

Weber State University  
Annual Assessment of Evidence of Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Master of Professional Communication  
Academic Year of Report: 2016/17 (Summer 2016, Fall 2016, Spring 2017)  
Date Submitted: November 14, 2017  
Report author: Dr. Sarah Steimel, Program Director

Contact Information:

Phone: 801-626-6535

Email: [sarahsteimel@weber.edu](mailto:sarahsteimel@weber.edu)

**A. Brief Introductory Statement:**

Please review the Introductory Statement and contact information for your department or academic program displayed on the assessment site: <http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if this information is current, please place an 'X' below. No further information is needed. We will indicate "Last Reviewed: [current date]" on the page.

**Information is current; no changes required.**

**Information is not current; updates below.**

Update:

## **B. Mission Statement**

Please review the Mission Statement for your department or academic program displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if it is current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [current date]”. No further information is needed.

If the information is not current, please provide an update:

**Information is current; no changes required.**

**Information is not current; updates below.**

Update:

### **C. Student Learning Outcomes**

Please review the Student Learning Outcomes for your academic program displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if they are current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [current date]”. No further information is needed.

If they are not current, please provide an update:

**Information is current; no changes required.**

**Information is not current; updates below.**

#### Updated Measurable Learning Outcomes

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

- 1) ...
- 2) ...
- 3) ...
- 4) ...
- 5) ...
- 6) etc.

**D. Curriculum**

Please review the Curriculum Grid for your department or academic program displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if it is current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed: [current data]”. No further information is needed.

If the curriculum grid is not current, please provide an update:

**Information is current; no changes required.**

**Information is not current; updates below**

Curriculum Map Format

	Department/Program Learning Outcomes							
	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Etc...			
Core Courses in Department/Program								

*Note<sup>a</sup>*: Define words, letters or symbols used and their interpretation; i.e. 1= introduced, 2 = emphasized, 3 = mastered or I = Introduced, E = Emphasized, U = Utilized, A = Assessed comprehensively; these are examples, departmental choice of letters/numbers may differ

*Note<sup>b</sup>*: Rows and columns should be transposed as required to meet the needs of each individual department

Additional Information (if needed)

## E. Assessment Plan

Please review the Assessment Plan for your department displayed on the assessment site: <http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if the plan is current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [current date]”. No further information is needed.

The site should contain an up-to-date assessment plan with planning going out a *minimum of three years* beyond the current year. Please review the plan displayed for your department at the above site. The plan should include a list of courses from which data will be gathered and the schedule, as well as an overview of the assessment strategy the department is using (for example, portfolios, or a combination of Chi assessment data and student survey information, or industry certification exams, etc.).

*Please be sure to include your planned assessment of any general education courses taught within your department.* This information will be used to update the General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee’s planning documentation.

Assessment plan:

**Our plan is updated (in the Goals Section below) to continue to meet the requirement that we extend out three years in the future. Otherwise it remains the same as previous year:**

Assessment Plan for Master of Professional Communication

Persons responsible for collecting and analyzing the data: The program director will oversee data collection. The MPC faculty advisory committee, which consists of all faculty teaching the required courses in a given academic year, will serve as the Assessment Committee to oversee and implement the program’s assessment plan. MPC faculty may be asked to collect and report data on assignments in their classes and may be asked to review papers and other artifacts for assessment purposes.

Assessment measures to be used: The MPC assessment plan examines student outcomes using the following direct and indirect measures.

Direct Measures (DM):

1. Student theses and projects submitted
2. Student performance on signature assignments with rubric in MPC 6010 Introduction to Grad Studies & Communication Theory
3. Student performance on signature assignments with rubric in MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communicators
4. Student performance on signature assignments with rubric in MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking
5. Student performance on signature assignments with rubric in MPC 6700 Research Methods for Professional Communication
6. Student performance on signature assignments with rubric in cognate area courses: MPC 6100 Team Building and Facilitation, MPC 6250 Visual Communication, MPC 6300 New Media, MPC 6400 Leadership Communication, MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication, and MPC 6600 Strategic Communication

7. Number of papers accepted for presentation at academic and professional conferences

Indirect Measures (IM):

1. Verbal and written feedback from individual graduates
2. Data on promotions and job placement, graduate and professional school acceptance, and other significant accomplishments

