

Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): Academic Programs

2018-19 Academic Year

University of Southern Maine

Reminder: All Department/Program Chairs will be responsible for completing an ASLP form by the end of this academic year for each academic program in your department. This campus-wide (annual) form is used to document the ongoing program assessment activities in each department/program. The form was designed to align with the NECHE (New England Commission of Higher Education) accreditation- assessment standards.

*If you have questions about this form, or need assistance with your program assessment plans during this academic year, please contact Susan King, Director of Academic Assessment, 780-4681, susank@maine.edu. **Please email this form by May 31, 2019.***

A. College, Department, Date

College Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Department Communication and Media Studies
Date May 31, 2019

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title David Pierson, Chair

C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program Communication, Media Studies

D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

- a. Are your student learning outcomes published on your department's website? Yes No

- i. If yes, please provide the url: <https://usm.maine.edu/communication-media-studies/communication-and-media-studies-learning-outcomes>
- ii. If no, please list 3-5 of the most important student learning outcomes for your program. **What will students know by the end of your program?**

- b. Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year.**

COM-LO-6;

MES-LO-4 & 5

- c. Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses? Yes No

- i. If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please provide the url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.

<https://usm.maine.edu/communication-media-studies/communication-a>

Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented

- a. **Identify which assessment measures (beyond individual student grading) were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.**
(NOTE: Many undergraduate programs are using their recently approved Capstone courses to assess student learning. Assessment plans included in your Capstone Proposal in the CCC may be referred to as examples of assessment work in your program.)

Assessment of Capstone courses by Faculty

- b. Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity; if a rubric or other structured approach was used to assess student outcome achievement, please describe and/or attach the rubric.

Outcomes were reviewed during Spring 2019. Capstone projects were assessed by faculty and group meetings. The papers were read and discussed.

Example: Outcome 1 was measured during the fall semester -- all majors completed a problem-solving case study during the _ course. Case studies were graded on a rubric by two faculty members.

Example: Outcome 2 was measured during the spring semester -- all majors in the capstone course completed a research project. Research projects will be reviewed and graded by a group of faculty.

Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (for example, annual discussion by faculty committee, etc.).*

The department underwent significant curriculum changes that became active in fall, 2018. Most significant was that out two majors became more distinct. One can could use an umbrella metaphor. The B.A. in Communication is the largest, most expansive umbrella covering the broad range of variables included in the study of human communication. Our B.A. in Media Studies is smaller umbrella that fits nicely within the larger umbrella of Communication. Its focus is more narrowly focused on media production, media writing, and media ecology. One could extend the metaphor to include even smaller umbrellas like our minors in Cinema Studies or Public Relations. Ideally, these umbrellas fit together nicely and allow students to navigate a path that best suits their intellectual and career interests.

For the Media Studies degree program, we focused our direct assessment on CMS 400: Senior Project, Learning Outcomes #4 and #5. Our assessment activities included defining the characteristics of a "signature work" (Student Agency, Integration of Skills, and Issues of Importance) and creating an evaluative rubric. We decided to use the fall section of 400 to pilot test both the definition and the rubric. Our discussion revealed that Student Agency and Integration of Skills is easily understood by students, but the Issues of Importance characteristic was more difficult for them to integrate with the projects and classroom discussion. While the criteria for assessing projects (clear communication objective/produces for specific target audience/effectively uses the grammar and codes media production/aesthetically pleasing) are on-target, the evaluative instrument needs to be revised from Likert scales to descriptions (e.g. Distinguished, Proficient, Marginal, Unacceptable). Assessment goals for 2019-2020: a) Implement a revised rubric fro CMS 400, and 2) Assess CMS 450 on Learning Outcomes #4 and #5.

The Communication degree program direct assessment focused on CMS 495: Theories of Communication and Learning Outcome #6: Demonstrate the Ability to be Self-Reflective about one's learning. This course requires students to work toward a personal response to a capstone prompt by completing weekly essays designed the emphasize reflection, both on their overall learning experience while at USM and in the major. The course also requires student to complete a literature review, which is considered their "significant work". Both types of work were reviewed by the faculty to assess the achievement of Learning Outcome #6. It was clear to all that the Learning Outcome was achieved, but lead to a further discussion of better preparation for the task of the literature review. We plan to coordinate all sections of CMS 200: ^{Research} Methods in Communication to cover this aspect of theory development.

- b. *Identify the specific changes that have been or will be made to improve student learning based on these program assessment results. (For example, what changes will the program make at the assignment, course, or program level to improve student learning, based on the assessment results?)*

See Narrative above.

- c. *Date of most recent program review/self-study?*

Spring 2015

E. Other Assessment Activities:

creating common assignments and/or assignment rubrics for use across different sections of required courses, examining student progress in entry-level courses, other assessment projects implemented by individual faculty, etc.).

No other assessment activities at this time.

F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:

a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities? If so, please state the outcome.

b. Please indicate if any of the community engagement activities listed below are included in your program's curriculum, by noting which activities are required or optional for students in your major.

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Internship, or a Field Experience	<input checked="" type="radio"/> R	<input type="radio"/> O
Independent Study (community-related project)	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> R	<input type="radio"/> O
Service-Learning (course-based)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> R	<input type="radio"/> O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	<input type="radio"/> R	<input checked="" type="radio"/> O
Other activities:		

c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.

Entry-level courses: None

Mid-level courses:

CMS 255, Business and Professional Communication
 CMS 345, Small Group Communication

Upper-level courses: CMS 400

Reminder: Please complete and submit this form by May 31, 2019

Please make sure you include any necessary file attachments when emailing this form. Thank you!