WSU Five-Year Program Review
Self-Study

Cover Page

Department/Program: Master of Professional Communication

Semester Submitted: Fall 2025

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Brief Introductory Statement
(Should align with or complement the Annual Strategic Planning Report)

The Master of Professional Communication (MPC) program at Weber State University prepares working professionals with the advanced communication knowledge and skills necessary to lead and collaborate effectively in today's rapidly changing, technology-driven environment. The program emphasizes applied expertise in writing, speaking, new media, and research methods, supported by coursework in organizational leadership, strategic and visual communication, facilitation, and team building.

The Workforce and Higher Education report, commissioned by the Utah System of Higher Education, emphasized that while Utah graduates possess strong technical skills, employers would like to see improvements in communication and other essential skills. This finding aligns closely with similar observations in other studies, which consistently confirm that communication-related skills are among the most sought after by employers. The MPC provides students with the resources to meet those demands.

A majority of MPC students are working professionals who are interested in enhancing their current skill sets and preparing themselves for advancement in their fields. Our students represent significant diversity in the fields in which they work. For most industries, strong communication skills provide a competitive advantage that is often overlooked in technical or applied fields.

The MPC program's mission is to cultivate ethical, adaptable, and culturally aware communicators who can think critically, lead strategically, and contribute meaningfully across professional contexts. Graduates advance in roles within corporate, government, nonprofit, and educational settings, often progressing to leadership positions in strategic communication, public relations, health promotion, and organizational training. Some pursue doctoral study or higher education careers, extending the program's impact beyond the professional sphere.

In alignment with ongoing institutional review and feedback, the MPC program continues to refine its curriculum and assessment practices to ensure consistency, academic rigor, and professional relevance across all delivery formats.

Standard A - Mission Statement

a. Description of Program Mission

In fall 2025, the faculty of the Master of Professional Communication (MPC) program revisited and refined the program's mission to ensure continued alignment with the evolving communication landscape and Weber State University's institutional priorities. The updated statement preserves the program's long-standing emphasis on theoretically grounded and applied practice while making more explicit the program's focus on **critical thinking, ethical communication, and cultural competence**. It also recognizes the growing importance of visual and digital media as essential components of 21st-century professional communication. The updated mission statement was voted on and approved by the full faculty of the Communication Department on November 13, 2025.

Our Mission Statement is:

> *The Master of Professional Communication program prepares working professionals with advanced knowledge and skills to communicate effectively across organizational settings. Students develop leadership, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural competence through applied research, writing, presentation, and design.*

b. Expected Outcomes and Assessment

The MPC program defines its core outcomes as the development of advanced skills in research, writing, speaking, and mediated communication—supported by critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural awareness. These outcomes are assessed through a combination of course-embedded assessments, capstone projects, and exit surveys that evaluate students' ability to synthesize theory and practice in professional contexts. Faculty review these assessment data annually to identify trends, update curriculum where needed, and ensure consistency across online and face-to-face course delivery.

c. Alignment with University and College Missions

Weber State University Mission Statement:
We transform lives and communities by educating students of all identities and backgrounds. We nurture student success through a supportive environment, individualized pathways, meaningful personal connections with faculty and staff, a blend of teaching and experiential learning, research, and civic engagement.

College of Arts & Humanities Mission Statement:
Through the transformative power of teaching and learning, Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities explores human experiences and creations. We embrace difference and engage in academic inquiry and research, artistic expression, and meaningful service in collaborative and reflective ways.

The MPC program's mission directly supports the Weber State University mission by fostering learning through engagement, access, and community collaboration. It aligns with the College of Arts & Humanities' mission by advancing creative and ethical expression, promoting inclusive dialogue, and preparing graduates to contribute to a diverse and interconnected world. By emphasizing applied, ethical, and culturally competent communication, the MPC program embodies the university's commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

d. Strategic Planning and Continuous Review

Program-level strategic planning plays a crucial role in maintaining alignment between the MPC mission and institutional objectives. The faculty regularly reviews the mission as part of ongoing strategic planning, integrating feedback from students, alumni, and industry partners to ensure relevance and responsiveness. This reflective process enables the program to adapt to technological, social, and professional changes while maintaining academic rigor and coherence with the college and university's strategic priorities.

Program Inventory

All Programs Offered (add rows as needed):

Current Year							
CIP Code	**Award Level**	**Program Name**	**Fall 3rd Week Enrollment**				
			2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
090101	GRAD	Master of Professional Communication	51	56	43	41	54
		TOTAL Department Faculty FTE*	36.5	37.2	37.5	35.5	NA
		Department Faculty-to-Student Ratio*	14.9	13.7	13.5	13.5	NA

*Note: The MPC program does not have any dedicated faculty. All MPC courses are taught by faculty in the Department of Communication. The numbers represented here are for the Department of Communication.

Provide a one-to-three paragraph description of each of the department's academic program offerings. Include explanations of emphases and concentrations.

The Master of Professional Communication (MPC) program offers an academically rigorous and professionally focused graduate education designed to advance communication theory and practice. Housed within the Department of Communication, the program integrates core coursework in advanced writing, presentation, new media, and research methods with specialized courses in strategic communication, organizational leadership, visual and mediated communication, and team facilitation. The curriculum strikes a balance between theoretical grounding and applied skill development, enabling students to explore communication as both an academic discipline and a professional practice.

The program's flexible structure accommodates both full-time students and working professionals, offering evening and online course options that maintain consistent academic quality across delivery formats. Small class sizes facilitate meaningful interactions between faculty and students, promote mentorship, and encourage collaborative learning. Through this diverse academic portfolio, the MPC program provides a comprehensive graduate education that reflects the department's commitment to ethical reasoning, critical thinking, and cultural

competence—core values that align with the missions of the College of Arts & Humanities and Weber State University.

Standard B - Curriculum

All of the 6000-level MPC courses are delivered in an eight-week hybrid format. Students attend one three-hour class per week and engage in asynchronous out-of-class learning to fulfill the remaining requirements for a three-credit course.

All MPC students are required to take nine credits of the following Foundational Courses:

- MPC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Study and Communication Theory
- MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communicators
- MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking in the Workplace

Additionally, all MPC students must choose to take one of the following courses to fulfill a Research Methods requirement:

- MPC 6700 Qualitative Communication Research & Analysis
- MPC 6710 Communication Survey Design & Analysis

MPC students are given the ability to choose four of the following six Core Courses:

- MPC 6100 Team Building and Facilitation
- MPC 6300 New Media in Professional Communication
- MPC 6350 Visual Communication in the Workplace
- MPC 6400 Leadership Communication
- MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication
- MPC 6600 Strategic Communication

To complete the program, MPC students choose one of three options

- Thesis Track:
    - Students register for six credits of Thesis/Project I and II (MPC 6900 & MPC 6950). They complete a research project in consultation with the MPC director and their thesis advisor.
    - Students also register for three credits of an elective course.
- Project Track:
    - Students register for three credits of Thesis/Project I (MPC 6900). They complete an applied project in consultation with the MPC director.
    - Students also register for six credits of elective courses.
- Coursework Track:
    - Students register for nine credits of elective courses
    - Students complete a portfolio for department submission

Course Rotation

The MPC provides a course rotation that has been updated since the last program review. The course rotation plan is posted on weber.edu/mpc (also available in a downloadable version), and physical copies

are available in the department office. The course rotation is reviewed every two years to assist with student planning and is scheduled for review and update in Spring 2026.

