Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Program: Bachelor of Arts in Communication (225)

Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts

College: Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern State University Mission Statement: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences Mission Statement: The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts. Students pursuing a degree in Communication polish speaking, writing, and multimedia skills through experiences in and out of the classroom. Innovative courses prepare students for hundreds of jobs that require a foundation of communication skills. TV anchors, radio show hosts, bloggers, photojournalists, graphic designers, social media managers, speech writers, public relations specialists, reporters and scores of others all rise according to their communications skills. Available concentrations include Strategic Communication, Broadcast and Digital Media Production and Multimedia Journalism.

> **Strategic Communication**: Encompassing organizational communication and public relations, this concentration offers a course of study for students to learn how individuals and organizations use communication and media to deliver messages to targeted audiences. Courses will focus on how organizations and media influence opinions and the behavior of key publics. The curriculum will emphasize an ethical approach and will analyze societal effects of strategic communication practices.

Broadcast and Digital Media Production: Students will learn to create, produce, and disseminate broadcast media of varied genres and styles. The knowledge and skills learned will prepare students for broadcast media and broadcast production careers in industries such as television, radio, film, videos, and Web delivery. Through hands-on instruction, students learn to research, write, produce, and direct media rich content.

Multimedia Journalism: Informing the public through accurate and well-written stories remains at the core of journalism. Beyond the basics of reporting and writing, journalists today must adapt to changing technologies and become proficient in multimedia storytelling – combining text with images, sounds, videos, and graphics to reach diverse audiences. This concentration will prepare students for varied journalism careers in media industries such as newspapers, magazines, Web, and social media.

Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts Mission Statement: The Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts prepares students from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds for entry-level careers in a broad range of communication fields or advanced study. Grounded in a broad liberal arts tradition, the program of study incorporates current professional standards, hands-on experiences and technologies. The department is committed to promoting freedom of expression and understanding the social responsibilities with such freedom.

Vision Statement: The Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts is committed to achieving regional recognition as a baccalaureate program noted for excellence in teaching, service and scholarship to the community, the University and the profession. The department's high-quality faculty will help students attain the knowledge, skills, and values needed to succeed in communications-related fields or to pursue advanced degrees.

Student Learning Outcomes: To achieve the above mission and vision statements, the department adopted the following six Student Learning Outcomes (SLO).

Graduates will
1. Write clearly and correctly in formats appropriate for communication professionals
2. Speak clearly and correctly in presentations or other formats appropriate for communication professionals
3. Produce effective visual content for varied audiences and formats
4. Gather and critically analyze information from diverse sources
5. Understand and apply legal and ethical principles related to communication
6. Use current media technologies and understand their social and cultural influences

Assessment Methodology: A table below outlines the assessment process for the Communication undergraduate program.
- Faculty and Department Head meet during on-call week each fall and spring semesters to review assessment plan and measurements. Rubrics, rating scales, and other matters related to assessment tools are reviewed, revised, and

implemented accordingly.
- Data are collected by the designated faculty for courses identified and returned to the Department Head or designated faculty member, who will upload the data to TaskStream or other University-designated portal.
- Department Head will analyze the data to determine student proficiency in meeting measurable outcomes.
- The Department Head will meet individually with faculty teaching courses from which assessment data are collected for their recommendations to revise course and assessment tools as part of continuous program improvement.
- The Department Head will discuss results with program faculty and the Department Advisory Council and solicit their input.
- Based on data analysis and meetings with faculty and Advisory Council members, the Department Head will then propose to the program faculty changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment cycle, and, if needed, curricula and program changes.
- The Department Head will approve changes as needed based on the above steps.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Communication graduates will write clearly and correctly in formats appropriate for communication professionals.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 1040: Writing Fundamentals for Communication Professionals
COMM 2510: Writing for Mass Media

Measure 1.1: Students will write clearly and correctly. Using specified assessment assignments, students will establish clear and correct writing skills that adhere to formats and frameworks appropriate for communication professionals. Each COMM 1040 student is evaluated by taking a pre-test at the beginning of the semester and a post-test at the end of the semester to measure improvement. The test identifies components of writing that are vital to the success of a communications professional. Students will be expected to demonstrate strong comprehension of fundamentals of writing in future required classes, specifically COMM 2510. The target is to have all students attain a grade of 70% or higher.