Goals

1. To assess the four core skill areas of writing, speaking, critical thinking and research methods each on a semi-annual basis. In 2015-16, we assessed critical thinking and research methods. In 2016-2017, will assess writing and speaking. In 2017-2018, we will again assess critical thinking and research methods, etc.
2. To assess the core cognate courses on a rotating basis. These courses include MPC 6100 Team Building and Facilitation, MPC 6250 Visual Communication, MPC 6300 New Media, MPC 6400 Leadership Communication, MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication, and MPC 6600 Strategic Communication. We currently have six courses, so we assess the core cognate area skills in two courses each year (so that each course is currently assessed every third year). In 2015-16 we assessed MPC 6250 and MPC 6300. In 2016-2017, we will assess MPC 6100 and 6400. In 2017-2018, we will assess MPC 6450 and MPC 6600. As new courses are added to the core cognate areas, they will be worked into the assessment rotation with every core cognate course being evaluated at least every third year.

To collect indirect measures every year, which include number of students/graduates who receive a promotion or a new job in a field related to professional communication, number of students accepted for further graduate study, individual feedback from students and graduates.

**F. Report of assessment results for the most previous academic year:**

There are a variety of ways in which departments can choose to show evidence of learning. This is one example. The critical pieces to include are 1) what learning outcome is being assessed, 2) what method of measurement was used, 3) what the threshold for ‘acceptable performance’ is for that measurement, 4) what the actual results of the assessment were, 5) how those findings are interpreted, and 6) what is the course of action to be taken based upon the interpretation.

**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)**

<b>Sample only - Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major – Sample only</b>					
Measurable Learning Outcome: Students will...	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:	Measure 1: A set of 10 multiple choice questions from Exam 1  Measure 2: Student presentations	Measure 1: 85% of students will score 80% or better on 10 questions  Measure 2: Using a rubric to assess the presentation, 90% of students will achieve a score of 75% or above.	Measure 1: 93% of students scored 80% or better on 10 questions  Measure 2: the threshold was met, but students performed poorly (avg. = 1.8) on one criterion.	Measure 1: Students successfully demonstrated interpretation skills  Measure 2: unclear where the issue is	Measure 1: No curricular or pedagogical changes needed at this time  Measure 2: provide better explanation of the expectations for this criterion and re-assess.
Learning Outcome 2:	Measure 1: Results of standardized test  Measure 2: Students are surveyed about their perceived competence of the outcome	Measure 1: 85% of students will score at or above the national average.  Measure 2: On a 5 point Likert scale, 90% of students will indicate 4 or 5	Measure 1: 90% of students scored above national average  Measure 2: Less than half of students felt competence with this outcome.	Measure 1: Students successfully demonstrated competence; lowest average score was in transfer of knowledge, where only 69% of questions were answered correctly.  Measure 2: Students tested well, but their perceived competence was lower than expected.	Measure 1: Faculty agree to include review of transfer in all related courses; this outcome will be reassessed during next review  Measure 2: Students will be given more opportunity to practice this skill with immediate feedback.

\*Can be a mix of direct and indirect measures, but at least one measure must be direct



Evidence of Learning Worksheet: **Courses within the Major**  
**Course:**

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:  Final written paper and Final Exams in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional Communication)	Measure 1:  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")	Measure 1:  10/21 (48%) of students scored as strong. 11/21 (52%) scored as adequate. 0/21 (0%) scored as inadequate.	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 writing intensive class is taken typically in one of their first two semesters.	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.  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 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> semester. This will allow the other classes to actually serve as scaffolding for writing instruction in a way that they hadn't previously.  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.
	Measure 2:  Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900)	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.	

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>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 receive a “strong” on the rubric in that faculty 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 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), 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</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
					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>Learning Outcome 2:</p> <p>Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Final speaking project in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce)</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final speaking project rubric- students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Combined across two classes:  23/34 (67.6%) scored as strong.  11/34 (32.3%) scored as adequate.  0/34 (0%) scored as inadequate.</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>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>	<p>The faculty members both said they felt the students performed very well in 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>

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
					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), as discussion among faculty indicates that perhaps part of our issue this year is that different faculty are defining "strong" and "adequate" differently.
Learning Outcome 3:  Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (This semester: Teambuilding/Facilitation and Leadership. )	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation)	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:  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 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 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.  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. We will do this in Fall 2017 in advance of assessment for 2017-2018

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 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.	

