

Assurance of Student Learning Reflection 2024-2025

Potter College of Arts & Letters	School of Media & Communication
Communication (Ref. 6003)	
Holly Payne	
Is this an online program? ☐ Yes ☒ No	Please make sure the Program Learning Outcomes listed match those in CourseLeaf. Indicate verification here ☒ Yes, they match! (If they don't match, explain on this page under Evaluation)

Instructions: For the 2024-25 assessment, we are asking you to reflect on the last three-year cycle rather than collect data. It's important to take time to look over the results from the last assessment cycle and really focus on a data-informed direction going forward. In collaboration with your assessment team and program faculty, review each submitted template from 2021-2024 and consider the following for each Program Learning Outcome, add your narrative to the template, and submit the draft to your **ASL Rep** by **May 15, 2025**.

Program Student Learning Outcome 1	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Analyze communication within organizations, relationship, & society.
Evaluation	Over the last three years, our assessment of related outcomes (previously framed as “Apply communication theories to evaluate interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, or public discourse”) showed that most students demonstrated at least satisfactory competence in analyzing real-world communication situations. Because we are consolidating our majors and revising our curriculum, we updated and reworded this outcome to place stronger emphasis on analyzing communication across varying contexts—organizational, relational, and societal. These revisions remain highly relevant and measurable. They also align with our new curriculum structure and the capstone experience introduced in the new program.
Measurement Instruments	For the past three years, we assessed “analysis” skills with several direct measures, including Film Analysis Papers (Interpersonal/Relational focus), Crisis Case Studies (Organizational/Public focus), Intercultural Conflict Papers (Societal context). Moving forward, our new plan consolidates these into a single capstone artifact—an Organizational Analysis/Problem Analysis Paper completed in COMM 494. Students will systematically identify a real communication issue within an organization, community partnership, or relational context and analyze root causes and relevant factors. This direct measure provides deeper consistency across sections and ensures that all graduating students produce the same culminating project for assessment.
Criteria & Targets	In the prior cycle, “success” commonly meant 70–75% of students scoring at least Satisfactory (3/5) or higher on specific rubric categories (e.g., applying theory, demonstrating critical analysis). Under the new plan, we have set a higher benchmark: students must score a “4” (Proficient) or higher on each relevant rubric dimension, such as Problem Definition, Critical Analysis of Organizational/Contextual Factors, and Writing/Presentation.
Results & Conclusion	In 2021–22, 97% met or exceeded the criteria on our Film Analysis measure; however, this measure focused primarily on interpersonal/relational contexts. In 2022–23, results for organizational-focused papers were somewhat lower (57–75% meeting targets), partly due to the instrument not aligning perfectly with the SLO. In 2023–24, we revised assignments to better capture students’ ability to analyze communication; more than 90% met the target on interpersonal and crisis case study measures, indicating strong improvement. Students typically excel at identifying surface-level issues. Going forward, we want them to engage in more thorough, in-depth analysis—tying underlying communication theories, organizational contexts, and relational or societal impacts into their work. Our new SLO #1 and revised capstone assignment directly address these goals by requiring deeper and more unified analysis.

<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For 2025–26, 2026–27, and 2027–28, we will require all students to complete a single capstone Organizational Analysis/Problem Analysis Paper (COMM 494). We will emphasize deeper theoretical integration and data-informed problem diagnosis in the assignment instructions. and collect artifacts from all students in COMM 494, with two trained faculty raters scoring each paper on a shared rubric. We plan to adjust rubrics, if needed, once we see how well students meet the new Proficient (4/5) threshold and will use rater comments for “closing the loop” discussions with all communication faculty each year, identifying whether curriculum changes or additional instructional resources are needed for better analysis skills.