COMM 1040, Writing Fundamentals for Communication Professionals, is an introductory writing course for communication majors targets improving the fundamentals of writing clearly and correctly.

Target: 70% of possible points

Finding: Target met.

Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Analysis: In AC 2020 – 2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty incorporated more real life examples of professional writing, provided context and motivation to students, and increased the amount of small writing activities throughout the semester.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students averaged a score of 87.44% on the post-test assignment. Students demonstrated growth in COMM 1040, earning an average post-test score of over 70% after scoring an average of 75% on the initial pre-test. The creation of this class intended to address an overall deficiency in the writing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation skills of incoming students in order to better prepare them for more advanced required communication classes. Students demonstrated a stronger understanding of writing mechanics than in years past but struggled to separate objective journalism elements from sensationalized, subjective media content. Faculty believes this reflects the evolution of the role and appearance of news media in today's world and the impact social media has on the way media is created and consumed. Additionally, students are now at an age where they do not have strong, formative memories of life before social media, so this creates a different perspective than previous students who may have had experiences analyzing information with and without social media's influence.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the results from AC 2021-2022, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will incorporate lessons that specifically address the difference between content (subjective) and considered news (objective). These efforts will increase media literacy, a vital component of being able to understand the context of information received from a news outlet, and increase the quality of their writing overall. Studying the cost of writing mechanics mistakes in the professional world will also emphasize the importance of dedicating themselves to solidifying those skills in COMM 1040.

Measure 1.2: The secondary assessment takes place via COMM 2510, Writing for Mass Media. Required of all majors, the prerequisites for this course are ENGL 1010, ENGL 1020 and COMM 1040. All require a "C" or higher. To assess students' abilities to write clearly and correctly, the secondary assessment is a writing assignment administered at the conclusion of the semester.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020 – 2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020 - 2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty reviewed class format, implemented structures to support online success, and incorporated real-life examples of professional writing.

In AC 2021-2022, students returned to an in-class format for COMM 2510. Students met the target by scoring an average of 80.5% on the assessment assignment, exceeding the goal of 70%. This is also a slight increase from the previous year when students met

online. Students appear to struggle with independently collecting information and writing cogent news items or public relations pieces.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the results from AC 2021-2022, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, the COMM 2510 instructor will coordinate with COMM 1040 instructor to ensure the most effective strategy for teaching strong writing mechanics is offered between the two courses as COMM 1040 is a pre-requisite for COMM 2510. Professional examples of current high-level public relations writing will be incorporated into the curriculum to provide context for students as they strive to create professional writing products.

SLO 2. Communication graduates will speak clearly and correctly in presentations or other formats appropriate for communication professionals.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 1010: Oral Communication

Measure 2.1. (Direct): The primary assessment for SLO 2 is the Persuasive Speech assignment administered via COMM 1010: Oral Communication. Freshman COMM majors were placed in a Freshman Interest Group (FIG) section during the Fall 2020 semester. Students were graded using two specific rubric categories (Language/Fluency category and Voice category) from a standard course rubric that supports this SLO.

