

Assessment of Student Learning Plan: Communication & Media Studies

Review of 2014-15 Academic Year

A. College, Department, Date

College College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Department Communication and Media Studies
Date April 2015

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

*Name and title*__ David Pierson, Associate Professor of Media Studies

C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program: Communication Bachelor of Arts Degree and Media Studies
Bachelor of Arts Degree

D. Assessment of Student Learning in Your Program

Step 1: Identify Student Learning Outcomes (*What are students able to do by the end of your program?*)

a. Media Studies Major Learning Outcomes

1. Students will understand media as systems of interrelated forces, including historical foundations, technological advances, economic dynamics, regulatory constraints, and ethical concerns.

2. Students will be able to grasp the complex relationship between communication/media theories and a diverse set of individual, social, and professional practices.

3. Students will understand the underlying philosophical assumptions of, and be able to apply, one or more communication research methods to address a range of media texts and audiences, production and technological practices, and relevant social issues.

4. Students will comprehend the foundations, process, and practices of writing for and about the media, and demonstrate proficiency in writing in one or more professional media writing applications.

5. Students will be able to conceptualize, design, and produce one or more works in media based on effective principles and practices of media aesthetics for a target audience.

Communication Major Learning Outcomes

- 1. Students will be able to understand and apply knowledge of human communication and language processes as they occur across various contexts, e.g., interpersonal, intrapersonal, small group, organizational, media, gender, family, intercultural communication, technologically mediated communication, etc. from multiple perspectives.**
- 2. Students will be able to understand and evaluate key theoretical approaches used in the interdisciplinary field of communication. I.e., students will be able to explain major theoretical frameworks, constructs, and concepts for the study of communication and language, summarize the work of central thinkers associated with particular approaches, and begin to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches.**
- 3. Students will be able to understand the research methods associated with the study of human communication, and apply at least one of those approaches to the analysis and evaluation of human communication.**
- 4. Students will be able to find, use, and evaluate primary academic writing associated with the communication discipline.**
- 5. Students will develop knowledge, skills, and judgment around human communication that facilitate their ability to work collaboratively with others. Such skills could include communication competencies such as managing conflict, understanding small group processes, active listening, appropriate self-disclosure, etc.**
- 6. Students will be able to communicate effectively orally and in writing.**

b. Then, identify which student learning outcomes were assessed this past academic year. (One or more of the outcomes and corresponding assessment plans could come from your department's CORE Course Blueprint(s)).

None, we spent the time developing the plan for assessing the student learning outcomes for both the Communication and Media Studies majors.

Step 2: How and When were the Learning Outcomes assessed?

- a. *Briefly describe the assessment tools, measures, or forms of evidence that were utilized to demonstrate students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes selected.*

Assessment of Communication Major Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to understand and apply knowledge of human communication and language processes as they occur across various contexts, e.g., interpersonal, intrapersonal, small group, organizational, media, gender, family, intercultural communication, technologically mediated communication, etc. from multiple perspectives.

The full-time Communication faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring grade distribution in CMS 102: Introduction to Communication and CMS 495 Theories of Communication (capstone course) as the primary assessment tool for this learning outcome.

2. Students will be able to understand and evaluate key theoretical approaches used in the interdisciplinary field of communication. I.e., students will be able to explain major theoretical frameworks, constructs, and concepts for the study of communication and language, summarize the work of central thinkers associated with particular approaches, and begin to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches.

The full-time Communication faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring grade distributions across all "Communication Theory" courses listed in the major. Particular attention will be paid to assessing the effectiveness of written and oral presentations in Communication courses.

3. Students will be able to understand the research methods associated with the study of human communication, and apply at least one of those approaches to the analysis and evaluation of human communication.

The full-time Communication faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring grade distributions in CMS 200: Methods of Research in Communication as the primary assessment tool for this learning outcome.

4. Students will be able to find, use, and evaluate primary academic writing associated with the communication discipline.

The full-time Communication faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring grade distributions in CMS 200: Methods of Research in Communication as the primary assessment tool for this learning outcome.

- 5. Students will develop knowledge, skills, and judgment around human communication that facilitate their ability to work collaboratively with others. Such skills could include communication competencies such as managing conflict, understanding small group processes, active listening, appropriate self-disclosure, etc.**

The full-time Communication faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring grade distributions across all “Communication Theory” courses listed in the major. Particular attention will be paid to those courses that emphasize communication skills (e.g., CMS 255: Business & Professional Communication, CMS 330: Theories of Interpersonal Communication, CMS 345: Small Group Communication).

