

Assessment Plan: Implementation of ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies

Student Learning Assessment Plan Department of Journalism and Mass Communication North Carolina A&T State University

Instructional assessment is a critical element of teaching and learning. The process is intended to measure instructors' effectiveness in helping students to learn the contents of courses taught. While grades represent assessment of individual students within a course, program assessment focuses on cohorts of students and what they have collectively learned in an entire program, across multiple classes and experiences.

At its best, assessment has a transforming effect on education through the circular process of analyzing curricula, instructional strategies, classroom materials, and student learning outcomes. The results are then used to improve teaching and learning. This continuous improvement process requires gathering information from multiple sources to analyze what students know, value, learn, and can improve upon during their college experiences.

The department chair oversees the JOMC Curriculum/Assessment Committee and ensures the implementation of the assessment plan. In summer 2017, the Committee met to refine the assessment plan, review collected data and results, and propose changes for the fall 2017 semester. The Committee and the JOMC faculty used the same method of measurement from fall 2017 until the end of the 2021-2022 academic year.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, department's goals were revised and approved to align them with the new competencies of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Accordingly, the assessment plan was revised to incorporate the new ACEJMC values and competencies, the university's vision and mission statements, and the unit's updated mission and vision statements.

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

Vision

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is a preeminent land-grant institution where high-achieving scholars are engaged in transformative teaching and learning, civic outreach, interdisciplinary research and innovative solutions to global challenges.

Approved by North Carolina A&T Board of Trustees on May 26, 2022, and UNC Board of Governors on July 20, 2022.

Mission

An 1890 land-grant doctoral high research activity university, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University prepares students to advance the human condition and facilitate economic growth in North Carolina and beyond by providing a preeminent and diverse educational experience through teaching, research, and scholarly application of knowledge.

Approved by North Carolina A&T Board of Trustees on May 26, 2022, and UNC Board of Governors on July 20, 2022.

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (JOMC)

Vision

The JOMC vision is to be recognized as an influential source in shaping the direction and makeup of mass media and their impact on society. *Approved by JOMC faculty on October 7, 2022.*

Mission

The mission of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication is to prepare journalists, multi-platform content creators and strategic communicators to tell stories from diverse perspectives and produce high caliber professional work by engaging in cutting-edge teaching, research, practice and public service. *Approved by JOMC faculty on October 7, 2022.*

JOMC Department Goals

From its mission statement, the department has developed the following goals:

1. Cultivate in students the practice of acquiring interdisciplinary knowledge and developing analytical and critical skills for acquiring balanced views of world issues including diversity, equity, inclusion and belongingness.
2. Assist students in the development of good oral and written communication skills the journalism profession requires;
3. Guide students in developing at least one area of specialty and preferably the convergence of multiple areas in their chosen field;
4. Provide students opportunities to collaborate with specialists in other fields in order to be informative, analytical, and critical in their reporting on issues;
5. Cultivate in students an understanding of the historical, cultural, legal, ethical and moral contexts in which they apply their knowledge and skills;
6. Prepare students for employment and career advancement in local, national and international media markets;
7. Challenge students to apply their classroom knowledge to public use by engaging them in local community activities;
8. Encourage students to participate in scholarly work and creative productions; and
9. Encourage students to explore new channels of communication and collaborative work that transcends departmental and institutional boundaries.
10. Maintain strong relationships with alumni, community, business and non-profit sector.

JOMC Faculty and Student Adoption of the ACEJMC Values and Competencies

JOMC faculty and students fully adopt and embrace the 10 values and competencies recommended by the ACEJMC. The university's administration endorses and supports this effort as an embodiment and outgrowth of its vision and mission, which charges faculty with seeking excellence in teaching and research. Therefore, ACEJMC accreditation helps the unit to enhance its instructional efforts and provide evidence of its commitment to the strategic goals of the university.

The 10 values and competencies inform the process of how courses in the department are structured and delivered to students. The JOMC curriculum maps identify the values and competencies emphasized in relevant courses. The core and required courses introduce the

students to an awareness, understanding and application of all 10 values and competencies. All JOMC course syllabi identify the values and competencies by listing of course goals and objectives. If needed, faculty may add additional goals and objectives.