Grading criteria for Language/Fluency category:

- o There is superior use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience to support objectives of the speech. The speaker clearly uses a variety of rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration to enhance the message. (5)
- o There is effective use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience of the speech. The speaker uses a variety of rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration to enhance the message. (4)
- o There is adequate use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience to support objectives of the speech. The speaker adequately uses a variety of rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration to enhance the message. (3)
- o There is limited use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience to support objectives of the speech. The speaker somewhat adequately uses a variety of rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration to enhance the message. (2)
- o There is weak use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience to support objectives of the speech. The speaker uses a variety of rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration that do little to enhance the message. (1)

- o There is no use of clear, correct, and appropriate language for the target audience to support objectives of the speech. The speaker uses no rhetorical devices such as analogies, repetition, and alliteration to enhance the message. (0)

Grading criteria for Voice category:

- o There is superior use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that heightens interest and matches messages appropriately. (5)
- o There is effective use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that heightens interest and matches messages appropriately. (4)
- o There is adequate use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that adequately heightens interest and matches messages appropriately. (3)
- o There is limited use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that somewhat adequately heightens interest and matches messages appropriately. (2)
- o There is weak use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that does little to heighten interest and matches messages appropriately. (1)
- o There is no use of natural variation of vocal characteristics including rate, pitch, volume, and tone in Standard English that does not heighten interest and matches messages appropriately. (0)

Target: 80% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty incorporated real-life examples of professional speaking into course activities. Faculty also used writing activities to strengthen students' ability to construct and deliver cohesive presentations.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students achieved an overall average of 4.18/5 or 83.6% in rubric categories associated with speaking clearly and correctly in presentations (see above for rubric category details). Students exceeded the acceptable target of 80% and are approaching the ideal target of 100%. This leaves room for improvement in students showing the ability to construct and deliver cohesive presentations.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will include activities that allow students to practice choosing concise speaking structure and effective word choice.

Measure 2.2. (Direct): Each student was required to prepare a presentation of their capstone portfolios and to present it to the class. Special emphasis was placed on their professional goals and objectives.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, the department reinforced skills learned in courses like COMM 1010 and COMM 2500 to emphasize the importance of effective verbal communication in a professional setting.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Overall, the class scored an average of 83%. Students did well with incorporating previous experiential learning experiences into their presentation material.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, the department faculty will coordinate to ensure that students are encountering multiple opportunities in both COMM core classes as well as COMM concentration classes to professionally present material prior to arriving in COMM 4700.

SLO 3. Communication graduates will produce effective visual content for varied audiences and formats.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 1010: Oral Communication

Measure: 3.1 (Direct): To assess students' abilities to create effective visual content for varied audiences and formats, the signature assessment is the creation of an engagement campaign. Students craft messaging based on their organization's needs and create a campaign to engage online users in supporting or sharing the campaign's messaging. This requires students to share messaging on multiple social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) using tools taught in class (Canva, Facebook Analytics, Instagram Insights) to create effective content, including visual elements. Students submitted a campaign summary, which includes selecting and analyzing the most effective social media posts from the campaign.

Target: 80% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020 - 2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty incorporated real-world examples of effective

social media content while also educating students on the quickly changing social media standards.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students scored an average of 88% on the engagement project assignment. The increase in the availability of application-based programs to edit photo and video seems to have impacted the student population in the sense that they are more inclined to create and edit content, typically on smart phones. Students usually still need a great deal of guidance when it comes to the elements of design, visual hierarchy, and other foundational design structures of which understanding is required in order to develop effective visual communication strategy. Students must also be able to adapt to and keep up with changing design preferences to stay current, specifically in the social media arena.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will include a lesson that covers history of design so students can develop a sense of the cyclical nature of design trends while also expanding their design foundation, preparing them to stay up-to-date in the visual communication industry while also priming them to create innovative new design work.