Curriculum Map

Core Courses in Department/Program	Department/Program Learning Outcomes				
	Writing/ editing	Present (oral/ visual) skills	Critical Thinking, Ethics, and Cultural Competence *Updated 2025 per review	Research	Knowledge in cognate areas
MPC 6010 Into to Graduate Studies/Theory	I		I	I	I
MPC 6100 Team Building and Facilitation		I	I	I	E
MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communicators	E		I	E	I
MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking in the Workplace		E	I		
MPC 6250 Interviewing				E	E
MPC 6300 New Media in Professional Communication		I	I		E
MPC 6350 Visual Communication in the Workplace		E	I		E
MPC 6400 Leadership Communication			E	E	E
MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication	I		E	E	E
MPC 6500 Topics in Professional Communication*	V	V	V	V	E
MPC 6600 Strategic Communication			E	E	E

Core Courses in Department/Program	Department/Program Learning Outcomes				
	Writing/ editing	Present (oral/ visual) skills	Critical Thinking, Ethics, and Cultural Competence *Updated 2025 per review	Research	Knowledge in cognate areas
MPC 6620 Conflict Resolution & Mediation			E		E
MPC 6700 Research Methods for Professional Communication	I		E	E	
MPC 6900/6950 Thesis/Project I and II	A	A	A	A	E

Note: 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).

I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill.
E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill.
A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill.
V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.

Curriculum Planning and Review Narrative (2025 Update)
The MPC curriculum is designed and reviewed through an intentional process that aligns program learning outcomes with the mission of Weber State University and the College of Arts & Humanities. Faculty meet annually to evaluate curriculum effectiveness using student assessment data, course evaluations, and capstone project outcomes. Adjustments are made as needed to ensure academic rigor, relevance, and consistency across delivery formats.
Strategic planning informs curricular updates through collaboration among faculty, the program director, and the advisory board. Courses are regularly offered on a rotating schedule to support timely degree completion, and instructional resources are allocated to maintain small class sizes and strong faculty mentorship. The curriculum reflects ongoing attention to ethical reasoning, critical thinking, and cultural competence as core dimensions of professional communication education.

Web address for WSU catalog page.

Weber State Catalog Page for MPC (2025-2026 School Year):
https://catalog.weber.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=24&poid=12114&hl=MPC&returnto=search

Note: Define words, letters, or symbols used and their interpretation; i.e., 1= introduced, 2 = developed, 3 = mastered. Assessed comprehensively, or I = Introduced, E = Emphasized, U = Utilized, A = Assessed comprehensively; these are examples, departmental choice of letters/numbers may differ. Be sure each outcome is assessed comprehensively at least twice within the curriculum required of all students.
Note[b]: Rows and columns may be transposed as required to meet the needs of each individual department

Describe the scope of instruction, learning outcomes, academic rigor, pedagogy, quality of assessment, and relevance for the instructional programs listed.

Standard C - Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

A. Measurable Program Learning Outcomes

a. Outcomes must be identified for every graduate degree or certificate offered by the program or department. List each credential and the associated outcomes separately.
b. Outcomes are likely to be shared between the credentials and well-defined in your curriculum grid.
c. If the program has been modified, added to, or removed from since the last review, please provide a brief narrative that discusses these changes.

At the end of their study at Weber State University, students in the Master of Professional Communication (MPC) program will be able to:

1. Write and edit at a level commensurate with professional and managerial communication standards.

2. Present information orally and visually with clarity, confidence, and professionalism in applied communication contexts.

3. Demonstrate critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural competence in professional and academic communication settings.

4. Conduct academic or applied research, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret data to inform communication decisions.

5. Integrate knowledge across one or more cognate areas—such as strategic, organizational, or mediated communication—to address real-world challenges.

Narrative:
These outcomes were reaffirmed and refined in 2025 to align with Weber State University's emphasis on critical thinking, ethics, and cultural awareness. The faculty reviewed program outcomes as part of the strategic planning and assessment cycle, confirming that they continue to reflect the MPC program's mission and the needs of both professional and academic constituencies. The learning outcomes are directly linked to the MPC curriculum map and serve as the foundation for ongoing assessment and curriculum development.

b. Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Program

Faculty have primarily assessed the program outcomes by collecting data in courses that focus on specific learning outcomes. Since the last program review, we changed the scale from a 5-point scale to a 3-point scale (3-Exceeds expectations, 2-Meets expectations, 1-Does not meet expectations). We are attempting to evaluate the entire program. For assessment, we identified courses that can act as an early benchmark and a capstone course. For example, MPC 6010, Introduction to Graduate Study and Communication Theory, serves as an early benchmark for MPC 6900 or the student portfolio, which acts as the capstone. We then compare the assessment data from those two courses as a bit of a pre- and post-test model to measure improvement.

Faculty assess courses by uploading the rubric into their Canvas course and then complete it at the end of the semester. Student learning outcomes are attached to the course and embedded into the rubric. However, often after submitting grades, the completion rate for these rubrics leaves room for improvement. We discussed various strategies among the faculty to serve as reminders, and decided to create Google Calendar appointments during the last week of classes and finals week to act as a reminder. Since the Canvas course closes, it can be harder to complete after the semester has ended.

As a faculty, we also had multiple conversations about what the 3-point scale (3-Exceeds expectations, 2-Meets expectations, 1-Does not meet expectations) measures, to ensure the numbers are consistent in meaning.

One area we need to improve is consistency in our exit surveys of MPC students who are graduating. We have experienced significant turnover in our Administrative Specialist III (three in three years). With this level of turnover, the exit survey was one area that did not receive the attention it deserved. A new version of the exit survey has been created and will be circulated to prospective graduates in the Fall of 2025.

Student learning is also assessed systematically across the MPC curriculum to measure progress toward each program outcome. Evidence of learning is collected annually from embedded course assessments, culminating projects, and capstone evaluations. The data are aggregated and reviewed at the program level to identify patterns in student achievement and to ensure that all five learning outcomes are comprehensively addressed throughout the curriculum.

Longitudinal data indicate that students who complete a thesis or professional project consistently demonstrate mastery of the program learning outcomes. Faculty have observed steady improvement in students' writing, research, and applied communication skills since the last review, due in part to revised course sequencing and enhanced faculty collaboration around assessment standards. Beginning in 2024, the program began reviewing disaggregated assessment data (by cohort and delivery format) to ensure equitable achievement and guide pedagogical refinement.

c. High-Impact and Applied Learning

High-impact educational experiences remain a cornerstone of the MPC program, providing students with opportunities for applied learning and professional engagement. All students participate in at least one writing-intensive course (e.g., MPC 6150 Professional Writing) and one research-intensive experience (e.g., MPC 6700 Qualitative Research Methods or MPC 6710 Survey Design and Analysis). These courses emphasize real-world communication challenges and require students to apply theoretical and ethical frameworks in professional contexts.

Many MPC courses incorporate community-engaged projects and client-based assignments. For example, in MPC 6100 (Team Building & Facilitation), students design and conduct focus groups for community partners, delivering actionable recommendations. In MPC 6150, students develop professional writing projects reviewed by practitioners in the field. These experiences enable students to bridge academic learning and professional practice, thereby strengthening their ability to lead and communicate effectively in diverse, real-world settings.

In the fall of 2024, we launched a paid research assistantship program that enables students to collaborate with faculty on academic research, gaining valuable research experience and earning supplementary compensation. In the spring of 2025, we expanded the assistantship model to include teaching assistantships, enabling students to partner with a faculty mentor to learn pedagogical skills. Both of these programs have been well-received by both students and faculty.

Finally, the MPC has partnered with the Communication Department to sponsor several study-abroad opportunities. In recent years, MPC students have studied in Finland and Cuba. A study abroad experience in China is scheduled for May of 2026.

d. Faculty and Advisory Involvement in Assessment

Faculty in the MPC program actively participate in curriculum development, assessment, and improvement. The program holds annual assessment meetings to review student outcome data, evaluate learning measures, and discuss adjustments to curriculum and pedagogy. Each course includes embedded assessment of program outcomes, ensuring ongoing alignment between instruction and assessment measures.