Assessment of Media Studies Major Student Learning Outcomes

- 1. Students will understand media as systems of interrelated forces, including historical foundations, technological advances, economic dynamics, regulatory constraints, and ethical concerns.**

For this first student learning outcome, the full-time Media Studies faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring semester grade distribution in CMS 103 Introduction to Media Studies as the primary assessment tool for this learning outcome.

- 2. Students will be able to grasp the complex relationship between communication/media theories and a diverse set of individual, social, and professional practices.**

For this second student learning outcome, the full-time Media Studies faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring semester grade distribution in CMS 103 Introduction to Media Studies, CMS 102 Introduction to Communication, and CMS 200 Research Methods in Communication as the primary assessment tools for this learning outcome.

- 3. Students will understand the underlying philosophical assumptions of, and be able to apply, one or more communication research methods to address a range of media texts and audiences, production and technological practices, and relevant social issues.**

For this third student learning outcome, the full-time Media Studies faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring semester grade distribution in CMS 200 Research Methods in Communication as the primary assessment tool for this learning outcome.

- 4. Students will comprehend the foundations, process, and practices of writing for and about the media, and demonstrate proficiency in writing in one or more professional media writing applications.**

For this four student learning outcome, the full-time Media Studies faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring semester grade distribution for the following media writing courses: CMS 150 The Writing Process, CMS 274 Writing for the Media, CMS 202 Writing for Popular Print Media, CMS 205 Topics in Media Writing, CMS 215 Journalism Reporting and Writing, CMS 225 Screenwriting, CMS 300 Topics in Media Writing II, CMS 302 Writing the Feature Story, CMS 305 Writing Opinion: Editorial and Columns, and CMS 315 Broadcast Newswriting as the primary assessment tools for this learning outcome.

5. Students will be able to conceptualize, design, and produce one or more works in media based on effective principles and practices of media aesthetics for a target audience.

For this fifth student learning outcome, the full-time Media Studies faculty will assess and discuss the fall and spring semester grade distribution for the following media production courses: CMS 203/204 Introduction to Video Production, CMS 220 Radio Production, CMS 320 Topics in Media Production II (Photojournalism, Audio Production, Compositing and Special Effects, Social Media, Documentary Studies and Preproduction), CMS 340/341 Field Video Production, CMS 440/441 Advanced Field Video Production, CMS 460 Topics in Media Production III (Film Directing, Documentary Production, Lighting for Film and Television), CMS 400 Senior Project, and CMS 450 Service Learning Practicum as the primary assessment tools for this learning outcome.

b. Briefly describe when and how you implemented the assessment activity.

The full-time Communication and Media Studies faculty will meet in mid-May every year to review and discuss the fall and spring grade distribution for the aforementioned courses associated with the specific learning outcomes for the Communication and Media Studies majors. This review may lead to possible changes in the above-mentioned courses, which are taught primarily by full-time and regular adjunct instructors for the Department of Communication and Media Studies.

Step 3: Process of Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

a. Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results, and how you expect to improve student learning.

Every year in mid-May the full-time Communication and Media Studies faculty will meet to assess and discuss the grade distributions in the aforementioned courses associated with specific student learning outcomes in the Communication and

Media Studies majors. Depending on review and assessment, the faculty may make changes to these particular courses to ensure that Media Studies majors complete the designated student learning outcomes.

***Other Assessment Activities:** *Are you able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level... (i.e. created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in entry-level courses, developed a new course, etc)?*

We have developed a set of expected learning outcomes for each major and these learning outcomes have been discussed and accepted by the majority of the full-time faculty members.

***Comments:**

For the 2014-15 academic year, the Department of Communication and Media Studies have completed and accepted an assessment plan for reviewing and assessing student learning outcomes for both the Communication and Media Studies majors. Each year student learning outcomes will be assessed and discussed, and if required, changes will be made to the specific courses associated with certain designated student learning outcomes.

