Mass Communications Department and Center for New Media
Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

Mass Communications Department and Center for New Media
Colorado State University-Pueblo
Updated assessment plan (5/31/2012)
Department assessment contacts are:
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Mass Communications Department and Center for New Media
Mission: To offer a pragmatic and professionally oriented program aimed at preparing majors for successful careers in the media and related areas and to prepare students for graduate study.
The Mass Communications major supports the mission of the university by offering a marketable and professionally credible program; a student-centered experience for learning and advising; an applied learning environment with cutting-edge technology; and a 40-year tradition for excellence.

Department Program Assessment
The department has numerous methods of direct and indirect program and curriculum assessment in which evidence is reviewed and analyzed by faculty. This occurs informally throughout the academic year as faculty interact with students and each other. Formal discussions occur at three department meetings held each calendar year: Fall convocation, holiday retreat, and spring retreat.

Assessment methods include:
*Senior portfolio
*MCCNM 493 Senior Seminar exit survey each semester
*Student course evaluations each semester
*Alumni survey conducted every five years
*Student composite GPA analysis and comparison each semester for faculty review
*Survey and grade reporting from professionals who oversee students in internships
*Anecdotal insight from alums and guests who present in courses

Student Learning Outcomes
Student Learning Outcomes are necessary to department assessment as they relate directly to evidence gathering and evaluation of what students have learned in their experience as mass communications majors. These include student competence in analytical thinking and communication, specific writing relevant to the professions represented in the major, and knowledge of technology relevant to the student's emphasis area of study.

Such ongoing student learning assessment insures the department remains adaptable, current, and strategic, thereby continuing to produce outstanding graduates who are successful in a media-oriented profession or graduate school.

Assessment of the SLOs occurs in the Senior Seminar course, MCCNM 493, which provides a capstone experience for students, with curriculum focused on preparation, review, analysis, and evaluation of the media and its role in society. The course curricula includes examination of media and popular culture, ethics in the professions, standards of professional conduct in the disciplines, and preparation for job interviews and resume writing. Student performance in the course is evaluated through various written

papers, oral presentations, in-class participation, and a final cumulative portfolio of the student's work in the Mass Communications major. Therefore, this course is the appropriate forum for evaluating student learning in the MCCNM Department.

All students in the Senior Seminar course create salient work related to three of the MCCNM Department learning outcomes. Students may or may not be graded on the assessment content in the Senior Seminar course, however a random selection of three students is chosen each semester for assessment of the three learning outcomes (six students total in an academic year). Two faculty rotate each year to serve as assessment judges.

Learning Outcome One: Critical Thinking
Student will display critical thinking skills, conveying complex ideas related to current issues and ethical expectations of mass media and related disciplines.

Assessment Method
Written word essay on a media-related topic required each semester in MCCNM 493. Six students are chosen randomly and annually (three from fall semester; three from spring semester) from the course for assessment of writing samples by two faculty members on a rotating basis.

Performance Criteria
Student work will be evaluated and placed into one of the following categories: exceeds expectations, meets expectations or fails expectations. Students who exceed expectations will display advanced critical thinking skills and convey multiple complex ideas related to current issues and ethical expectations of mass media and related disciplines. Students who meet expectations will display critical thinking skills and convey complex ideas related to current issues and ethical expectations of mass media and related disciplines. Students who fail to meet expectations will not display critical thinking skills nor will they convey complex ideas related to current issues and ethical expectations of mass media and related disciplines.

Performance Expectations
All students are expected to either meet or exceed expectations in critical thinking skills.

Learning Outcome Two: Writing/Communication
Students will write with clarity and organization, utilizing the proper format, writing mechanics and audience focus, in a manner that is professionally competitive for an entry-level position in the discipline.

Assessment Method
At least four samples of student work related to one's discipline of study. The writing samples are included in the student portfolio, which is submitted during the final week of the MCCNM 493 course.

Performance Criteria
Student work will be evaluated and placed into one of the following categories: exceeds expectations, meets expectations or fails expectations. Students who exceed expectations will produce writing samples that are comparable to entry-level professional writing with little editing required. Students who meet expectations will produce writing samples that convey entry-level professional writing skills with some editing required. Students who fail to meet expectations will produce writing samples that are not suitable as entry-level professional writing and require extensive editing.

Performance Expectations
All students are expected to either meet or exceed expectations in writing.

Learning Outcome Three: Application of Technology
Students will demonstrate technological expertise related to the specific emphasis area that is professionally competitive for an entry-level position in their discipline.

Assessment Method
At least two samples of work will be assessed based on technological proficiency and competence. The samples are included in the student portfolio, which is submitted during the final week of the MCCNM 493 course.

Performance Criteria
Student work will be evaluated and placed into one of the following categories: exceeds expectations, meets expectations or fails expectations. Students who exceed expectations will display significant technological expertise that is highly competitive beyond the entry level in their discipline. Students who meet expectations will display adequate technological expertise that is competitive at the entry level in their discipline. Students who fail to meet expectations will not display adequate technological expertise and will fail to produce work that is competitive at the entry level in their discipline.

Performance Expectations
All students are expected to either meet or exceed expectations in technological expertise.

Learning Outcome Four: Presentation
Students will demonstrate command of subject, organization of thoughts, and skill at interpersonal presentation in front of an audience (live or for broadcast).

Assessment Method
One 10-minute interview or presentation on a media-related topic or related to student's emphasis area will be assessed based on command of subject, organization and presentation skills. The sample will be included within the student portfolio, submitted in the MCCNM 493: Senior Seminar course.

Performance Criteria
Student work will be evaluated and placed into one of the following categories: exceeds expectations, meets expectations or fails expectations. Students who exceed expectations will demonstrate advanced skills in conveying command of subject, organization of thought, and presentation ease. Students who meet expectations will demonstrate adequate skills in conveying command of subject, organization of thought, and presentation ease. Students who fail to meet expectations will lack adequate skills in conveying command of subject, organization of thought, and presentation ease.

Performance Expectations
All students are expected to either meet or exceed expectations in the presentation outcome.

The department's learning outcomes are included in the course catalog and are incorporated into course syllabi. The department chair also introduces the course outcomes during a presenting in the first course of the major, MCCNM 101: Media and Society. Faculty discuss the outcomes during the three department meetings held each year. At this time, any curricular changes based on the results of the assessment will be discussed and determined.

Curriculum
See separate curriculum map.

Assessment results/Continuous processes
The Mass Communications Department and Center for New Media prioritizes informal and formal feedback and structured assessment in its ongoing effort to accomplish its goals and produce outstanding student graduates prepared for work in media-related disciplines and in graduate school.

Evidence from all methods of information gathering and assessment provide the foundation for department strategic planning related to planning decisions in such areas as curriculum, faculty hiring and evaluation, student performance and evaluation, teaching and media laboratory technology and facilities.