Unfortunately, the MPC Advisory Board was unable to be sustained due to the changing demands of the pandemic and the transition to a new program director. Many of the people who served on the MPC Advisory Board remained in informal contact with faculty by being invited to meetings and classes to share their expertise. We are in the process of formally reconstituting the broader Communication Advisory Board to serve all students.

Summary

Through structured assessment, faculty collaboration, and applied learning experiences, the MPC program ensures that students graduate with the advanced communication skills, ethical awareness, and professional competencies needed to lead in dynamic organizational and cultural contexts. Continuous review of learning outcomes and assessment data sustains the program's alignment with Weber State University's mission and its commitment to student success.

Please respond to this prompt:

B. *How do the program faculty assess their instructional program offerings and outcomes? Do program faculty engage advisory groups such as local and state employers in assessment? If not, how do the program faculty ensure learning and content are relevant?*

Addressed in section d

C. Other programs

a. General Education Outcomes (if applicable)

Provide a brief summary of the program's contribution to supporting, improving, and/or revitalizing the General Education program at WSU:

b. Concurrent Enrollment (if applicable)
c. Other interdisciplinary work

D.

Five/Seven-year Assessment Summary

[In this section you should provide a summary of your assessment findings and actions since your last program review. Annual assessment reports for each of those years can be found at https://www.weber.edu/ie/Results/Department_Results.html. Please be sure to include information from each of the four (or six) years prior to this report. If you do have data to report for the last academic year, evidence-of-learning grids can be included in appendix G.]

Assessment of Graduating Students

A narrative describing assessment processes for graduating students (at the associate, bachelor, and/or graduate level) should be provided.

The MPC program employs both direct and indirect assessment measures to evaluate student achievement of learning outcomes. Direct assessment occurs through the program's culminating experiences, which provide students with opportunities to synthesize theoretical knowledge and professional skills in communication research, writing, and application.

Two of the three degree "paths" lead to culminating projects:

1. Academic Thesis Path: Students complete MPC 6900 and MPC 6950, producing a formal written thesis evaluated by a faculty committee using a standardized rubric aligned with program learning outcomes.

2. Professional Project Path: Students complete MPC 6900, designing and implementing a professional communication project. These projects are evaluated using rubrics that measure the integration of research, writing, and strategic communication skills.

3. The third path consists of a coursework-based capstone drawn from approved advanced electives. Faculty assess learning within these courses by comparing student performance to benchmarks established in foundational courses such as MPC 6010 (Intro to Graduate Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods). This provides a longitudinal view of student growth across the program.

Indirect assessment measures include graduate exit surveys, alumni feedback, and employment outcomes. These data provide evidence of students' career advancement, professional achievement, and continued engagement in communication-related fields. Faculty review both direct and indirect assessment data annually

to identify trends, ensure consistency across delivery formats, and discuss curricular adjustments during end-of-year assessment meetings.

Standard D - Academic Advising and Student Engagement

Advising Strategy and Process

The graduate program director serves as the academic advisor for prospective and current MPC students. The program director advises prospective students on prerequisites based on an evaluation of their undergraduate transcripts. Because MPC students primarily take required courses in their first three semesters, the advising load for first-year students is not overly heavy.

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. 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

The graduate program director also consistently attends the first evening of the first required MPC course – MPC 6010, Introduction to Graduate Studies & Theory – where he presents students with a paper copy of the degree requirements and discusses them with all students.
Additionally, the program director makes recommendations to accommodate the unique enrollment needs of individual students.

Second-year students receive advising emails before registration opens each semester, containing 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 typically consult with the program director for advising once a semester during their second year to ensure they stay on track for graduation.

Additionally, numerous resources are available to help students understand their degrees. There are degree maps, which chart out an ideal two-year plan, summary lists of all classes required for the degrees, and an automated program, CatTracks, that allows students to track their progress through their degrees.

Effectiveness of Advising

Currently, there are no major issues with advising; however, with the recent growth in the program, advising is becoming a larger portion of the graduate director's work responsibilities. Further growth may necessitate the addition of advisors to fulfill students' needs. Students can meet with a faculty member who understands the degree requirements, consult materials that reinforce these requirements, and track their progress through CatTracks. Our time-to-graduation rates suggest that students are, on average, making adequate and timely progress.

Past Changes and Future Recommendations

We have no current recommendations for advising, as the system generally works well for the number of students we serve in the program. The graduate program director has a teaching release time of two classes per semester for program administration, and at this time, that time is sufficient to meet the advising and administrative demands.

Please respond to the following prompt:

What strengths/weaknesses do the programs have with recruiting and retaining students from a variety of backgrounds? How is student success supported within the program(s)?

Strengths:

The MPC is well-positioned to recruit and retain students from diverse backgrounds. More than half of our current students come from non-Communication undergraduate programs. The skills and principles taught in the MPC are designed to help students from any industry develop the necessary skills to transition into leadership positions. Importantly, communication skills are largely transferable across industries and serve as a competitive advantage in many fields. The program's focus on applied communication skills, leadership, and digital media is especially appealing to mid-career professionals seeking advancement across multiple industries.

Further, the MPC program demonstrates a strong commitment to accessibility. The flexible, hybrid course delivery format, which offers both in-person and online options, supports working professionals, non-traditional students, and those balancing family or career obligations. Faculty members actively engage in personalized mentorship, creating an inclusive and supportive environment that welcomes students from diverse educational and professional backgrounds.

To capitalize on the recruitment and retention of Weber State's excellent undergraduate Communication graduates, the MPC program is in the process of implementing an accelerated master's program for Weber State Communication Department students who are excelling in their undergraduate studies. This program would enable these students to begin taking up to 12 credits of MPC courses in their senior year that would count toward both their MPC degree and their undergraduate degree. We believe that this program will be a strong recruitment tool for both the MPC and the undergraduate Communication program.

Weaknesses:

The program's current marketing efforts rely heavily on regional networks and word of mouth, which can limit their reach to more diverse populations outside Northern Utah. Additionally, limited scholarship opportunities and a lack of awareness about graduate assistantships may pose barriers for first-generation and lower-income students. Strengthening partnerships with primarily undergraduate institutions and local businesses could help expand recruitment pipelines.

Support for Student Success

The MPC program prioritizes student success through small class sizes, close faculty mentorship, and applied learning opportunities. Faculty members maintain frequent contact with students, providing individualized feedback and guidance on professional development. The program also integrates capstone projects and real-world client work, enhancing both academic learning and employability.

Students benefit from strong institutional support services, such as the Writing Center, Career Services, and library research assistance. The program's emphasis on collaborative learning fosters a strong sense of community and peer support. Continued development of alumni networking opportunities and internship connections would further strengthen student outcomes and long-term career success.