Communication & Media Studies

A. Are there “community engagement” activities integrated in your departmental curriculum?

a. *Please indicate which of the components, listed below, are included in your program’s curriculum, and then indicate if the activities are required or optional for students in your major.*

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Included</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	___	R	O-X
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	___	R	O-X
Internship, or a Field Experience	___	R	O-X
Independent Study (community-related project)	___	R	O-X
Capstone Course (community-related project)	<u>_X_</u>	R-X	O
Service-Learning (a component of a course)	<u>_X_</u>	R-X-	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	___	R	O-X
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	___	R	O -X

Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	<u> X </u>	R-X	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	<u> </u>	R	O-X
Other Activities (not mentioned above):			

b. Please list the courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a “community engagement” activity in your program:

Entry-level courses:

Mid-level courses: CMS 492 Internships in Media Studies, CMS 430 Communication Internship

Upper-level courses: CMS 450 Service Learning Practicum

Additional Comments:

Community Collaboration -Communication

The Communication Program faculty is active in collaborating with the Portland area community, departments across the University of Southern Maine Campus, and the University of Maine System. Following is a brief synopsis of the Communication program primary faculty--Dr. Maureen Ebben, Dr. Russ Kivatisky, Dr. Daniel A. Panici, and Dr. Lenny Shedletsky--activities focusing on community collaboration.

Portland Area Community

Communication Internship Program.

Dr. Russ Kivatisky has been the coordinator for the Communication Internship program from 2010 - 2014. The Communication program has a long-standing and well-developed internship program. In fact, over the past four years 155 Communication majors have earned 761 internship credit hours. This translates to 22,839 hours of community service provided by communication students. The overall purpose of our internship program is to provide a practical learning experience for students during which they use skills and knowledge learned in the classroom. The internship program also provides students the opportunity to test their interest and aptitude for a particular career before permanent commitments are made. Because the Communication major takes a broad view of the field, interns have served in a variety of settings. A short list includes, the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital, the Portland Museum of Art, WCSH6, Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Community Counseling Center, Shipyard Brewing, IDEXX, the Maine Center for Creativity, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland Pirates, Portland Sea Dogs, and Maine Red Claws. In several cases, student interns have been hired by their sponsoring organizations (e.g., Communication and Marketing at Big Brothers Big Sisters; Director of Conferences at the

University of New England). The value of the Communication Internship Program can be evidenced by representative comments from community organization: "College night at the museum was a huge success thanks to our intern." (Portland Museum of Art); "Our intern has once again completed all tasks in the Development Office. As I said last semester, her help continues to be invaluable." (Barbara Bush Children's Hospital); "Our intern learned how to make the move from student to professional during her internship." (WCSH6); "She has participated extensively in numerous aspects of special events, as well as done several research projects that have contributed significantly to the agency." (Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Maine)

Recent Faculty Community Service.

Dr. Maureen Ebben is currently serving as a member of the Baxter Academy for Technology and Science High School Parent Advisory Group. Dr. Ebben serves on the Maine Cyber Security Cluster faculty engaging in outreach and education around communication and information security issues facing medium and small businesses in Maine. She has also been a resource for various Portland area news media about issues related to communication and social media and issues related to communication and cyber security. Dr. Daniel A. Panici has served on the MSAD #51 School Board and Board Member for the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies. He has also been a resource for various Portland area news media about issues related to media effects, media ownership, and journalism. Dr. Lenny Shedletsky is working with Camp Susan Curtis on their multimedia presence in the community and collaborators include Maine College of Art, Maine Medical Center, and the State of Maine.

Recent Communication Major Internship Sites

104.7 Radio

AARP

Alzheimer's Association

Barbara Bush Children's Hospital

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Bottomline Technologies

Broadreach Public Relations

Con-Tech Corporation (Training and Development)

Eco-Maine

Fox 25 News - Boston

Fox News 51

Freeport Chamber of Commerce

Girl Scouts of Maine

Gulf of Maine Research Institute

IDEXX

Lewiston Auburn YMCA

Local Thunder (Social Media/Marketing)

Maine Chapter Touring Co.

Maine Energy Marketing Shipyard Brewing Co.