Measure 3.2 (Direct): In COMM 1010, students must produce and use an effective visual aid for the final speech, the persuasive speech. The FIG sections are taught in Fall 2021 only. Speeches are graded using a standard course rubric including a specific rubric category (Presentation Aid category) for this SLO:

- o There is superior design and/or use of aid to effectively support verbal message. Aid clarifies and enhances verbal message. The speaker demonstrates ability to use varied presentation strategies for an appropriate, respectful presentation. Speaker can adapt to unexpected circumstances affecting use of aid. (5)
- o There is effective design and/or use of aid to effectively support verbal message. Aid clarifies and enhances verbal message. The speaker demonstrates ability to use varied presentation strategies for an appropriate, respectful presentation. Speaker can adapt to unexpected circumstances affecting use of aid. (4)
- o There is adequate design and/or use of aid to support verbal message. Aid clarifies verbal message. The speaker demonstrates ability to use a presentation strategy for an appropriate, respectful presentation. Speaker can adapt to unexpected circumstances affecting use of aid. (3)
- o There is limited use and/or somewhat adequate design of presentation aid. The speaker does not demonstrate ability to support or enhance verbal message. Aid is not always used at the appropriate time. Speaker is uncomfortable with presentation media/technology. (2)
- o There is weak use and/or inadequate design of presentation aid. Presentation aid may be inappropriate. Technical presentation problems (visibility and clarity) interfered with message comprehension. Speaker is uncomfortable with presentation media/technology. (1)
- o There is no presentation aid used to support verbal message. (0)

Target: 80% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty critiqued examples of effective and ineffective visual aids and encouraged students to be creative in developing meaningful visual support for their presentations.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students achieved an overall average of 4/5 or 80% in the presentation aid category. Students achieved the acceptable target (80%) and approached the ideal target (100%). This year, more students than normal did not complete a visual aid when delivering their speech. This may have had something to do with students adjusting to being back in the classroom after the challenges encountered due to COVID. Either way, shifting emphasis to not just the effective construction of visual aids but also the value of their presence in a speech setting will be something faculty will focus on in the upcoming year.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will emphasize the importance of visual aids and their ability to strengthen the impact of a verbal message by providing specific examples of speeches both with and without visual aids present.

SLO 4. Communication graduates will gather and critically analyze information from diverse sources.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 2510: Writing for Mass Media
COMM 4700: Capstone Course of Communication Competence

Measure 4.1 (Direct): To assess students' abilities to gather and critically analyze information, the signature assessment for Measure 4.1 is a writing assignment. This assignment requires students to cover a specific event and write an article about this event using a minimum of three sources. Students are graded using a five-category rubric. The rubric assesses the presence of proper headline and format; use of AP style; use of proper spelling, grammar and punctuation; development of an effective lead; and effective content organization.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty emphasized the importance of strong sourcing skills to COMM 2510 students through discussion, examples, and critique.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students scored an average of 8.29/10 or 83% in the rubric category associated with gathering and analyzing source material. Some students struggled with identifying high-quality source material and properly citing online sources so as to avoid unintentional plagiarism scenarios.

Decision: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will provide specific guidelines for assessing the quality of source material and incorporate an increased frequency of examples and practice with citing online source material.

Measure 4.2 (Direct): The capstone course is required of all graduating seniors majoring in Communication. The writing assignments required more thought than recitation form the textbooks. Students were challenged to understand and think. To understand the evolution of the American tradition of free speech, much attention was given to the history of journalists, publications and movements such as Yellow Journalism and how propaganda was used to start wars and change public perception of social issues.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met on four out of five assessment assignments.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met on four out of five assessment assignments. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, the department reviewed its curriculum to incorporate more research work and instruction regarding properly citing sources in courses occurring earlier in the program.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met on four out of five assessment assignments. Students were to write a thoughtful, cogent essay about the evolution of the First Amendment and its place in a democratic society, especially as it concerns journalism and other forms of media. Students were asked to provide evidence of their knowledge of the First Amendment's historical roots and how the First Amendment impacts their professional and personal lives. The course average was 20.46 out of 25 points or 82%. Overall, students demonstrated basic skills about how to conduct research and critically analyze information. In addition, the research component of this assignment showed averaged 8.2 points out of 10 (or 83%), indicating basic research skills.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met on four out of five assessment assignments. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, the department will coordinate with faculty to include additional research assignments in both COMM core and COMM concentration classes taking place throughout the curriculum so students will be proficient in research methods, citations, and source analysis by the time they arrive in COMM 4700.