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that graduates of accredited programs be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

1. apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invite ACEJMC is located;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;
4. present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
5. write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
6. demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
7. apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
8. effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
9. critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
10. apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Implementation of the 10 ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

The following pages describe how program outcomes are framed and listed on syllabi as student learning outcomes to reflect the 10 ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

Curriculum Maps

JOMC students may choose a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism and Mass Communication degree with a concentration in one of the following three areas: Mass Media Production, Multimedia Journalism, and Public Relations. Curriculum maps indicate where the 10 ACEJMC Values and Competencies are addressed in the core and required courses.

JOMC Measures of Assessment

Assessment is a continuous process in which each step is built upon the previous one through feedback from the previous direct/indirect measures, in-class results and feedback from external media professionals. The process provides answers to the question of what knowledge and skills JOMC students have gained through their course of study.

The JOMC Department applies four direct measures and three indirect measures to assess student learning at the undergraduate level. The direct and indirect measures for assessment are listed below and described in detail in the individual sections that follow.

Direct measures include:

- JOMC Accreditation Pre- and Post-tests (created from the Grammar Proficiency Exam and the JOMC Senior Comprehensive Exam starting in fall 2021)
- E-portfolio Evaluations
- Internship Evaluations

Indirect measures include:

- Senior Satisfaction Survey
- Alumni Survey
- Student Awards

The Grammar Proficiency Pre-Test and Post-Test (direct measure) and the JOMC Comprehensive Pre-Test and Post-Test (direct measure) were administered through spring 2020.

Grammar Proficiency Pre- and Post-Test (direct measure)

Proper grammar is an important skill in newswriting and editing. In fall 2017, the department began to administer a grammar pre-test to first-year journalism and mass communication students in JOMC 102 (Interactive Communication in a Digital World). This is the first JOMC course students take as a part of their degree requirements in journalism and mass communication. Students take a grammar post-test in JOMC 220 (Reporting and Writing Across Platforms) after they have taken the required English 226 course (Basic Grammar and Mechanics) and after completion of a grammar review JOMC 220.

JOMC Senior Comprehensive Exam (direct measure)

In fall 2017, the department selected a set of assessment questions for a JOMC Senior Comprehensive Exam to determine what students have learned upon graduation. The pilot test was scheduled for spring 2018 and administered to mostly senior students enrolled in JOMC 498 (Media Internship) after they have completed most of the required courses.

JOMC Accreditation Pre- and Post-tests

In fall 2021, the Grammar Proficiency Exam and the JOMC Senior Comprehensive exam were combined to create the JOMC Accreditation Pre- and Post-tests. The pre-test is taken during JOMC 102 (Interactive Communication in a Digital World), which is a freshman-level course, and the post-test is taken during the JOMC internship class, which is a senior-level course. This assessment process provides more reliable feedback than the earlier assessments.

Electronic Portfolio (direct measure)

The JOMC faculty has developed an e-portfolio requirement for the JOMC 492 (Mass Communication Professional Development Seminar). Juniors and seniors develop an e-portfolio to show their professional readiness for employment in the media industry. This course is an intensive study of professional practices, skills, etiquette, and attitudes of the mass

communication industry that intended to prepare students for off-campus internships. Since fall of 2015, the department requires students to use WordPress to build and share their e-portfolios.

WordPress.com website is a customizable, scalable, secure and easy to use platform and offers pre-designed templates for personalized brand development. The site adjusts to various digital media platforms/devices for viewing. WordPress accounts for almost 25 percent of all self-hosted sites

The e-portfolio provides an opportunity for students to showcase their individual knowledge, skills, and talents in a professional manner. They also learn to develop their own niche in the media industry, prepare for graduate school or pursue other opportunities. Used as a part of students' JOMC curriculum matriculation, their work is viewed and judged by faculty, alumni, and professionals in the mass media field. Through this e-portfolio and individual presentations, judges can assess students' work and gain an insight about their overall knowledge pertaining to their chosen area of study and learning outcomes. The evaluators are matched according to the students' area of concentration.