Maine Red Claws

Maine Women's Policy Center

Portland Magazine

Portland Museum of Art

Portland Phoenix

Portland Pirates

Portland Sea Dogs

Portland Visitor's Bureau

SAGA Sports

Senator Susan Collins Office Disney College

Sexual Assault Response Services WCSH6

The Free Press

The Maine Center for Creativity

UNE Conferences and Events

VIA Advertising

WXTK News Radio (Cape Cod)

Community Collaboration-Media Studies

Media Studies chiefly and most consistently collaborates with external community organizations through its internship and service learning courses. Majors may elect to complete an internship for credit through CMS 492 Internships in Media Studies. Student interns work closely with a mentor in a sponsoring organization and the Media Studies internship coordinator to develop an internship that both provides opportunities to develop and/or enhance professional skills and requires a reflective engagement with

their applied learning experiences. Longstanding, successful relationships with sponsoring organizations include: WCSH-6 (TV news & features), Lone Wolf Documentary, and the Portland Press Herald (for a more complete listing see Appendix G; Media Studies Internships). From 2008-2012, Media Studies students worked approximately 18,000 internship hours.

While many Media Studies majors opt to do an internship all must participate in service learning through one of the two required senior capstones, CMS 450 Service Learning. One distinction with internships is that Service Learning always entails students working with a USM cohort on a collaborative project, whereas most internships do not. The collaborative experience is multi-layered in that students collaborate as a production team internally and with an organization/field supervisor externally. Additionally, they are observing the other teams in the Service Learning class and thereby get exposure to the diversity of non-profit mission and clientele. Internships characteristically involve a more explicit commitment to student self-interest and career, whereas service learning introduces them to the complexity of society and to a host of communities that have remained largely invisible to undergraduates attending a university, working one or two jobs, and having a normal early-twenties life. And unlike Internships, Service Learning focuses exclusively on the non-profit sector, something students typically have very little experience with. Through this class alone Media Studies majors have contributed approximately 7,000 hours of community service over eight semesters from 2008-2012.

Service Learning Partners in Media Studies

All The Way Home/Art At Work
Alliance for a Clean & Healthy Maine
American Red Cross
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Boys & Girls Clubs
Portland English As A Second Language Scholarship Fund
Portland High School Environmental Science Club
Portland Land Bank
Portland Mentoring Alliance
Portland Police Department
Boys To Men
Camp Susan Curtis
Center for Grieving Children
Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence
Centre Theatre/Dover-Foxcroft
City of Portland Department of Public Works
Community Partners for Protecting Children
Creative Trails/Shoot Media
CTN5/Community Television Network
Cultivating Community
Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District
Environmental Health Strategy Center Fort Williams
Charitable Trust Friends of Casco Bay
Friends of Deering Oaks

Friends of the Kotschmar Organ
Goodwill of Northern New England
Hospice of Southern Maine
Hour Exchange Portland
Maine Multiple Sclerosis Society
Make It Happen
MedHelp Maine
New England Coalition Against Handgun Violence
Northeast Hearing and Speech
Portland Symphony Orchestra
Portland Trails
Portland Water District
Rippling Waters Organic Farm
Saco River Jazz Ensemble
South Portland Police Department
South Portland Public Schools
State of Maine Animal Resource
Team STRIVE U
Sweetser School
The Iris Network
The Morrison Center
USM Art Gallery
USM Athletic Department
USM Cares
USM Counselor Education Program
USM Department of Music
USM Libraries
USM Office of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
USM Student Success
USMentors
Winterkids
Write2Me
Young Life

Recent Internship Sites In Media Studies

360 Productions
Audiophile Magazine
Bangor Daily News
BET – DC
BIKE Magazine
BRIDE Magazine
Catama Video
CBS – New York

Center for Grieving Children
CTN5 Portland
Dispatch Magazine
Dress For Success
Fairchild
Foundation Fiore Verde
Garrand
gBritt Marketing
Gitgo Productions
Gum Spirits Video Productions
Jews For Jesus
Lighthouse
Lone Wolf Documentary
Maine Hockey Journal
MPBN NBC – New York
New Gloucester Middle School
No Umbrella Productions
Portland Magazine
Portland Phoenix
Portland Pirates
Portland Press Herald
Portland Radio Group
Portland Red Claws
Portland Sea Dogs
Professional Mariners Magazine
Ruger Firearms
Saco River Community Television
Shanti Arts
South Portland Community Television
The Café Review
The Free Press
The Studio Portland
The Wolf FM
UNUM
USM Office of Public Affairs
WCSH6 Portland
WGME Portland
WLBZ Bangor
WMPG WMTW Portland
WPXT TV North Conway Radio