Name	Degree	Title	Type (tenure, tenure track, contract or adjunct)
Atkins, Aaron*	Ph.D. E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University	Assistant Professor	Tenure-Track
Ault, Michael *	Ph.D. University of Oklahoma	Associate Professor	Tenured
Baltazar, Andrea*	M.F.A. Pepperdine University	Associate Professor	Tenured
Bialowas, Anne*	Ph.D. University of Utah	Professor	Tenured
Carver, Deann*	M.A. Westminster University	Instructor	Contract
Chen, Li*	Ph.D. Syracuse University	Assistant Professor	Tenure-Track
Corbin, Nicola*	Ph.D. University of Georgia	Professor	Tenured
deSeriere, Nikki	M.A. Kansas State University	Instructor	Contract
Felt, Mylynn*	Ph.D. University of Calgary	Assistant Professor	Tenure-Track
Gillen Hoke, Hailey*	Ph.D. West Virginia University	Professor	Tenured
Haislett, Robin*	Ph.D. Texas Tech University	Assistant Professor	Tenure Track
Hales, Natalie	M.P.C. Weber State University	Instructor	Contract
Howerton, Leslie*	Ph.D. University of Oregon	Assistant Professor	Tenure Track
Johnson, Lauren	M.A. University of Wyoming	Instructor	Contract
Josephson, Sheree *	Ph.D. University of Utah	Professor	Tenured
Kassler, Katie*	Ph.D. University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Assistant Professor	Tenure Track
Lancaster, Alexander L.*	Ph.D., West Virginia University	Associate Professor	Tenured

McAllister, James	M.F.A. University of Utah	Instructor	Contract
Norman, Jean	Ph.D. University of Nevada, Las Vegas	Professor	Tenured
Packer, Colleen *	Ph.D. University of Utah	Professor	Tenured
Rodriguez, Nathan *	Ph.D. University of Kansas	Associate Professor,	Tenured
Salmon, Stephen	J.D. Vermont Law School	Instructor	Contract
Schnabel, Elaine*	Ph.D. University of North Carolina	Assistant Professor	Tenure Track
Steimel, Sarah *	PhD-University of Nebraska- Lincoln	Professor,	Tenured
Warnock, Brent	M.A. University of Utah	Instructor	Contract

Faculty Scholarship

Publications

Faculty have produced more scholarship in recent years than at any other point in the Department's history. They have published 51 scholarly journal articles and book chapters. In Appendix I is a list of published scholarship and creative works in the last five years.

Conference Presentations/Editorial Boards

Other scholarship includes numerous conference presentations at regional, national, and international conferences. Several faculty members regularly review articles for journals and conferences. Faculty members often serve as reviewers for the National Communication Association in divisions such as G.I.F.T.S. and Organizational Communication, while participating in and reviewing with regional organizations like the Central States Communication Association, the Eastern States Communication Association, and the Western States Communication Association. Other faculty members are members of and actively engaged with the following professional organizations: the Broadcast Education Association's Interactive Media & Emerging Technologies division, the Association for Business Communication, the Utah Bar Association, the American Journalism Historians Association, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and the International Communication Association.

Research Support

The department generally supports scholarly and professional development with a yearly allotment of $400 for each full-time faculty member. Faculty can apply for funding from the dean's office with contributions up to $1,250 in travel funds yearly to faculty members actively pursuing scholarship. In addition, the department typically supports faculty members with an additional $5,000 (split into $2,500 for Fall and $2,500 for Spring)

out of the money received from Concurrent Enrollment tuition. Faculty members must apply for these funds, and a review committee, consisting of faculty, evaluates the proposals for funding. The full faculty votes and approves the committee's recommendation at a faculty meeting. Most recently, in Fall 2025, seven faculty members received funding for travel. Some faculty have competed for and received research and scholarship monies from special accounts on campus, such as the Research, Scholarship and Professional Growth (RS&PG) fund, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), Center for Community-Engaged Learning (CCEL), the Presidential Teaching Scholarship, and the Brady Presidential Distinguished Professor award. The department also supports faculty who attend conferences by covering classes and other assignments. Overall, faculty members can receive support for research, but it often involves cobbling together funding from multiple sources on campus, which can be time-consuming.

Mentoring Activities

The Department of Communication assigns mentors to new faculty. Also, before a new faculty member begins, they are provided with an orientation guide about the department that covers everything from how to obtain keys to an overview of the department committees and when faculty meetings are typically held. This was created since the last program review and has been shared with new faculty members to help acclimate them before they arrive. New faculty have indicated that the guide is helpful, and it has been shared with other departments within A/H as a model. Faculty serve as advisors and mentors to help new faculty members learn about the organizational culture and address their questions. The dean also provides funding so that the faculty member can take their mentee out to lunch one time. New full-time faculty members are also encouraged to attend the New Faculty Retreat, an overnight, off-campus event. This helps faculty to learn about Weber State and build relationships with others across campus who are also new.

The dean's office also takes an active role in mentoring new faculty and has created, in Fall 2024, a new robust mentoring program under the Associate Dean, who is also a faculty member from the Department of Communication. At the college level, every new faculty member is paired with an existing faculty member (tenure-track or instructor) from another department in the College of Arts and Humanities to provide them a resource and a sounding board outside their home department. The College sponsors monthly conversations on topics of interest to new faculty members and their mentors (e.g., tips for teaching WSU students, getting involved in service without getting overwhelmed, preparing for Rank & Tenure, or Annual performance review). Mentors are encouraged to check in with the new faculty at least monthly in the first year and as is mutually beneficial beyond that point.

Ongoing Review and Professional Development

Faculty members undergo review with the goal of enhancing their teaching, promoting scholarship, and upholding a tradition of strong service. Every year, the dean of the College of Arts & Humanities requires all full-time faculty to submit a Faculty Annual Report (FAR) to document performance and accomplishments in the academic year. The FAR is typically due in February. The Department Chair writes a personalized response to each faculty member, which is also shared with the dean. In years when merit raises are awarded, these are based on the results of this evaluation. Teaching in the department includes a peer review by three members of an Evaluation of Peer Instruction Committee (EPIC) for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members.

Tenure reviews assess teaching (including peer, student, and administrative evaluations), scholarship/creative performance, and service. These reviews involve an extensive evaluation by the Department Rank and Tenure Committee, the department chair, the College Rank and Tenure Committee, and, finally, the dean. Candidates complete a second-year review by the chair. During this chair-level review, the chair observes one class, reviews materials from at least one course in depth, and then meets one-on-one with the faculty member to discuss the classroom observation and materials. A letter summarizing these observations is then placed in the candidate's file. This is followed by a formal third-year tenure review. Tenure-track faculty are considered for tenure in their sixth year. They undergo the EPIC teaching review again, followed by reviews from the department committee, the college committee, the dean, and the provost. Tenure and promotion are approved by the President's Council.

To help clarify this process, the department created extensive Tenure, Promotion, Post-Tenure, and Triennial Evaluation Guidelines and Procedures, which were approved by department faculty on March 14, 2024. This document was first drafted by more senior faculty members in the department and then revised in smaller groups throughout the year to ensure that all faculty members could ask questions as needed. Key takeaways from this process included a meeting in the Fall semester of all faculty members under review with the department rank and tenure committee. Also included in this document are the types of evidence and documentation that might show teaching effectiveness and service. While the final document is helpful for faculty, the process itself proved beneficial in demystifying the process. Another outcome is that some faculty have requested a faculty mentor to review their file before submitting it.

Once tenured, faculty members are evaluated as they seek promotion. Faculty members may seek promotion to full professor in their 10th year unless they petition for early promotion. Promotion reviews assess teaching (including both peer evaluations and student evaluations), scholarship/creative activities, and service with the multiple levels of review described above. Tenured faculty who do not seek promotion to full professor are reviewed every five years in a post-tenure review process that has been modified slightly by HB 438 (https://le.utah.gov/~2024/bills/static/HB0438.html). They complete an in-depth evaluation of their teaching with our EPIC process. Following HB 438, they are evaluated by a college committee, with one member serving as the department chair. Tenured faculty who have earned the rank of full professor are also reviewed every five years. The post-tenure review process also includes peer, student, and administrative evaluations of teaching, assessing scholarly and creative performance, as well as service. Performance compensation awards with $5,000 salary bumps can be earned post-tenure, but candidates must meet the same qualifications as those in tenure and promotion reviews.

Contract faculty undergo EPIC reviews at the end of their first year and then every three years. This is in addition to regular evaluation by students.

