balanced rigor across courses, including a standard for providing feedback to students in a timely manner.	
Recommendation 3 - Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment	1. Consider creating a database with student publications, presentations, and industry feedback of student projects and career accomplishments.	2019-2020. We met as a faculty virtually (Zoom) during Spring 2020 to review these recommendations. We agree to create such a database. We started with a Google Doc to support brainstorming on this process. We hope to do this work in the 2020-2021 school year.
		2020-2021 We will refine Google Doc (used for brainstorming appropriate metrics) and we will start Web Page Redesign
		2021-forward: Web page redesign finalized over Summer 2021. Continue to update list.
Recommendation 4 - Support	1. Put a process in place to ease communication and time-sensitive decisions on applications. Consider using a file sharing application (Box) for the distribution and	2019-2020. The MPC director and administrative staff met Spring 2020. A new BOX process was created to review applications. Upon reflection, the staff member said it streamlined process.

	evaluation of applications, with clear expectations for use.	
		2020-forward. Continue monitoring new process of using Box and update as needed.
Recommendation 5- Relationships with External Communities	Consider forming an advisory board comprised of industry experts representative of popular career paths who could serve as mentors and/or provide internship opportunities.	2020 – Research We have considered the Communication Department advisory board as partly our advisory board as well. Based on conversation at Graduate council, it appears some departments do this (same board for undergrad and grad programs) while some programs have a split board.
		2020-2021 We intend to discuss this with our Communication advisory board in Spring 2021. Our options are to continue with a shared board but to make sure the MPC program receives greater board focus or to split/form a second board. We will engage the current board in this conversation and act on their recommendation.
		2021-forward. We will enact the board’s recommendation, to either emphasize the MPC program and seek more guidance from our current board or to split & form a new board in the 2021-2022 school year.
		Continue monitoring and update as needed.

Additional narrative:

Our site visit was in Spring 2020 and we are just concluding that program review now (October 2020) with presentations to graduate council, etc. Our 2020 program reviewers noted generally that excellent progress was made on the previous (2015) program review recommendations. We look forward to making similar progress continuing to support our students and their learning going forward.

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	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)			
Full-time Tenured	6	6	6
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	7	7	9
Part-time and adjunct	1		
With Master's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured			
Full-time Non-Tenured	7	7	5
Part-time and adjunct	2		
With Bachelor's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured			
Full-time Non-tenured			
Part-time and adjunct			
Other			
Full-time Tenured			
Full-time Non-tenured			
Part-time			
Total Headcount Faculty	23	20	20
Full-time Tenured	6	6	6
Full-time Non-tenured	14	14	14
Part-time	3		

Please respond to the following questions.

- 1) First year student success is critical to WSU's retention and graduation efforts. We are interested in finding out how departments support their first-year students. Do you have mechanisms and processes in place to identify, meet with, and support first-year students? Please provide a brief narrative focusing on your program's support of new students:
 - a. **Any** first-year students taking courses in your program(s)

As a Master's program, we are not really seeing "first year students" as the university defines them (e.g. as first-time freshman). However, of course we try to support all students who are new to our program (e.g. are "first time masters students")!

The graduate program director serves as the academic advisor for prospective and current MPC students. The program director advises prospective students before and during the admissions process.

Once admitted, the program director sends an email with information about course offerings and required courses for first year students a few weeks before registration opens each semester. So, all students (including first-time students) receive advising emails from the director each semester. Students regularly request more advising appointments (both in advance of registration and during the course of the normal semester) and the program director regularly meets with students, including first year students.

The graduate program director also always attends the first evening of the first required MPC course – the MPC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Studies & Theory. This means that every first-year student meets the director in the first semester; and at that general advising presentation they are told about the program, given advice, and encouraged to contact the director for additional appointments.

Second year students are still sent advising emails before registration opens each semester with course descriptions and general advising information. Second year students also typically meet with the program director between their first and second years or early in their second year to plan their electives and a path to graduation.

Students who "stop out" by not enrolling during the program are contacted by the program director to see what supports or opportunities can be provided to support the student.

Beyond the director, our relatively small program prides itself on intensive connections between faculty and students. Our faculty are very actively engaged and care deeply about student retention, success and graduation.

- b. Students declared in your program(s), whether or not they are taking courses in your program(s)

Same as above, generally, we communicate frequently with students in and out of the classroom.

- 2) A key component of sound assessment practice is the process of 'closing the loop' – that is, following up on changes implemented as a response to your assessment findings, to determine the impact of those changes/innovations. It is also an aspect of assessment on which we need to improve, as suggested in our NWCCU mid-cycle report. Please describe the processes your program has in place to 'close the loop'.