Program Student Learning Outcome 2	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Develop strategic, theoretically informed communication plans addressing organizational, relational, or societal issues.
Evaluation	In the older assessment cycle, we frequently measured whether students could propose “solutions” in group projects, case analyses, or final papers. While students generally identified problems well, they often needed more guidance on grounding their solutions in theory and articulating thorough strategies. This new outcome explicitly integrates “theoretically informed” strategies into how we teach and assess. We believe the revised SLO is still relevant and remains measurable through direct artifacts (capstone strategic plan components).
Measurement Instruments	Previously, multiple measures existed—e.g., Conflict Analyses, Interpersonal Film Analysis “recommendations,” or Crisis Communication Plans. Under the revised approach, we will use the “Strategic Plan/Problem Solution Plan” portion of the COMM 494 capstone. Students will develop strategic goals, objectives, and interventions based on communication theories and research. We will evaluate clarity, depth, and applicability of their proposed solutions against a detailed rubric.
Criteria & Targets	Historically, we used 70–75% at Satisfactory (3/5) as our benchmark for solution proposals. We are raising the bar to “4” (Proficient) or better, meaning that students’ strategic communication plans must clearly demonstrate a theoretical foundation, articulate specific goals and objectives, conduct audience analysis, propose feasible and theoretically grounded strategies, and include an evaluation plan.
Results & Conclusion	Results: Over the last three years, students typically did well identifying problems (averaging around 3.8–4.0/5), but solution proposals scored lower, around 3.3–3.5/5. Common weaknesses included insufficient use of scholarship to justify strategies and a lack of clear metrics for success. Where instruction included a stronger link between theory and practice, student proposals improved. Conclusion: We learned that students need more explicit guidance and practice in bridging communication theory to real-world solution-building. Our updated SLO #2 and the single capstone project aim to standardize that instructional emphasis, so that every student must demonstrate the ability to craft grounded, strategic solutions, not just identify issues.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	Beginning in 2025–26, each COMM 494 group will produce a written “Strategic Plan/Problem Solution” section scored with a new rubric. Faculty in prior courses (e.g., 300-level theory classes) will reinforce how theories inform solution development, so students enter the capstone with stronger preparation. The assessment team will analyze rubric results each year and track whether more than 70% of students achieve “4” or better. If weaknesses persist, we will pilot additional materials (e.g., sample papers, solution-planning workshops) and incorporate more collaborative review sessions among faculty to strengthen theoretical application in solutions.

Program Student Learning Outcome 3	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Construct and present messages appropriately adapted to specific contexts and audiences.

Evaluation	In our prior cycle, we assessed writing and oral presentation in various courses (e.g., Interpersonal Film Analysis, Crisis Case Study, Intercultural Conflict Analysis), often noting that students' communication was competent but sometimes lacked audience adaptation. As we move to a single capstone course, we will specifically measure audience adaptation and presentation quality via a unified oral presentation and final written product. This SLO remains highly relevant, especially for preparing students for diverse professional environments.
Measurement Instruments	Historically, we used papers in multiple classes; rubrics varied. With the new plan, every COMM 494 student team will deliver an Oral Presentation to an external community partner or mock panel. Two faculty members will observe the presentation and rate each team on clarity, coherence, message adaptation to the target audience, engagement, and professionalism.
Criteria & Targets	Previously, success was frequently set at 75% scoring "3/5" or better on writing/presentation rubrics. In the new plan, we will expect 80% of our students to achieve a "4/5" or better, reflecting "Proficient" skill in constructing/adapting messages for a real organizational or societal audience.
Results & Conclusion	Results: Over the last three years writing competence generally rated well (means often above 3.5/5). Oral presentation adaptation was less consistently measured. Qualitative feedback indicated that students benefited greatly from examples of strong audience adaptation and explicit guidelines on tone, style, and organization of messages. Conclusion: Our existing data indicates that while students are comfortable presenting, we want to ensure consistent, advanced skill in tailoring messages to different audiences. The new curriculum's single, culminating Oral Presentation with real or simulated external partners helps ensure everyone receives the same challenge, and we can gather more uniform data on how effectively they adapt messages.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	All groups in COMM 494 will deliver a formal presentation to a community partner (or an appropriate substitute if a partner is unavailable), and two trained faculty raters, using a standardized rubric, will evaluate message adaptation, clarity, coherence, engagement, and professionalism. We will collect rater feedback each semester and review the results annually with the broader faculty. If we find that certain dimensions (e.g., audience engagement or clarity) are consistently weaker, we'll adjust the curriculum and provide targeted skill-building activities in 300-level courses prior to the capstone.

