

Program: Communication

Academic Program Assessment Plan (2017-2018)

1. Please review last year's assessment results (2016-2017) as well as the Academic Program Assessment Report with the faculty in your program. How does your program plan to take these results into consideration in future programmatic planning?

Last year we conducted an analysis of our faculty's perception of public speaking in our upper level courses. Generally speaking, the faculty were satisfied with the level of public speaking skill.

Nevertheless, based on the data we will take two actions:

- In the Public Address class (required by students in all our programs), we plan on enhancing the discussion about the limits and proper uses of technologies.
- Faculty in the upper-level curriculum plan on providing further critiques about "what should and should not be" part of PowerPoint presentations.

2. Please review your program's Learning Outcomes. Do any of them need to be updated or clarified?

- a. Please provide brief indications of the kinds of assessment (e.g. course exams, term papers, course projects, senior seminar, senior interview, etc.) that might be used to assess each outcome. (The purpose here is to see that your program has considered ways it might measure each outcome.)

At the Basic Competencies level, we do not see any major changes that need to be made. The structure of the programs are that students get their basic skills in the lower-level courses and expand upon them as they go into the upper levels. We also feel that our Critical Thinking objective is being met by the group projects and papers our students write, as we give them real-world problems to solve using their skills. This too meets our other outcomes, as students are required to collaborate with their fellow students and assemble projects and presentations in nearly all of the upper level courses we offer.

We are considering adding a learning outcome focused on the continuous improvement mindset we encourage across programs. We plan on testing that idea in this year's assessment round.

- b. Please compare your Learning Outcomes to the University's main learning objectives: interdisciplinary, problem-focused education; critical thinking; diversity; environmental sustainability; and engaged citizenship. (These objectives were identified in the MLLO Project, which may be found here: <http://www.uwgb.edu/MLLO/>.) Which programmatic outcomes match university mission outcomes?

We explicitly teach critical thinking skills in our classroom projects and have identified this as a priority in our learning outcomes. Moreover, from the problem-focused education perspective,

the final projects in most of our classes are based around solving specific problems, whether they are managing organizational crises, information dissemination challenges, meeting computer security threats or developing multimedia advertising campaigns for real local clients. We also encourage interdisciplinary education by having students cross-train in multiple emphases as well as allowing students from other disciplines into our courses so they can develop skills that will be useful for their respective majors and emphases.

3. Which outcome will you assess this year (2017-2018)?

Our revised assessment plan for this year focuses on all three departments in our unit and the one common area between them – continuous improvement. The ability to maintain a continuous improvement mindset is critical to long-term student success in the Communication, Computer Science, and Information Science fields. To that end, we want to evaluate how our students are progressing in this important area.

4. Which technique will you use to assess this outcome?

Continuous improvement is a key component of all our programs (Communication, Information Science, & Computer Science). To develop the most useful assessment, we will be conducting a survey of our student reactions to this key learning outcome. These surveys will ask students about their experiential perspectives in their own coursework and faculty commitment. Questions will be evaluated on a Likert scale that will include but are not limited to:

- *I embrace continuous improvement.*
- *The faculty in my program embrace the continuous improvement mindset.*
- *My student colleagues embrace continuous improvement.*
- *My program has the proper tools and processes to encourage continuous improvement.*
- *The faculty in my program practice continuous improvement.*
- *My colleagues are skilled at providing continuous improvement feedback.*

We will also ask three open-ended questions:

- *What does continuous improvement mean to you?*
- *How could the department do a better job sharing continuous improvement feedback?*
- *What 3 words come to mind when you hear the words “continuous improvement”?*

The survey will be administered to all students in the Communication, Information Science, and Computer Science programs via e-mail prior to the end of the semester. Data will be gathered from Qualtrics and then used to develop a report for the further development and improvement of our curriculum.