

School of Journalism and Mass Media

ASSESSMENT PLAN

Adopted February 2020, Revised August 2022

Background

The School of Journalism and Mass Media developed an Assessment Plan in May 2009 with revisions in 2012 and 2013. The school implemented an overall assessment plan that sought to align its learning outcomes based on the university's five broad, overall learning outcomes developed for regional accreditation by the Northwest Commission on College and Universities. Assessing JAMM's five specific learning outcomes included direct measurement tools in the core required freshman-level courses JAMM 100 Media & Society and JAMM 121 Media Writing, an assessment of internships and the assessment of student work in capstone courses by members of the professional advisory board. In addition, the school mapped the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies onto existing courses for Advertising, Broadcasting & Digital Media, Journalism and Public Relations programs. The assessment plan was reviewed during ACEJMC's initial accreditation of the school in 2016 and was found to be in line with accreditation standards.

The field of academic assessment has grown and matured over the last decade since the initial assessment plan was created and revised. The standards by which ACEJMC assesses accredited and accreditation-seeking programs has grown during this time as well. Additionally, the school offers an interdisciplinary degree in Film and Television. These changes have necessitated the creation of a new assessment plan for the School of Journalism and Mass Media to be aligned with current accreditation standards set by NCCU and ACEJMC.

In this plan, the school starts with the adoption of ACEJMC's 10 Professional Values and Competencies as the overall learning objectives for our curriculum and instruction in Advertising, Broadcasting & Digital Media, Journalism and Public Relations. Assessing each for the four programs guides the overall assessment plan and the strategies employed. The Film and Television program provides a different set of learning objectives based upon its interdisciplinary nature, and so its specific learning objectives derive from the university's learning outcomes.

Assessment Plan

The School of Journalism and Mass Media curriculum for Advertising, Broadcasting & Digital Media, Journalism and Public Relations enables our students to learn the following values and skills to prepare them for work and citizenship in a diverse and global society:

JAMM Values

1. Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in a global context and in the United States
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals, individuals and institutions in shaping communications
3. Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts

4. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
5. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

JAMM Skills

1. Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
2. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
3. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness
4. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts
5. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

The University of Idaho designed five learning objectives that provide a basis for assessment of teaching and learning through curricular and co-curricular experiences.

1. Learn and integrate - Through independent learning and collaborative study, attain, use, and develop knowledge in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences, with disciplinary specialization and the ability to integrate information across disciplines.
2. Think and create - Use multiple thinking strategies to examine real-world issues, explore creative avenues of expression, solve problems, and make consequential decisions.
3. Communicate - Acquire, articulate, create and convey intended meaning using verbal and non-verbal methods of communication that demonstrate respect and understanding in a complex society.
4. Clarify purpose and perspective - Explore one's life purpose and meaning through transformational experiences that foster an understanding of self, relationships, and diverse global perspectives.
5. Practice citizenship - Apply principles of ethical leadership, collaborative engagement, socially responsible behavior, respect for diversity in an interdependent world, and a service-oriented commitment to advance and sustain local and global communities.

The six values and six skills that comprise the learning outcomes for the school's ACEJMC accredited programs incorporate the university's broad based learning objectives. Additionally, the learning outcomes for the Film and Television program extend the university's broad learning outcomes.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment begins with an understanding that a well-developed curriculum guides students through different levels of knowledge acquisition of learning outcomes. Students should become aware of a program's learning outcomes and work towards a greater understanding of them in 100- and 200-level courses. Finally, students should be able to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of learning outcomes in 300- and 400-level courses and particularly in senior capstone courses.

The general assessment strategy for the school is to directly measure whether students are aware, understand and can apply learning outcomes at different waypoints in the curriculum. Doing so will

allow the faculty to analyze the attainment of learning outcomes at each waypoint and make changes to improve teaching and learning where it is needed.

Assessment maps provide an overview of the required courses for each learning outcome and the level of knowledge acquisition of the learning outcomes.

Each course on an assessment map includes associated learning outcomes on its syllabus, and course instructors deploy teaching and learning strategies designed to provide students with an awareness, understanding or application of the learning outcomes based on the course level. Syllabi are collected each semester and examined for inclusion of learning outcomes.

Direct measurement tools are developed and deployed to determine whether learning outcomes are being met, and best practices dictate that the measurement tools provide faculty and assessors with tools and data that are replicable and reliable. Direct measures are derived from assignments, exams or other instruments assigned to students by instructors or specialized instruments with no grading component in the course. The materials should be analyzed by faculty members, professionals or knowledge experts independent of the course or course grades using rubrics or other methods designed to measure knowledge acquisition of learning outcomes. The university also accepts instructor-led measurement and analysis of learning outcomes in individual courses.

Courses with multiple sections will use common direct measurement tools for purposes of assessment. Capstone courses demonstrating the application of professional skills are assessed by members of JAMM's Professional Advisory Board or other media professionals and facilitated by faculty members.

Indirect measures provide additional holistic information to help guide assessment decisions and changes to improve teaching and learning. The school uses graduating senior surveys, internship reports, specialized questions on student course evaluations, awards in student media competitions, three-year post-graduation surveys, retention and graduation rates and high impact practices such as service learning opportunities and alumni mentoring.

The director or the director's designate is responsible for managing the assessment strategy and process. The school's faculty is collectively responsible for using assessment information to guide curricular improvements.

Data Collection, Analysis and Implementation of Changes

At the beginning of a semester, instructors of courses on the assessment maps will be notified of any direct measurement tools that need to be created or existing tools that will be used to collect data. The instructors will be responsible for deploying the tool, collecting or capturing the data or materials needed for assessment, and providing the materials or data to the director or designate.

The school uses a schedule that includes semiannual, annual and biennial data collection and analysis to balance the scope of assessment activities with the size of the faculty.

The university's assessment of program-level student learning outcomes ensures student achievement and continuous program-level improvement. Each year faculty and administrators of academic programs collect and analyze data and determine how to improve teaching and learning based on the results. The school adopts the annual assessment reporting deadlines established by the university. Reporting deadlines for assessment reports are around the end of October each year.

The assessment reports for each academic program will provide the basis for discussion among faculty on any curriculum changes needed during the Fall faculty retreat typically held the week before Fall classes begin. Changes implemented during faculty meetings will be included in that year's annual report.