SLO 5. Communication graduates will understand and apply legal and ethical principles related to communication.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 2040: Media Law and Ethics
COMM 4910: Communication Internship/Seminar

Measure 5.1 (Direct): All communication majors are now required to take Media Law and Ethics, taught by Dr. Brian Gabrial. The signature assessment for this SLO is a final examination that evaluates the students understanding of legal and ethical principles involving journalists and strategic communications professionals. Each question on the final examination is linked directly to this SLO. In addition, a short research paper provides data on students' organizational, writing, and research skills.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, faculty emphasized the importance of law and ethics to COMM 2040 students to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution and their fundamental First Amendment rights through discussion and practical application. The instructor enforced the attendance policy outlined in the syllabus.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. The composite score (fall/spring) on the course final exam was 76%. Concerning specific questions regarding First Amendment rights guaranteed under the Constitution, the composite score was 91%. (The composite score was 100% in naming four of the five rights.) In identifying the Constitution's basic structure, 80% answered this section of the assessment correctly. Other analysis indicates that students, overall, met the 70% SLO threshold of identifying seminal U.S. Supreme Court cases involving the First Amendment, scoring an average of 73%. An analysis of a short research paper indicated that students are showing some basic writing and research competencies, receiving a composite score of 77.5%.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will emphasize the importance of law and ethics to COMM 2040 students to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution and their fundamental First Amendment rights through discussion and practical application. The instructor will enforce the attendance policy outlined in the syllabus.

Measure 5.2 (Direct): All communication majors are required to register for this internship/seminar course as part of their capstone experience. Each student undertakes

150 hours of unpaid internship work under the direct supervision of a media professional. At the internship's end, the supervisor is provided an evaluation form that states "5. Understand and apply legal and ethical principles related to communication." The supervisor is asked to judge the student on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "weak" and 5 indicating "excellent."

Target: Four out of five possible points (4.5/5) or 90%.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021 the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022 the faculty reviewed courses to ensure legal and ethical considerations are always addressed and reinforced as appropriate in courses.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met with 12 students completing their internships. Students scored an average of 4.5/5 (90%) in the category related to legal and ethical principles in communication. This score indicates that the students are prepared to enter a professional environment with an understanding of these concepts.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will review courses to ensure legal and ethical considerations are always addressed and reinforced as appropriate in courses.

SLO 6. Communication graduates will use current media technologies and understand their social and cultural influences.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

COMM 2020: Mass Media and Society

Measure 6.1: Students in COMM 2020 completed an assessment assignment which was an inquiry and self-assessment about their attachment to and use of social media to access media related information, and a final paper related to understanding media technologies and their potential influence on society and culture.

Target: 70% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, the instructor used a strong foundational structure to offer consistency and organization for students to combat stressful exterior factors. This took the format of weekly assignments, group projects, and connecting the concepts of mass media to future careers.

As a result, in AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Students scored an average of 20/20 or 100% on the inquiry/self-assessment score and an average of 91% on the final paper showing that the student had a strong foundational structure in understanding stressful exterior factors. The students also showed understanding to how mass media is important to their future careers.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021 - 2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, the instructor will provide students with a framework to navigate the stresses of the digital world and the relationship that exists between the physical world and our digital space. This will take place in discussion format as well as written assignment format.

Measure 6.2: This assessment measures students' abilities to use current media technologies correctly and effectively. Students are required to complete a comprehensive final project that encompasses knowledge of current social media technologies, usage, and strategy.

Target: 80% of possible points

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2020 – 2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, in AC 2021-2022, the faculty incorporated new technologies that assisted students in quickly, effectively, and creatively developing content for publication on social media platforms.

As a result, in AC 2021 – 2022, the target was met. Students exceeded the target with an average score of 90%. Students demonstrated skills that indicated proficiency in strategy development, content creation, targeted messaging, and teamwork. The introduction of new technologies streamlined this process and allowed students to implement a more diverse set of skills as they completed their projects.