As a program, we believe assessment data is useful to the extent that we use it to consistently refine, clarify and modify our curriculum to ensure our students are succeeding in our program mission to “prepar[e] working professionals with the advanced communication knowledge and skills needed to excel in a range of communication-related careers.” We believe our assessment efforts demonstrate ways in which we use that feedback loop on a regular basis.

Each year, our MPC faculty committee meets several times to discuss issues related to assessment and curriculum, and each year we have made changes to the program’s curriculum (ranging from major curriculum changes to more specific class content changes) based on the data. As an example of a major curriculum overhaul, we saw some consistent patterns that our students were not evidencing achievement of the desired research methods skills by the end of the single research methods course. We started by joining the 6010 and 6700 courses together in a required sequence so that students would have more scaffolding in research, writing and critical thinking before taking 6700. We saw data (and heard anecdotally as well) that this improved student outcomes. However, we felt improvement was still possible. So, after investigating similar masters programs across the country, we decided as a faculty that this may be due, in part, to a need to split quantitative and qualitative methods into separate courses. We put that through the curriculum process last spring and this fall and we are piloting the split class for the first time this fall (2020) and spring (2021).

As an example of a more granular curriculum adjustment, as I said, when we saw that presentational skills were still a challenge for some of our students in the 6210 courses through assessment data, we refined the 6210 course itself to include more low-stakes practice presentations AND

we agreed to integrate presentation opportunities into more courses (including the 6010 course, for instance) to give students more scaffolded practice before they reach the 6210 course.

We have also, at a more macro level, adjusted our program learning outcomes to reflect what we expect students to be learning and to help us emphasize key skills that need to be assessed. So, for instance, we added visual communication explicitly to our presentations outcome this past year. We have always considered visual skills to be part of presentations, but when that wasn't called out specifically in the learning outcome, we didn't have folks uniformly emphasizing and measuring it. So, updating our outcomes allows us to hold conversations about how to best teach and measure key skills in our courses.

We are absolutely continuing work in this process, as we are using the new Canvas rubrics developed for our program assessment starting in Fall 2020 and we are starting to explore a portfolio-based process for our students as part of their capstone experience. Our program will continue to meet regularly to collect, reflect, and modify our program to help students both learn and demonstrate their learning in meaningful ways.

Glossary

Student Learning Outcomes/Measurable Learning Outcomes

The terms 'learning outcome', 'learning objective', 'learning competency', and 'learning goal' are often used interchangeably. Broadly, these terms reference what we want students to be able to do AFTER they pass a course or graduate from a program. For this document, we will use the word 'outcomes'. Good learning outcomes are specific (but not too specific), are observable, and are clear. Good learning outcomes focus on skills: knowledge and understanding; transferrable skills; habits of mind; career skills; attitudes and values.

- Should be developed using action words (if you can see it, you can assess it).
- Use compound statements judiciously.
- Use complex statements judiciously.

Curriculum Grid

A chart identifying the key learning outcomes addressed in each of the curriculum's key elements or learning experiences (Suskie, 2019). A good curriculum:

- Gives students ample, diverse opportunities to achieve core learning outcomes.
- Has appropriate, progressive rigor.
- Concludes with an integrative, synthesizing capstone experience.
- Is focused and simple.
- Uses research-informed strategies to help students learn and succeed.
- Is consistent across venues and modalities.
- Is greater than the sum of its parts.

Target Performance (previously referred to as 'Threshold')

The level of performance at which students are doing well enough to succeed in later studies (e.g., next course in sequence or next level of course) or career.

Actual Performance

How students performed on the specific assessment. An average score is less meaningful than a distribution of scores (for example, 72% of students met or exceeded the target performance, 5% of students failed the assessment).

Closing the Loop

The process of following up on changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, materials, etc., to determine if the changes had the desired impact.

Continuous Improvement

An idea with roots in manufacturing, that promotes the ongoing effort to improve. Continuous improvement uses data and evidence to improve student learning and drive student success.

Direct evidence

Evidence based upon actual student work; performance on a test, a presentation, or a research paper, for example. Direct evidence is tangible, visible, and measurable.

Indirect evidence

Evidence that serves as a proxy for student learning. May include student opinion/perception of learning, course grades, measures of satisfaction, participation. Works well as a complement to direct evidence.

HIEE – High Impact Educational Experiences

Promote student learning through curricular and co-curricular activities that are intentionally designed to foster active and integrative student engagement by utilizing multiple impact strategies. Please see <https://weber.edu/weberthrives/HIEE.html>