Student Evaluation

At the end of each semester, the department administers the Instructor and Course Evaluation Form online to gather data on teaching effectiveness from students' perspectives. Since the evaluations are administered online, instructors and the department must take steps to encourage students to participate in them. These evaluations are read by the program director. Since the last program review in Fall 2022, the evaluation instrument has shifted away from a 1-5 point scale and is now focused on personal reflection by the student and feedback to the faculty. Faculty are also no longer compared to one another quantitatively, and a faculty member's student evaluations may not be used as the only source of evidence for instructional effectiveness (PPM 3.3 Student Evaluations).

Teaching, Research, and Service Awards
In the last five years, several faculty members have been recognized for major awards:

- Brady Presidential Distinguished Professor Award: Sarah Steimel
- Fulbright: Sarah Steimel and Sheree Josephson
- Presidential Teaching Excellence Award: Nicola Corbin and Jean Norman
- Lindquist Award: Alex Lancaster
- RISE (Research, Impact, Success, and Emerging Research Awards): Elaine Schnabel
- Clifford P. Cheney Service to Journalism award from the Utah Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists: Sheree Josephson

Service Responsibilities on Campus
Our faculty are often called upon to lead important service responsibilities on campus:

- Associate Dean LCAH: Sarah Steimel
- Graduate Studies Director of all Graduate Programs: Sarah Steimel
- Director of the Center of Excellence for Teaching and Learning: Colleen Packer and Nicola Corbin
- Chair, Research, Scholarship, and Professional Growth Committee (RSPG): Aaron Atkins
- Faculty Ombuds: Colleen Packer
- Faculty in Residence-Center for Community Engaged Learning: Alex Lancaster
- Graduate Studies Leadership Team: Michael Ault

Programmatic/Departmental Teaching Standards

MPC courses are taught in eight-week blocks using a blended learning format that includes three hours of face-to-face instruction per week, supplemented with online learning. Faculty use Canvas, the campus learning management system, to provide the online course components. Most courses incorporate a range of teaching methods, including lectures and discussions, case studies, guest speakers, group activities, presentations, and computer lab exercises.

Faculty Qualifications

Faculty members who teach in the MPC program are required to have either a Ph.D. in Communication or a master's degree in Communication, plus at least five years' work experience as a communication professional.

Please respond to the following prompt:
Describe faculty engagement in department governance, in academic planning, and in maintaining a positive learning environment for its students.

Faculty Engagement in Governance and Academic Planning

Faculty in the MPC program are highly engaged in both program governance and development. They actively participate in faculty meetings, curriculum committees, admissions committees, and initiatives that shape the program's direction. Decision-making is a collaborative process, with faculty contributing to curriculum revisions, course design, and assessment planning to ensure alignment with both institutional goals and industry needs. Faculty members regularly review program learning outcomes and student feedback to maintain academic rigor and relevance in an evolving communication landscape.

Maintaining a Positive Learning Environment

Faculty members play a central role in creating and sustaining a positive, inclusive, and student-centered learning environment. They maintain open lines of communication with students, provide timely and constructive feedback, and emphasize mentorship throughout the program. Small class sizes facilitate meaningful interactions between faculty and students, allowing instructors to tailor their approach to diverse learning needs and professional goals.

In addition, MPC faculty are committed to experiential and project-based learning, ensuring that students gain practical, marketable skills. Many integrate real-world client projects and community engagement into their courses, helping students build confidence and professional networks. This supportive and collaborative culture contributes significantly to student satisfaction, retention, and post-graduate success.

Standard F – Program Support
Support Staff, Administration, Facilities, Equipment, and Library

Adequacy of Staff

i. Include evidence of ongoing Staff Development

Adequacy of Administrative Support

Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment

Adequacy of Library Resources

Adequacy of Staff

The current office support staff for the MPC is one 30-hour-per-week administrative specialist. The program recently filled the 30-hour-a-week administrative specialist position. Over the last five years, we have had five different MPC administrative specialists, which has put a strain on the program director and the Department of

Communication's administrative specialist, who often needs to step in to train new admins and fill in during periods of admin turnover. The MPC recently hired a social media manager to work 5-10 hours a week in Summer 2025.

The program's administrative specialist attends periodic training and workshops to learn and stay up-to-date on university systems and processes. In accordance with university procedures, classified staff are reviewed via WSU's Performance Review and Enrichment Program (PREP) each academic year, where goals are jointly discussed and reviewed. Since the last program review, the university has transitioned to a new online reconciling platform (Concur), which has required time to get faculty up to speed. The Communication Department's administrative specialist has done an outstanding job learning this new system and providing support to faculty and the MPC administration. Overall, the exceptional ability and commitment of our limited staff play a crucial role in the department's success.

Adequacy of Administrative Support

The Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities holds monthly meetings, led by the dean, for department chairs and program directors. The agenda and meeting minutes are shared on a Google document. The dean also meets once a month, one-on-one with department chairs and graduate program directors, to be up to date on any issues. The dean's office works hard to support students in attending conferences, traveling, or other special events and opportunities by allowing students and/or faculty to apply for special funds. The dean's office also supports faculty travel/research with multiple calls for applications and awards of up to $1,250 a year per faculty member. There has been some turnover in the dean's office since the dean began with the college, with the third marketing director now in place, but a new outreach plan is underway. There is also a College Development position that has experienced turnover, with three individuals holding this position during the program review time period. There is a College IT Support Professional who provides support for faculty.

Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment

The roughly 16-year-old Elizabeth Hall provides a nice setting for faculty and staff to work and for students to learn. Most faculty offices have good furniture and windows that afford views with natural light. All classrooms are "smart" with the necessary equipment to support teaching and learning. Most classrooms have comfortable seating for students, but over time, some of our classrooms need replacement chairs and updated furniture. Additionally, since the last program review, we have converted audio/editing labs into offices for an MPC administrative staff member. This is not ideal office space, as the desks are not at the correct height, and the space is not very large. We have requested modifications and expressed the need for adequate office space, but we have not been granted any funding to make adjustments, let alone fix the desk height. Furthermore, with the addition of an extra tenure-track faculty line, we will require an extra office.

Although not ideal, we have course fees for several classes. Course fees are the primary funding mechanism that enables us to support technology in the classroom, such as teaching station computers and projectors. One way we utilize course fees is to apply for an ARCC grant in Fall 2021/Spring 2022 to match our approximately $12,000, which will help fund equipment. Furthermore, we use course fees to update our computer lab every five to six years. We were able to update our computer lab in EH-Hall 314 in Spring 2025 with 25 Macs after saving for roughly six years. While it is not ideal to ask students for course fees, we save the funds to purchase equipment. It can be problematic as it takes time to build up savings for expensive equipment, and we are

concerned that accounts with amounts not spent may come under scrutiny, but we are attempting to be diligent and save. We have been able to update some of our Digital Media Studio 76 space by applying for Perkins Grant money (in Summer 2021, 2023, and 2024), which combined totaled roughly $150,000. This has been a tremendous help, but there is still more updating to be done, as some of our equipment was so old that it could not be supported on campus-wide networks.

Adequacy of Library Resources

The department receives strong support from Stewart Library. Requests for books, videos, and other instructional materials are regularly honored. Library personnel are available to department classes for instruction on library use and research. Interlibrary loan means that faculty and students can obtain any resource possible.

Standard G - Relationships with External Communities

Description of Role in External Communities

Guest Speakers and Clients
Faculty members regularly invite community members to speak to MPC classes. Classes also provide regular pro bono public relations, advertising, and audio/video work for a variety of community organizations, serving two purposes: enhancing the educational opportunities of students and allowing faculty to interact with professionals in the community. Some notable clients for courses include the Loveland Aquarium, Swig, Ogden Made, UTA, Ogden City, and National Geographic.