Decision: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will incorporate technologies for both creative content creation and strategic organization into an increased number of projects, giving students multiple opportunities to interact with the software/technologies before beginning their final assessment assignment.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results: The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2022-2023. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results.

- Faculty incorporated more real life examples of professional writing, provided

context and motivation to students, and increased the amount of small writing activities throughout the semester.

- Faculty reviewed class format, implemented structures to support online success, and incorporated real-life examples of professional writing.

- Faculty incorporated real-life examples of professional speaking into course activities. Faculty also used writing activities to strengthen students' ability to construct and deliver cohesive presentations.
- The department reinforced skills learned in courses like COMM 1010 and COMM 2500 to emphasize the importance of effective verbal communication in a professional setting.
- Faculty incorporated real-world examples of effective social media content while also educating students on the quickly changing social media standards.
- Faculty critiqued examples of effective and ineffective visual aids and encouraged students to be creative in developing meaningful visual support for their presentations.
- Faculty emphasized the importance of strong sourcing skills to COMM 2510 students through discussion, examples, and critique.
- The department reviewed its curriculum to incorporate more research work and instruction regarding properly citing sources in courses occurring earlier in the program.
- Faculty emphasized the importance of law and ethics to COMM 2040 students to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution and their fundamental First Amendment rights through discussion and practical application. The instructor enforced the attendance policy outlined in the syllabus.
- Faculty reviewed courses to ensure legal and ethical considerations are always addressed and reinforced as appropriate in courses.

- The instructor used a strong foundational structure to offer consistency and organization for students to combat stressful exterior factors. This took the format of weekly assignments, group projects, and connecting the concepts of mass media to future careers.
- Faculty incorporated new technologies that assisted students in quickly, effectively, and creatively developing content for publication on social media platforms.

Plan of action moving forward:

- COMM 2510 instructor will coordinate with COMM 1040 instructor to ensure the most effective strategy for teaching strong writing mechanics is offered between the two courses as COMM 1040 is a pre-requisite for COMM 2510. Professional examples of current high-level public relations writing will be incorporated into the curriculum to provide context for students as they strive to create professional writing products.
- Faculty will include activities that allow students to practice choosing concise speaking structure and effective word choice.
- The department faculty will coordinate to ensure that students are encountering

multiple opportunities in both COMM core classes as well as COMM concentration classes to professionally present material prior to arriving in COMM 4700.

- Faculty will include a lesson that covers history of design so students can develop a sense of the cyclical nature of design trends while also expanding their design foundation, preparing them to stay up-to-date in the visual communication industry while also priming them to create innovative new design work.
- Faculty will emphasize the importance of visual aids and their ability to strengthen the impact of a verbal message by providing specific examples of speeches both with and without visual aids present.
- Faculty will provide specific guidelines for assessing the quality of source material and incorporate an increased frequency of examples and practice with citing online source material.
- The department will coordinate with faculty to include additional research assignments in both COMM core and COMM concentration classes taking place throughout the curriculum so students will be proficient in research methods, citations, and source analysis by the time they arrive in COMM 4700.
- Faculty will emphasize the importance of law and ethics to COMM 2040 students to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution and their fundamental First Amendment rights through discussion and practical application. The instructor will enforce the attendance policy outlined in the syllabus.
- Faculty will incorporate lessons that specifically address the difference between content (subjective) and considered news (objective).
- Faculty will emphasize the importance of law and ethics to COMM 2040 students to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution and their fundamental First Amendment rights through discussion and practical application.
- The instructors will enforce attendance policies outlined in the syllabus.
- Instructor will provide students with a framework to navigate the stresses of the digital world and the relationship that exists between the physical world and our digital space. This will take place in discussion format as well as written assignment format.
- Faculty will incorporate technologies for both creative content creation and strategic organization into an increased number of projects, giving students multiple opportunities to interact with the software/technologies before beginning their final assessment assignment.