To add more outcomes, if needed, select the table above and copy & paste below.

Assessment Rubric for the Organizational Analysis/Problem Analysis Paper
Program Learning Outcome 1: Analyze communication within organizations, relationships, and society.

Problem Definition and Clarity:

Distinguished (5): Clearly defines and articulates the organizational problem or challenge with exceptional clarity. Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the issue and its impact on the community.	Proficient (4): Provides a clear problem definition with insight. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the issue and its relevance to the community.	Average (3): Competently defines the organizational problem. Offers clarity, but additional details could enhance understanding.	Developing (2): Basic problem definition; may lack clarity, and additional details are needed for a comprehensive understanding.	Unsatisfactory (1): Inadequate problem definition; lacks clarity and fails to convey a clear understanding of the issue's significance.
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Critical Analysis of Organizational Factors:

Distinguished (5): Conducts a comprehensive analysis of relevant organizational factors, considering their impact on the community. Demonstrates a deep understanding of organizational dynamics and their implications for the service learning project.	Proficient (4): Provides a thorough analysis of organizational factors, showcasing insight into their relevance to the community and the service learning initiative.	Average (3): Competently analyzes key organizational factors, though additional depth or consideration of implications may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Basic analysis of organizational factors; may lack depth or overlook certain aspects relevant to the community and the project.	Unsatisfactory (1): Limited analysis of organizational factors, failing to provide a comprehensive understanding of their impact on the community and the project.
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Writing and Presentation:

Distinguished (5): Presents ideas in a clear, engaging, and well-organized manner. Exceptionally well-written with proper grammar and syntax.	Proficient (4): Well-written and organized. Communicates ideas clearly with proper grammar and syntax.	Average (3): Competently written with acceptable organization. Some improvement in clarity and organization is possible.	Developing (2): Basic writing and organization; may lack clarity and coherence. Requires improvement in grammar and syntax.	Unsatisfactory (1): Poorly written and organized; lacks clarity and coherence. Numerous issues with grammar and syntax.
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Assessment Rubric for the Strategic Plan/Problem Solution Plan

Program Learning Outcome 2: Develop strategic, theoretically informed communication plans addressing organizational, relational, or societal issues.

Theoretical Foundation:

Distinguished (5): Demonstrates an exceptional understanding and application of relevant communication theories, providing a nuanced and sophisticated theoretical foundation for the strategic plan.	Proficient (4): Applies a solid understanding of communication theories relevant to the issue, effectively integrating them into the strategic plan.	Average (3): Demonstrates a competent understanding of relevant communication theories, though additional depth or specificity may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Basic application of communication theories with limited depth or specificity.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to apply or demonstrate a clear understanding of relevant communication theories.
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Strategic Communication Goals and Objectives:

Distinguished (5): Develops clear, specific, and measurable strategic communication goals and objectives aligned with addressing the identified issue, demonstrating innovation and foresight.	Proficient (4): Establishes well-defined strategic communication goals and objectives that align with addressing the identified issue.	Average (3): Sets competent strategic communication goals and objectives, though additional specificity or clarity may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Establishes basic goals and objectives with limited specificity or clarity.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to articulate clear and specific strategic communication goals and objectives.
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Audience Analysis:

Distinguished (5): Conducts a comprehensive audience analysis, demonstrating a deep understanding of the target audience's needs, attitudes, and communication preferences.	Proficient (4): Conducts a thorough audience analysis, considering the target audience's needs, attitudes, and communication preferences.	Average (3): Conducts a competent audience analysis, though additional depth or consideration of audience factors may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Conducts a basic audience analysis with limited depth or consideration of audience factors.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to conduct a meaningful audience analysis.
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Communication Strategies:

Distinguished (5): Develops innovative and highly effective communication strategies informed by theory, demonstrating creativity and strategic thinking.	Proficient (4): Develops well-crafted communication strategies informed by theory that align with the established goals and objectives.	Average (3): Develops competent communication strategies, though additional creativity or specificity may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Develops basic communication strategies with limited creativity or specificity.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to develop effective communication strategies.
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Evaluation Plan:

Distinguished (5): Designs a rigorous and sophisticated evaluation plan, incorporating relevant metrics and measures to assess the success of the communication strategies.	Proficient (4): Designs a solid evaluation plan with clear metrics and measures to assess the success of the communication strategies.	Average (3): Designs a competent evaluation plan, though additional detail or specificity may enhance its effectiveness.	Developing (2): Designs a basic evaluation plan with limited detail or specificity.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to design a meaningful evaluation plan.
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Writing and Presentation:

Distinguished (5): Presents ideas in a clear, engaging, and well-organized manner. Exceptionally well-written with proper grammar and syntax.	Proficient (4): Well-written and organized. Communicates ideas clearly with proper grammar and syntax.	Average (3): Competently written with acceptable organization. Some improvement in clarity and organization is possible.	Developing (2): Basic writing and organization; may lack clarity and coherence. Requires improvement in grammar and syntax.	Unsatisfactory (1): Poorly written and organized; lacks clarity and coherence. Numerous issues with grammar and syntax.
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Assessment Rubric for the Oral Presentation to Community Partners**Program Learning Outcome 3: Construct and present messages appropriately adapted to specific contexts and audiences.****Message Adaptation:**

Distinguished (5): Constructs and presents messages with exceptional adaptation to the specific context and audience, demonstrating creativity, cultural sensitivity, and a nuanced understanding of communication dynamics.	Proficient (4): Constructs and presents messages with effective adaptation to the specific context and audience, showing a clear understanding of communication dynamics.	Average (3): Constructs and presents messages with competent adaptation, though additional depth or specificity may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Demonstrates basic adaptation to the context and audience, with limited depth or specificity.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to adapt messages appropriately to the context and audience.
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Clarity and Coherence:

Distinguished (5): Presents messages with exceptional clarity and coherence, maintaining a logical flow and engaging the audience effectively.	Proficient (4): Presents messages with clear and coherent organization, ensuring a logical flow and audience engagement.	Average (3): Presents messages with competent clarity and coherence, though additional polish or refinement may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Presents messages with basic clarity and coherence, with room for improvement in organization and flow.	Unsatisfactory (1): Presents messages with poor clarity and coherence, lacking organization and a logical flow.
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Engagement and Interaction:

Distinguished (5): Engages the audience effectively, fostering interaction, and adapting presentation style to maintain audience interest.	Proficient (4): Engages the audience and encourages interaction, demonstrating an effective presentation style.	Average (3): Engages the audience competently, though additional techniques for interaction may enhance the overall presentation.	Developing (2): Demonstrates basic audience engagement, with limited interaction and room for improvement in presentation style.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to engage the audience effectively, lacking interaction and an engaging presentation style.
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Adaptation to Feedback:

Distinguished (5): Demonstrates an exceptional ability to adapt to feedback during the presentation, making real-time adjustments for improved communication.	Proficient (4): Adapts to feedback effectively, making adjustments to enhance the overall quality of the presentation.	Average (3): Adapts to feedback competently, though additional responsiveness may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Demonstrates basic adaptation to feedback, with room for improvement in responsiveness.	Unsatisfactory (1): Fails to adapt to feedback effectively, lacking responsiveness during the presentation.
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Professionalism:

Distinguished (5): Demonstrates exceptional professionalism in demeanor, language, & presentation materials.	Proficient (4): Presents with a high level of professionalism in demeanor, language, and presentation materials.	Average (3): Presents with competent professionalism, though additional polish in demeanor or materials may be beneficial.	Developing (2): Demonstrates basic professionalism, with room for improvement in demeanor or materials.	Unsatisfactory (1): Lacks professionalism in demeanor, language, or presentation materials.
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