Professional Contacts (National and Local Boards)
Faculty members also serve on national and local boards that are not directly related to the discipline, but draw on content expertise. For example, a faculty member serves on the board of the Utah Council on Conflict Resolution and has also served as the mediator coordinator for the Utah Alternative Dispute Resolution program at Ogden Justice Court. A faculty member was the Board Chair for the DaVinci Academy of Sciences & the Arts School Board (K-12 Public Charter School in Northern Utah) and a board member. Faculty members have served as board members for the Utah Skeleton and Bobsled Association, Family Promise of Ogden, the Weber State Charter Kindergarten School Board, and as President of the Friends Board for the Weber-Morgan Children's Justice Center.

Guest Speakers
The department is frequently asked for faculty members to present on campus and in the community their expertise. Below is a representative sample of presentations done on- and off-campus, and some of the topics covered:

On Campus

- Physician Assistant Program - Professional Development 1 series: The Impact of Stress on Professionalism, and the Importance of Wellness and Resilience
- Criminal Justice CJ 4810: Guest lecture on conflict

- Geography, Environment & Sustainability Department and the Sustainability Practices and Research Center at The Sustainability Forum: Influencer Advocacy in Climate Change
- WSU PodCats Podcast – Guest on WSU PodCats podcast, a podcast created and hosted by Honors Students. On the season 4 episode titled "Setting Boundaries Within Your Relationships"
- Weber State Campus-Wide Staff Development Trainings
    - Scaling New Heights Together: Crafting Team Values for Stronger Collaboration. [Presented at Academic Affairs & Student Success Divisions' Campus-Wide Staff Development Conference]
    - Feathered Feedback: Enhancing Communication for Belonging. [Presented at Academic Affairs & Student Success Divisions' Campus-Wide Staff Development Conference]
    - Saying No with Purpose: A presentation on boundary setting for success in the workplace. [Presented as part of Employee Learning Week]

Off-Campus Organizations
Utah Association of Public Treasurers Training Academy: Time management training, writing
National Federation of the Blind (Weber/Davis County Branch)
Young Mazda: Power of communication
Trails Foundation of Northern Utah
NHL Utah Hockey Club: Workplace training
Utah Department of Wildlife Resources: Workplace training
Supreme Court of Utah: Leadership and team building training
Utah State Court Clerks
Family promise: Event planning and organizing a fun run
Catalyst Campus: Training on organizational structuring for rapid expansion and growth
Catalyst Campus: Conflict management
Nonprofit Executive Director Training: Using AI tools in nonprofit work and delivering feedback
United Way of Northern Utah: Delivering meaningful feedback
Middle Tennessee State University: Interview and design and application
Utah PRSSA Workshop: How to use Generative AI in communication and professional activities
Generative AI in communication-related
University of Alberta: Social network analysis
American Society of Military Comptrollers
FanX Salt Lake Comic Convention: Public Relations to promote puppy lounge and pet adoption
Weber-Morgan Children's Justice Center: Public relations services

Summary of External Advisory Committee Minutes

Community and Graduate Success

Community and Graduate Success

One way we celebrate graduate success is with a Spring awards ceremony that honors the top overall graduate in the MPC, in which faculty present them with a speech of recognition. Honored students are encouraged to bring friends and family to the celebratory event. We select a student speaker from the outstanding graduating class to address the audience. We often have a photographer on site to take headshots of graduating students, helping them prepare for their post-graduation careers. Overall, it is a great way to celebrate the success of our students after many years of hard work and dedication.

The department is not satisfied with its contact with alumni. However, we don't have the personnel to do this at the department, college, or even university level. Individual faculty members have maintained contact with alumni and shared information with the grad director, who then included it in newsletters with the alumni's permission. The MPC program put together a 10-year reunion event on May 2, 2022. This event included sharing pictures, student speakers, and appetizers to reconnect socially and professionally. We shared a scholarship that alumni could donate to, and roughly 50 people (between alumni and faculty) attended the event.

We hope to address this area in the future through the reorganization of our overall Communication Advisory Board and the MPC Advisory Board. The Department of Communication has established a committee this year, entitled "Community Outreach and Student Success," to work on some of these goals. Contact with alumni will show our students what graduates do with a degree in Communication. It will also provide names our development director can contact to help raise scholarship and other funding. The MPC plans to build on the Communication department's ideas and successes to replicate this committee for the MPC.

Standard H – Program Summary
Results of Previous Program Reviews

Date of Previous Program Review: 2019		
Text of Recommendation	Intended Action	Progress (be specific)
Recommendation 1: Review team acknowledged that the mission statement generally represents the program, while asking us to reflect on being more direct with the critical thinking and cultural competence goals of the program.	Discuss at a future MPC meeting a sentence to make explicit the goal of critical thinking and cultural competence in the mission statement.	MPC faculty met and revised the mission statement (see above) to incorporate reviewers' recommendations and to more clearly and succinctly articulate the MPC mission.
Recommendation 2: Reviewers asked us to reflect on critical thinking and cultural competence being more clearly described in the curriculum	Discuss at a future meeting. Adapt syllabi, course titles, and course learning outcomes to more explicitly connect them to critical thinking and cultural competence. One idea already suggested was faculty including a statement on the syllabus how the course meets critical thinking and cultural competence.	Critical thinking and cultural competence have become a major focus of many of our course offerings. We discussed this in multiple faculty meetings and mentoring discussions especially when new faculty have joined the department.
Recommendation 3: Consistency of rigor across the curriculum.	Discuss at a future MPC meeting the rigor and consistency across courses with regard to not only syllabi, but also how faculty interpret the hybrid nature of the program. We have already begun to discuss how faculty interpret and describe hybrid in syllabi in a shared google doc. This discussion will continue.	We discussed this in multiple faculty meetings and mentoring discussions especially when new faculty have joined the department. We still could improve in making the rigor of our courses more consistent. We also have teaching training as part of each of our monthly faculty meetings.

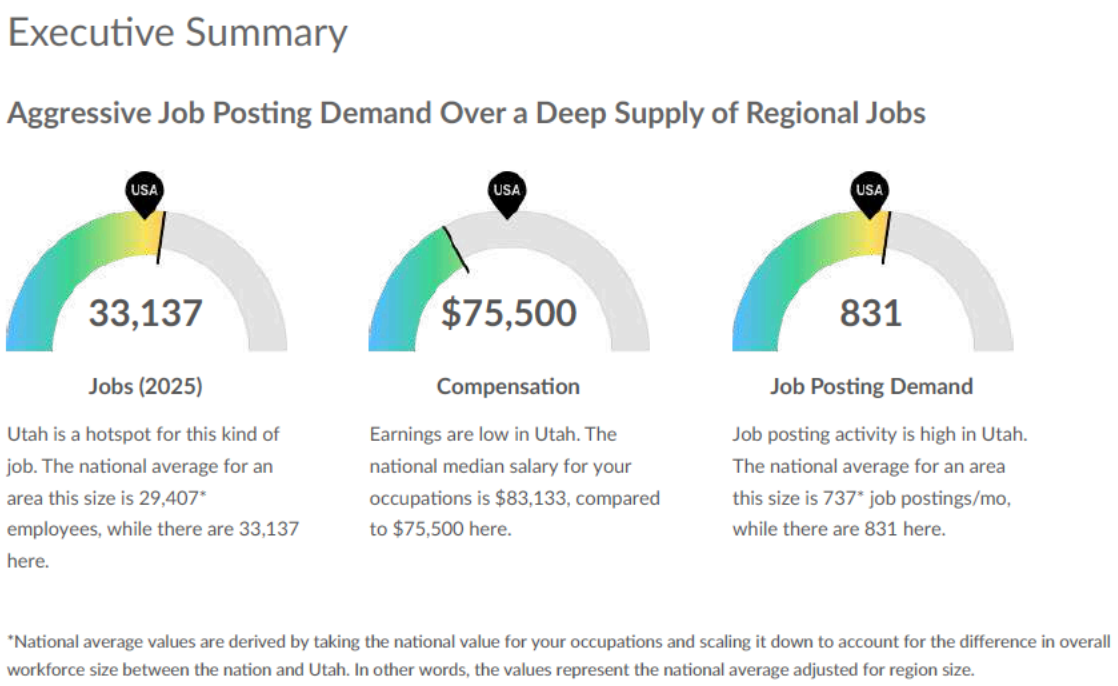
Recommendation 4: Further details could be included about completed thesis projects and community/engaged learning connections and those details could be shared more widely with stakeholders.	To better track engaged learning, we have created a google doc in which faculty can share, after a course is completed, what community partner they worked with and other deliverables like conference research presentations. This is already in process as part of overall university assessment goals for graduate programs.	We have done well to address and acknowledge faculty and student successes through the Communication Department and MPC newsletters. Our new social media manager has also collected student and faculty classwork and research to highlight on our social media accounts.
Recommendation 5: Assessment is something programs can and should continually refine. They recommend we closely follow the currently in-process changes to research methods to determine if they help better reach student learning goals.	Continue to reflect on assessment during future meeting (Spring 2021) and discuss results of separating research methods content into two courses. Fall 2020 will be the first time that research methods will be separated to discuss quantitative and qualitative methods in two courses. Continue to work with the office of Institutional Effectiveness to refine assessment practices and improve our measurement of student learning outcomes.	We have continued to monitor ways of improving our assessment tools. We are currently working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure that the program CIP codes capture what industries students work in after they complete the MPC program.

