



Information Science | 2016-2017 Assessment Plan

1. Please review last year's assessment results (2015-2016) 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 student's perception of group work in our upper level courses. Generally speaking, students were mostly satisfied with the group work requirements, feeling they were an important part of their experience and that they learned useful skills even as they felt the projects were occasionally difficult to balance and created a burden in some cases. Based on this data we will continue encouraging group projects though we will be making steps to address some of the student concerns at a curricular level.

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 that might be used to assess each outcome.

At the Basic Competencies level, we do not see any major changes that need to be made. The structure of the COMM program is that students get their writing, public speaking, and visual communication 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 communication skills. This too meets our Professional Applications outcome, 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.

- b. Please compare your Learning Outcomes to the University's main learning objectives. 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 communication problems, whether they are managing organizational crises 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 (2016-2017)?

Our revised assessment plan for this year focuses on all three departments in our unit and one common area between them – public presentation and speaking. The ability to get in front of a group of people and present research/work/etc. is incredibly important to 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 skill.

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

Public presentation is a key component of many courses across our three disciplines. To develop the most useful assessment, we will be conducting internal faculty surveys to determine where we think our students are at in terms of public presentation – their strengths, weaknesses, areas of improvement and where we can focus pedagogical and curricular development to more effectively prepare students for their professional careers. These surveys will ask faculty about their experiential perspectives in their own coursework as well as how they feel the prerequisite courses have prepared students for success in their class. Questions will be evaluated on a Likert scale or other form of objective measure and will include but are not limited to:

- I feel students are comfortable when presenting in front of the group in upper-level courses.
- I feel students come out of the program with the presentation skills they need to succeed professionally.
- The prerequisites for my program successfully prepare students for in-class presentations.

The survey will be administered to all faculty 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 public presentation curriculum.