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

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

Based on this year’s assessment, our students in the MPC program are generally doing well, although they still struggle with writing (which is not a surprise, writing is our students’ weakest skill area coming into the program). We can and will continue to scaffold learning to ensure that students are gaining the skills they need to demonstrate mastery in the writing course. We also already have changes in place that we believe will make a difference. For example, writing is currently taken in a student’s first two semesters in the program. 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 2nd or 3rd semester. This will allow the other classes to actually serve as scaffolding in a way that they hadn’t previously, giving students chance to practice writing at the graduate level in formative and summative assessment activities before the in-depth writing class their second or third semester.

In addition, our undergraduate program (Department of Communication) has done substantial work in the last year to standardize assessment definitions and develop uniform scales across classes (including a five point scale to measure the extent to which students fail to meet, meet, or exceed expectations on measured learning outcomes and clear definitions of expected student performance on those measures at the “introduced”, “emphasized” and “mastered” levels. Our primary goal in the next year is to investigate, adapt, and adopt a similar system of standardized measurement across our course to make these numbers even more comparable/meaningful going forward.

What I learned from gathering assessment data this year was that though we have a standardized rubric of “strong” “adequate” or “inadequate” for each of our assessed areas, faculty are operating with different working definitions of “strong”, for example, in a way that I believe is skewing assessment results.

I believe the newly developed undergraduate program (Department of Communication) definitions and thresholds are more precise and specific, and I have buy in from the MPC program faculty to work on adapting/adopting a version of that for our graduate program before assessment for the 2017/2018 school year.

b. Evidence of Learning: High Impact Practices (HIPs)

List the activities you have within your academic program that you consider to be high impact. For key elements of high impact practices, see: [Key Elements of High-Impact Practices](#).

If you cannot identify any HIPs occurring within your academic program, please indicate that. Are you planning to incorporate HIPs in the near future?

- MPC 6900 (Master's Thesis and Professional Projects) is a class dedicated to in-depth academic master's thesis projects and/or professional portfolio building projects. This is optional (not all students complete the class), but students who do are engaging in high-impact research/applied HIPs.
- MPC 6010/6700 (Intro to Grad Studies & Research Methods). Students complete small, student-designed IRB approved research projects to investigate a real-world communication problem across these two classes (16 weeks total) supported by in-depth faculty mentoring, frequent feedback, etc. Some (though certainly not all) of the students choose to present these projects at a subsequent conference on or off campus.
- MPC 6100 (Teambuilding and Facilitation) includes community facilitation projects in which students are required to facilitate a deliberative decision making process for real clients. In Fall 2017, for example, the students facilitated Ecological/Environmental deliberations at a range of workplaces/organizations to help organizations think through their environmental goals and responsibilities. These projects are certainly high-impact community/applied HIPs.
- Though those are the two most obvious examples, I strongly believe that many of the characteristics of HIPs (e.g. Significant investment of time and effort by students, Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters, Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback, Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications etc.) are present in most of our classes. Our classes are small to foster those mentoring relationships and as an applied, professional program, almost all student projects feature real-world applications, etc.

c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses

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

- Deleted because we do not offer GE courses in the MPC program.



### G. Summary of Artifact Collection Procedure

Artifact	When/How Collected?	Where Stored?
2016-2017 Thesis Papers & Applied Professional Projects (MPC 6900)	Writing (Outcome 1 above)	Electronic Copies of MPC Thesis Papers are Stored in Digital Repository in WSU Library; MPC projects are Stored in Canvas
Signature Final Assignments Final Exams and rubrics in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional Communication)	Writing (Outcome 1 above)	Canvas
Signature Assignments and rubrics in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce)	Professional Speaking (Outcome 2 above)	Canvas
Signature Assignments and rubrics in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation)	Knowledge in one or more cognate areas [Teambuilding & Facilitation] (Outcome 3 Above)	Canvas
Signature Assignments and rubrics in MPC 6400 (Leadership)	Knowledge in one or more cognate areas [Leadership] (Outcome 3 Above)	Canvas

Summary Information (as needed)