(add additional table rows as needed)
Summary Information (as needed)

Standard I – Career Outcomes; Ongoing Program Demand and Career Advising

Using the Lightcast data provided for the program, briefly describe the ongoing demand for the degrees in the program as well as the demand for jobs for which the program is preparing students.

Communication is a unique area, as there are numerous emphases and specializations that can make it challenging to find the overall job picture. Sixteen occupations were identified (Advertising and Promotions Managers, Marketing Managers, Public Relations Managers, Fundraising Managers, Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists, Producers and Directors, Broadcast Announcers and Radio Disc Jockeys, News Analysts, Reporters, and Journalists) in the Lightcast data shared with us, but we do believe our degree has so many portable skills that it is challenging to generate a perfect listing. Below is an overall snapshot of the job forecast (which, aside from compensation, is generally positive) for the 16 identified jobs:



One area that is clearly seeing market demand is in social media and data analytics. We recently created a Data Visualization and Storytelling course to capitalize on this trend. A Social Media Data Analyst helps businesses improve their online presence by studying data from websites and social media platforms. They track the number of people visiting a site, the time spent on the site, and whether purchases are made. Using this information, analysts collaborate with marketing teams to plan and execute online ads, optimize search engine results, and develop engaging content. They test web ideas, research new trends, and ensure their strategies follow e-commerce regulations while boosting a company's online success. The demand for social media and data analytics professionals is increasing:

- 72,801 jobs in Utah (2024) with a median salary 11% above the national average ($55,908 vs. $50,366).
- 12,017 new Utah jobs projected in the next decade, with 100,000+ openings nationwide (O*Net).
- 849 unique Utah job postings in December 2024 alone, with employers in healthcare, retail, marketing, and higher education urgently seeking talent.
- Roles like Social Media Analysts, SEO Managers, and Digital Marketing Strategists require specialized training in tools like Google Analytics, Hootsuite, and AI-driven analytics—skills our program provides.
- Social media and data analyst roles are in critical shortage, with Utah County employers filling positions in just 11 days—far faster than most jobs.

Over the next five years, Lightcast anticipates that employer partners will experience a significant increase in job openings in the social media field, with skill growth ranging from 9% to 17%. Expertise in content strategy, AI-driven analytics, and digital marketing will be essential to meet workforce needs (*References: Lightcast (2024), O*Net (DOL), Talent Ready Utah, U of U Peer Review).

Communication skills are often cited as the most sought-after durable skills in the Cicero report, as well as noted in NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) competencies, which are the eight skills that employers look for in new hires: Career and Self-Development, Communication, Critical Thinking, Equity and Inclusion, Leadership, Professionalism, Teamwork, and Technology.

Completions by Institution

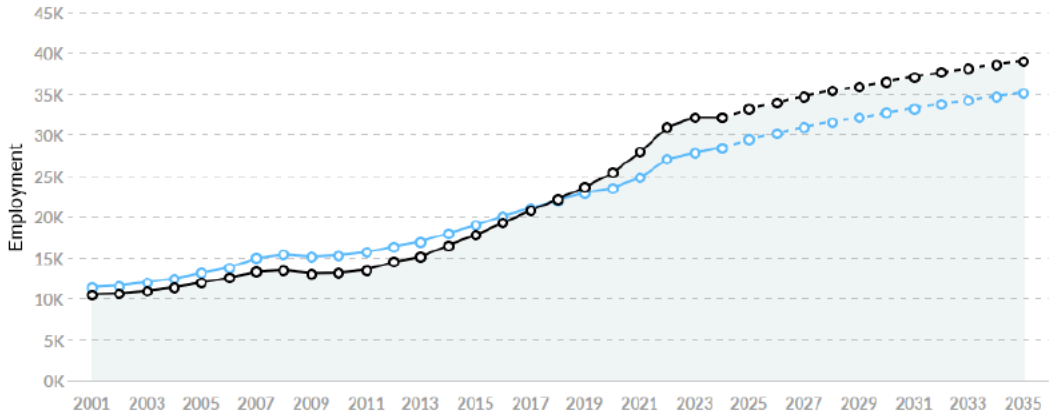
Institution	Master's Degree Completions (2023)	Growth % YOY (2023)	Market Share (2023)	IPEDS Tuition & Fees (2023)	Completions Trend (2019-2023)
Southern Utah University	32	0.0%	34.8%	$6,770	
Weber State University	27	0.0%	29.3%	$6,391	
Brigham Young University	13	-13.3%	14.1%	$6,496	
Westminster University	9	-30.8%	9.8%	$41,416	
Utah State University	7	600.0%	7.6%	$8,305	
University of Utah	4	-33.3%	4.3%	$9,315	

According to the LightCast data, Weber State has the second-highest number of completions for master's programs in the state of Utah and a 30% market share. This is impressive considering that Southern Utah's program is 100% online and can therefore recruit worldwide. Because our program focuses primarily on in-person course offerings, the majority of our students are recruited from the region. One competitive advantage that Weber State's MPC program has is the low cost of attendance. We take great pride in access and affordability. Due to the low cost for students, the MPC provides an excellent value and return on investment. The MPC's unique position as an applied degree designed to help working professionals differentiates us from BYU, Utah, and Utah State, and provides practical, in-demand skills for non-academic working professionals.

Jobs

Regional Employment Is Higher Than the National Average

An average area of this size typically has 29,407* jobs, while there are 33,137 here. This higher than average supply of jobs may make it easier for workers in this field to find employment in your area.



	Region	2025 Jobs	2035 Jobs	Change	% Change
●	Utah	33,137	39,019	5,882	17.8%
●	National Average	29,407	35,167	5,759	19.6%

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for your occupations and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Utah. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Provide information about the type of career advising available to students in the program.

Graduate students in our program have access to the Career Services office at Weber State (https://weber.edu/careerservices). That office provides a variety of career placement support services, including resume reviews, practice interviews, internship and employment fairs, job databases, and more. We have had students work with Career Services in the past.

Since many of our classroom projects are theoretically informed and applied, our students regularly develop marketable skills through our coursework. Additionally, some classes (e.g., MPC 6600 and MPC 6100) connect students to organizational clients outside the classroom. We have had several students find new work or promotions through this kind of applied networking.