The students present their e-portfolios for evaluation at the end of the semester in which the JOMC 492 course is taken. The criteria for judging the submittals are determined by the ACEJMC accrediting standards and current media industry needs. In spring 2017, the e-portfolio evaluation form was updated to clearly and accurately reflect the ACEJMC core values and competencies.

Internship Site Supervisor's Evaluations (direct measure)

All students in the department will complete at least one professional off campus internship before graduation. The internship faculty gather feedback from each professional supervisor to assure students have mastered the competencies and values. The department will analyze the internship evaluations on an aggregate basis to determine the level of student preparedness and performance in professional work settings. The aggregate analysis can reveal trend lines or patterns to suggest ways to improve curriculum and instruction. Students are evaluated on their communication, cognitive and professional skills. The site supervisor's evaluation is part of the student's final grade for the internship class.

This direct measure evaluates the student's ability to cultivate the practice of seeking interdisciplinary knowledge in students, and help them acquire and apply analytical and critical skills in developing views on issues; to prepare students to transcend professional and other boundaries individually and collaboratively in addressing situations, responsibilities and challenges; and to cultivate in students an understanding of the historical, cultural, legal, ethical and moral contexts in which they apply their knowledge and professional skills.

JOMC Senior Satisfaction Survey (indirect measure)

Seniors were given a short departmental survey included in the internship survey of their educational experience. The department will compare and analyze responses to discover issues or reveal trends over time that need to be addressed to enhance student learning. The survey is sent to all prospective graduating seniors. Students are asked to reflect specifically on their

experience in terms of the ACEJMC competencies and values. The university conducts its own student surveys, and the department has access to those results.

It is vital to measure student's success and canvas their opinions on a variety of variables to determine the issues important to students

Alumni Survey (indirect measure)

It is important to the continued success of our program that we assess the educational experiences of our alumni. The indirect measure will assess our graduates' experiences and perceptions. The alumni survey will tell us what our graduates think about the effectiveness of the curriculum, how well the program prepared them for the profession/industry. The results will give insight into which areas in the program need improvement and the areas where we are excelling. The alumni survey was created and implemented during the summer of 2017 and will be used to measure the quality and success of our program. Assessment occurs every three years.

The alumni survey is also shared with the JOMC Alumni Council to discuss strategies for improvements.

Student Awards (indirect measure)

Student successes can be an external indicator of the quality of the educational experience, whether originating in classes or through student media. The school will compile student successes, ranging from research presentations in the college's Student Undergraduate Research Forum to national competitions such as the Hearst Journalism Awards and Broadcast Education Association competitions. The compilation, comparison and analysis of student success over time can offer insight into the effectiveness of the instruction and experiences provided to students.

Voluntary Participation in Organizations, Programs, Activities (indirect measure)

The department seeks to cultivate in students the practice of collaborating with other students with similar backgrounds. Opportunities for this collaboration are provided by organizations related to the major and housed inside or outside the department. They include: (1) *The A&T Register* (student newspaper); (2) WNAA-FM 90.1 (University radio station); (3) the campus television studio; (4) the campus chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America; (5) the campus chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists; and (6) the Aggie Press.

Timeline for Completing the Assessment Loop:

Assessment is a continuous process with each step built upon the previous step and feedback built into the system at all steps. The result is increased transparency for academic programs. The process provides answers to the question about what knowledge and skills the student needs to possess.

During the August 2022 faculty meeting, the JOMC faculty discuss how to apply assessment results from the measures to strengthen curriculum, instruction and student learning. The action plan is implemented for the upcoming year. The curriculum assessment committee collects and analyzes the data at the during the semester for improvement. The results are reported to the

faculty and the chair at the end of the academic year to determine what strengths and weakness are revealed. Areas for improvement are addressed by individual faculty, the curriculum assessment committee and the chair depending on those responsible for the change.

Course Syllabi Annual Review

All syllabi will be continuously reviewed by the professor/instructor to improve the student learning outcomes particularly using new media technology and staying current with industry changes. In addition to formally accomplish this improvement, an individual syllabus audit by the curriculum committee will take place every two years with the core courses and concentration courses being examined during alternating years. This will become a performance evaluation assignment for each professor/instructor responsible for the course design.