## Appendix A

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

Date of Program Review: 2014-2015	Recommendation	Progress Description
<p>Recommendation 1 - Keep the applied focus. Embrace the MPC focus rather than trying to become an MA in Communication.</p>	<p>Since this is a specialized Master's program, it might be expected that forces could inadvertently direct it toward conformity with more traditional Masters programs. Examples might include a greater emphasis on conference presentations than professional activities in assessment or an increase in incoming students from academic rather than professional areas. The program has discovered an especially important niche and needs to continually keep its eye on its mission.</p>	<p>1. Though we continue to value and celebrate students' academic successes (e.g. students who present at academic conferences, publish with faculty or go on to PhD programs), we recognize those as unique. The vast majority of our students are and intend to continue working full time with this degree and we are committed to ensuring the degree is appropriate for an applied, professional focus.</p> <p>2. We continue to develop our Facebook page and LinkedIn account for the MPC program. They both feature news about current students and the successes of our alumni. The Facebook page allows us to show our students and alumni actively engaged in professional activities. The LinkedIn page allows us to showcase professional successes (alumni promotions, new jobs, etc.) and also allows alumni to share potential professional job opportunities with each other. We also use current and former students on promotional materials talking about how the degree impacted them in their professional career in positive ways.</p>

		<p>3. We continue to offer a variety of classes which bring in guest speakers/working professionals to help our students see how the skills we teach operate in applied contexts and to allow our students to network with other industry professionals. We value work applications in many of our classroom projects and partnerships.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 - Assessment for coursework track</p>	<p>Develop measures to assess the newly implemented coursework option in lieu of a thesis or project.</p>	<p>1. After looking at our graduates' transcripts, most of our graduates who pursue the coursework track take additional courses in the "core required courses" area. E.g. they are required to take 4/6, but many of our coursework graduates take a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> course from the list. This is the most common way students earn coursework credit from our department. We continue with our assessment plan to make sure all six of those courses get assessed on a consistent, rotating basis.</p>
		<p>2. We collected assessment data in two of those core courses this year (MPC 6100 and MPC 6400) focused on student proficiency in that cognate area.</p>
		<p>3. We will continue to explore options for best assessing the coursework track.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 - Recruiting</p>	<p>Recruit a larger applicant pool. When resources become available for additional staff positions, hire a professional staff member to help with recruiting.</p>	<p>1. We ran a large internet/digital marketing campaign in 2015-2016 and again in 2017. We continue to sponsor relevant industry events (e.g. the Utah Public Relations society's Golden Spike Awards Gala). We have revamped our</p>

		<p>website and social media accounts. All together that appears to have generated larger application numbers over the past few years. We did not accept applications in July 2016 because we had a full class. In the 2016-2017 school year, we had 57 new applicants and admitted a slightly larger than normal cohort of 32 students. Even with that expanded cohort, we had a rejection rate of nearly 44%. We appear to be doing well in this area.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 - External advisory board</p>	<p>Present evidence of the contributions of the external advisory board in the next program review.</p>	<p>2. We are in ongoing talks with our new Dean about a potential for a college-wide recruiter. We do have a college-wide Marketing Director (Christine Denniston) and she does regularly promote our MPC program as part of the College of Arts &amp; Humanities.</p> <p>1. As mentioned in the program review report, the external advisory committee was created in Fall 2015 and had only met one time before the report was due. Now that we have created an external advisory board, we will seek their input and report on their recommendations and subsequent actions taken in the next program review.</p> <p>2. Due to the MPC leadership transition, the external advisory board has not met recently. We will arrange a meeting in Spring 2018.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 - Student and faculty travel budget</p>	<p>Allocate additional resources for student travel to present at conferences and for faculty to travel to professional</p>	<p>1. We have budgeted for student travel to conferences for the past three years. So far four students have used these travel funds.</p>

	<p>conferences for professional development and to enhance teaching.</p>	<p>2. We have a faculty travel budget, but so far we have used it for travel related to recruitment rather than professional development.</p>
		<p>3. Now that our base budget is set, explore the viability of a process for faculty to apply for professional development travel funds. These funds should be earmarked for professional conferences that enhance teaching (beyond the scope of the academic conferences that are funded through other means).</p>
		<p>4. We have spent substantial money from the MPC budget to support both teaching and research efforts in the Department of Communication broadly, financing things like the new Podcasting space, cameras and recording equipment, computer lab renovations, etc. That money and technology enhancement benefits both our graduate students and our faculty who use the equipment for both teaching and research in various ways.</p>