Students have also utilized the project class to create a professional web-based portfolio and develop their professional communication brand on social media and online platforms. The program director utilizes the 6900 class to provide additional guidance on the job search process for students seeking this information.

Additionally, all our faculty members in the graduate program engage in informal career advising with our students.

Please respond to this prompt:
What career data does the department have about its graduates? What methods does the department use to gather information from completing students, employers, and others and how does the department use this information to improve the program offerings?

Accessing accurate and reliable data regarding our graduates has been a consistent struggle. Since the pandemic, we have not been consistent with administering exit surveys and maintaining our alumni contact information database. We hope that the reimplementation of our exit survey for graduates will provide us with greater access to data regarding career paths, salary progression, and perceived return on investment for our graduates and the organizations they work for.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Student and Faculty Statistical Summary

(*Note*: Data provided by Institutional Effectiveness. This is an extract from the Program Review Dashboard and shows what will be sent to the Boards of Trustees and Regents)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Student Credit Hours Total		906	948	976	798
Student FTE Total		45.3	47.4	48.8	39.9
Student Majors		54	51	56	43
Program Graduates		24	27	27	29
Student Demographic Profile Female		38	35	36	27
Male		16	16	20	16
Faculty FTE Total Adjunct FTE Contract FTE		36.5 23.7 12.8	37.2 24.1 13.1	37.5 25.5 12.0	35.5 22.9 12.6
Student/Faculty Ratio		14.9	13.7	13.5	13.5

Appendix B:

Faculty (note: we need to report the previous 5 years – if this has not been included in your biennial assessment report, please provide that information here – one table for each of the 5 previous years)

Faculty Headcount	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)				
Full-time Tenured	9	9	9	11
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	8	9	9	8
Part-time and adjunct	3	4	4	4
With Master's Degrees				
Full-time Tenured				
Full-time Non-Tenured	7	6	6	6
Part-time and adjunct	22	22	24	24
With Bachelor's Degrees				
Full-time Tenured	0	0	0	0
Full-time Non-tenured	0	0	0	0
Part-time and adjunct	0	0	0	0
Other				
Full-time Tenured				
Full-time Non-tenured				
Part-time				
Total Headcount Faculty				
Full-time Tenured	8	9	9	11
Full-time Non-tenured	15	15	15	13
Part-time	25	26	26	26

	Tenured	Tenure-Track	Other Contract	Adjunct
Number of faculty with Doctoral degrees	11	8		
Number of faculty with Master's degrees			6	1
Number of faculty with Bachelor's degrees				
Other Faculty	0	0	0	
Total	11	8		

Most recent completed year; contract/Adjunct Faculty Profile

Name	Rank	Tenure Status	Highest Degree	Years of Teaching	Areas of Expertise
Deann Carver	Instructor	None	MPC	5 plus	PR, Strategic Comm, PR Writing,
Brent Warnock	Instructor	None	M.A.	5-plus	Presentational Speaking
Stephen Salmon	Instructor	None	J.D.	5-plus	Law

Summary Information (as needed)

Appendix C: Staff Profile

Name	Job Title	Years of Employment	Areas of Expertise
Quincy Linsley	MPC Administrative Specialist III	2 months	Budget, scheduling, graduate applications, recruitment
Sareah Gardner	COMM Administrative Specialist III	6.5 years	Budget, scheduling, registration, social media, website, etc.

Summary Information (as needed)

We have had five different administrative specialists in the past five years. One of the major contributors to turnover has been the low pay for this position. Quincy is a fantastic admin and is a tremendous asset to the program.

Appendix D: Financial Analysis Summary
(This information will be provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness)

Communication						Fiscal year (17/18 = 2018)
Funding	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**	
Appropriated Fund	2,454,054	2,492,669	2,720,895	2,717,359	2,923,938	
Other: IW Funding from CE	196,230	117,675	194,660	207,642	234,897	
Special Legislative Appropriation						
Grants or Contracts						
Special Fees/Differential Tuition	0	0	15,510	0	0	
Total	2,650,284	2,610,344	2,931,065	2,925,001	3,158,835	
Student FTE Total [1]	542.10	509.60	504.40	477.90	528.90	
Cost per FTE [2]	4888.92	5122.34	5810.99	6120.53	5972.46	
Notes						
Student FTE Total is from the first tab						
(Total / Student FTE) = Cost per FTE						

Note – with this information and the student information, we will calculate a ‘cost per fte’ as part of the financial summary

Summary Information (as needed)

Appendix E: External Community Involvement Names and Organizations

Name	Organization

Appendix F: Site Visit Team (both internal and external members)

Name	Position	Affiliation
Sydney O'Shay	Director Master of Communication Studies	Utah State University
Corina Segovia-Tadehara	Director of the Master of Social Work	Weber State University

Appendix G: Evidence of Learning Courses within the Major
(use as a supplement to your five-year summary, if needed. Be sure to delete the sample text before using)

Data from Fall 2024 are provided below

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement Direct and Indirect Measures*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 1.A: Write and Edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader	Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid. Faculty assess the rubric in Canvas. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness pulls the data for analysis.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	Measure 1: In courses MPC 6100, 6150, and 6500, 37 students were assessed and 36 either met or exceeded expectations. This shows that at the end of these writing intensive courses, 97.3% of students are at least meeting this expectation.	Measure 1: The data suggest that our instructors are doing well assisting students in elevating their writing skills. This outcome will be reassessed during next review
	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:
Learning Outcome 2.A: Present Information	Measure 1: Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a	Measure 1: All 37 students evaluated at least met expectations	Measure 1: The data suggest that our instructors are doing

orally and in visual form	class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid. Faculty assess the rubric in Canvas. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness pulls the data for analysis.	77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	for this learning outcome by the end of these courses.	well assisting students in elevating their Presentation skills. This outcome will be reassessed during next review
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate critical thinking and cultural competence	Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid. Faculty assess the rubric in Canvas. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness pulls the data for analysis.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	Measure 1: By the end of the courses, all 37 students at least met expectations for this learning outcome.	The data suggest that our instructors are doing well assisting students in elevating their critical thinking skills. This outcome will be reassessed during next review
Learning Outcome 4: Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts	Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course,	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course,	In courses MPC 6100, 6150, and 6500, 37 students were assessed and 36 either met or exceeded expectations. This shows that at the end of these writing	The data suggest that our instructors are doing well assisting students in elevating their skills in academic research. This outcome

	Faculty assess the rubric in Canvas. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness pulls the data for analysis.	demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	intensive courses, 97.3% of students are at least meeting this expectation.	will be reassessed during next review
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas	Measure 1: A rubric is uploaded to the class listed under this learning outcome on the curriculum grid. Faculty assess the rubric in Canvas. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness pulls the data for analysis.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	Measure 1: I – 90% of students will complete the course, demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill. E – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill. A – 90% of the students will complete the course, demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill. V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.	In courses MPC 6100, 6150, and 6500, 37 students were assessed and 36 either met or exceeded expectations. This shows that at the end of these writing intensive courses, 97.3% of students are at least meeting this expectation.	The data suggest that our instructors are doing well assisting students in elevating their knowledge in cognate areas. This outcome will be reassessed during next review

Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses
(use as a supplement to your five-year summary, if needed)

*At least one measure per objective must be a direct measure. Indirect measures may be used to supplement evidence provided via the direct measures.
Appendix H: sample Signature Assignments

Additional Summary Information (as needed)

Appendix I: Faculty Publications

Amacher, A., **Ault, M. K**., & Van Gilder, B. (2023). Surviving in higher education: How communication influences Tongan students' assimilation in higher education institutions. *Western Journal of Communication*, *87*(5), 835–856. https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2022.2155069

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