Individual Course Syllabus Audit

Here are questions to be addressed during the individual syllabus audit:

1. What changes have you made to the syllabus since the last formal review to improve ACEJMC University Student Learning Outcomes?
2. What changes have you made to the syllabus since the last formal review to improve SACS University Student Learning Outcomes?
3. What changes are needed now to the syllabus to improve ACEJMC Student Learning Outcomes?
4. What changes are needed now to the syllabus to improve ACEJMC Student Learning Outcomes?
5. What resources are required to make that change to improve ACEJMC Student Learning Outcomes?
6. What technological and/or industry patterns are catalyzing changes?
7. How does the evolution of the individual course syllabus and student learning goals affect the JOMC's overall curriculum and course of study?

Implementation of the 10 ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

The following describes how the syllabi frame student learning outcomes to reflect ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. According to our curriculum map, all 10 professional values and competencies are emphasized in the student learning outcomes of the JOMC core courses.

The student learning objectives explain what a student should achieve to reach the stated goal. It includes measurable variables and specific criteria to describe acceptable performance or proficiency toward mastering that goal.

JOMC Core Courses

JOMC 102: Interactive Communication in a Digital World

JOMC 220: Reporting and Writing Across Platforms
JOMC 249: Introduction to Multimedia
JOMC 303: Mass Communication Research Methods
JOMC 393: Communication Law and Ethics

Learning Objectives:

Goal 1: Students should understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the United States of America.

Course: JOMC 393 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

Students will be able to explain the importance of individual and media professional rights and responsibilities provided by the First Amendment.

Students will be able to explain the application and legal importance of the First Amendment to their individual and professional discourse in a democracy.

Goal 2: Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications

Course: JOMC 102 Learning Objective

Students will be able explain the importance of media history and the development of journalism and mass communication.

Goal 3: Students should be able to demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.

Course: JOMC 393 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to demonstrate the application of the laws, rules, regulations, and personal efficacy in treating all people with respect and equality.

Students will be able to examine the application and the importance of researching and respecting the peoples' traditions, rituals, and customs.

Goal 4: Students should be able to present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies

Course: JOMC 249 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to demonstrate media content publication skills by constructing a WordPress multimedia site.

Goal 5: Students should write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.

Course: JOMC 220 Learning Objective:

Students will demonstrate their newswriting skills by writing four news stories.

Students will be able to write news story leads and nut grafs.

Course: JOMC 249 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to use technology for research and writing of news stories.

Students will be able to use AP Style rules, grammar, mechanics, and rules for writing for the Web through the exercises and assignments.

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to select the appropriate media theory for empirical research.

Goal 6: Students should be able demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity,

Course: JOMC 393 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to examine the application and the importance of researching and respecting the peoples' traditions, rituals, and customs.

Course: JOMC 249 Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to interpret sources to critically evaluate their own work for accuracy and radialities.

Students will be able to identify the application and the importance of researching and telling the complete story surrounding any professional media assignment.

Goal 7: Students should apply critical thinking skills when conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Course: JOMC 249 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to think critically and creatively to develop interviewing communication skill through numerous exercises and assignments.

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objective

Students will be able think critically about media research issues and create independent empirical research projects.

Course: JOMC 220 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to demonstrate media content publication skills by constructing a WordPress multimedia site.

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to compose hypotheses and determine the appropriate statistical tests to support or not support the hypotheses.

Course: JOMC 393 Learning Objective

Students will be able to think critically, creatively, and independently about their personal duties within the confines of media law.

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to write correctly and clearly about media empirical research.

Goal 8: *Students should be able to apply basic numerical and statistical concepts effectively and correctly.*

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to collect, interpret, and explain quantitative and qualitative data.

Course: JOMC 303 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to critically evaluate basic qualitative and quantitative research methodologies such as polling, content analysis and thematic analysis.

Goal 9: *Students should be able to critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness*

Course: JOMC 393 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to explain important aspects of media law and ethics from practice and exposure to examples of quality journalism.

Students will be able to interpret sources for accuracy and reliability.

Goal 10: *Students should be able to apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.*

Course: JOMC 249 Learning Objective:

Students will be able to demonstrate media content publication skills by constructing a WordPress or ExpressAdobe multimedia website.