Additional narrative:

## 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 2016-17	
Headcount (This report includes everyone who is full time in the Communication Department. Not all Comm faculty teach in the MPC program, but may be eligible to, so I included all full time faculty in the department of Communication. However, I only included adjuncts/part time folks if they teach in the MPC program, since the majority of Comm undergraduate department adjuncts would not ever teach MPC.)	23
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)	14
Full-time Tenured	6
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	7
Part-time and adjunct	1
With Master's Degrees	9
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-Tenured	7
Part-time and adjunct	2
With Bachelor's Degrees	N/A
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-tenured	
Part-time and adjunct	
Other	N/A
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-tenured	
Part-time	

Total Headcount Faculty	
Full-time Tenured	6
Full-time Non-tenured	14
Part-time	3

**Please respond to the following questions.**

- 1) Based on your program's assessment findings, what subsequent action will your program take?

As mentioned on page 11, Our undergraduate program (Department of Communication) has done substantial work in the last year to standardize assessment definitions and develop uniform scales across classes (including a five point scale to measure the extent to which students fail to meet, meet, or exceed expectations on measured learning outcomes and clear definitions of expected student performance on those measures at the "introduced", "emphasized" and "mastered" levels. Our primary goal in the next year is to investigate, adapt, and adopt a similar system of standardized measurement across our course to make these numbers even more comparable/meaningful going forward. I have buy in from the MPC faculty to pursue this plan.

We have also, based on this assessment report and graduating student feedback, decided to offer the "core required courses" more frequently in our program to allow us to mandate the order in which they are taken. So, for instance, in the 2016-2017 school year, students could take the MPC 6150 Writing course before they take the MPC 6010 Intro to Grad Studies/Theory course. Starting Spring 2018, we will offer the Intro course (6010) every fall/spring to ensure that students newly admitted in either the Fall or the Spring start with the intro course and take writing in their second/third semester. In short, we are going to do more to ensure students take the classes in the order that best scaffolds/supports student learning across the curriculum. We believe that formative assessment on writing in the MPC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Studies class will produce stronger writers when we comprehensively assess writing in the MPC 6150 Writing class.

- 2) We are interested in better understanding how departments/programs assess their graduating seniors or graduate students. Please provide a short narrative describing the practices/curriculum in place for your department/program. Please include both direct and indirect measures employed. Finally, what were your findings from this past year's graduates?
1. We assess MPC 6900/6950 Academic Thesis & Projects for all students who complete a thesis or project in the program. Those theses or projects are typically completed in the last (or second to last) semester before graduation. These serve as direct measures of student learning on a variety of program outcomes (writing, research, theory, etc.). The thesis/project track is optional, but it is often completed by 35-50% of the graduating students.
  2. We also assess final projects in all of our core elective courses. Students must take 4/6 of the core electives and students who do NOT choose the thesis/project track typically take additional course (e.g. a 5<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup>) as part of their coursework to complete for graduation. This serves as a direct measure of student learning in those courses.



3. We gather two forms of indirect measures – student exit surveys and student post-graduation employment information. Student exit surveys ask them to report on their own sense of learning (among other factors) to help us better the program. Post-graduation employment information (which is gathered primarily through LinkedIn) helps us see evidence of career success from our graduates.

I have spent some time looking to see if there are any reasonable normed measure we could use as an “exit” assessment for our program. There is no such measure provided by our national organization (the National Communication Association), nor could I find one for a Masters in Professional communication. As a statistics teacher myself, I wish we had a normed quantitative measure to compare, but I believe we will have to keep refining our internal assessment to measure our students. That is a big part of why we intend to spend substantial time standardizing assessment definitions and developing uniform scales across classes over the next few months.

Overall, we believe that our students are performing well and demonstrating evidence of learning. Though our students demonstrate some struggle on assessment measures early in the program (writing, for example, which is currently assessed in a writing class taken in the first semester or two), our measures near the end of the program demonstrate that students who have chosen to do a thesis or project, for example, are generally strong writers. Our student exit surveys generally show students reporting that they feel as if they gained career-practical knowledges and skills through the program and that they use those skills in both their places of employment and their interpersonal lives. The career data we are able to track on our students do indirectly agree that students are frequently moving “up” in their careers in the time after graduation.