

MA in Communication Assessment Report for AY2021-2022

Communication: MA in Communication Mission Statement

Mission Statement:

The MA Communication program prepares students for a) communication-related professions in the concentrations of Communication Studies; Journalism; Media Arts; Media Studies; and Public Relations & Organizational Communication and b) pursuing a doctoral degree in communication through a broad array of competencies across the different concentrations. These competencies include the development of hands-on skills to exploration of theory, a focus on practice and application to analysis of state-of-art research, and a general survey of broad areas to narrow study of specialized topics.

Communication: MA in Communication Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate communication theory and research in the chosen concentration.
2. Apply communication theory and research to analyze communication practices relevant to the chosen concentration.
3. Produce scholarly or creative work as relevant to the chosen concentration.
4. Present one's own and other's scholarly or creative work in a public setting.
5. Adhere to professional guidelines for work in the profession.

Communication: MA in Communication Assessment #1

Assessment Method:

Evaluation of major assignment from theory-relevant courses using a rubric that assesses both the evaluation and the application of theory.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) asked instructors from Fall 2021 theory courses (COM 6140 (Public Relations Theory), COM 7200 (Rhetoric of Visual Culture), and COM 7250 (Rhetorical Criticism) and Winter 2022 theory courses (COM 7610: Feminist Media Theory and Criticism and COM 7410: Communication Theory) to submit sample MA student final papers for assessment. Out of that sample, 19 papers (3-4 from each course) were randomly selected for assessment. The instructors were asked to assess the quality of the student’s work independent of any grade/score the paper received.

The assessment rubric consists of four evaluation categories: Introduction: problem, significance, and purpose; literature review; style guidelines; and writing mechanics. Each category had four evaluation levels: Excellent, good, weak, and unacceptable, with a detailed description of each level for each of the categories. Based on the evaluation level of the individual categories, an overall summary evaluation level was also assessed. An overall average of 3.0 met our expectations for student learning.

MA Assessment: Rubric for Assessment of Final Paper from Theory Courses for Assessing Student Learning Outcome 1

See separate PDF with MA Assessment Rubric for LO 1 & 2

Data:

Fall 2021

COM 6140:	Learning Outcome 1			
	Problem/Sign	Lit Review	Style Guidelines	Writing Mechanics
Student A	5	5	5	5
Student B	5	3	4	5
Student C	5	5	5	5
COM 7200				
Student A	2	2	3	2
Student B	4	3	4	3
Student C	4	3	4	3
Student D	4	4	4	4

COM 7250				
Student A	4	3	4	3
Student B	4	3	4	4
Student C	3	3	4	3
Student D	2	3	4	4
	42	37	45	41
	3.81	3.36	4.09	3.72

Winter 2022

COM 7610	Learning Outcome 1			
	Problem/Sign	Lit Review	Style Guidelines	Writing Mechanics
Student A	3	2	2	3
Student B	4	4	4	4
Student C	1	1	1	1
Student D	4	4	4	3
COM 7410				
Student A	2	3	4	4
Student B	4	3	3	3
Student C	4	4	4	4
Student D	4	4	4	4
	26	25	26	26
	3.25	3.13	3.25	3.25

Results:

Combined results for the two semesters ranged from 3.25-3.67, with an average of 3.49. This is a significant improvement in scores from last academic year, where the range was 2.38-3.6, with an average of 2.83. Based on the assessment data, 16 of the 19 students met or exceeded expectations. Average student performance was above expectations (3.57).

Program Action Plan:

The results suggest that our MA students are improving in their evaluation of communication theory and research in the chosen concentration in our department. The categories with the lowest average ratings was in literature review (3.13), while the other three categories averaged higher at 3.25. We continue to have regular dialogues as graduate faculty and on the graduate committee about improving students' ability to access literature, weave it into conversation, and

evaluate it. This is material that we can focus on in our Introduction to MA Studies course (COM 7000) and our individual theory courses.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation:

Beginning with the coming academic year, the graduate committee will discuss ways emphasize accessing literature, weave it into a dialogue, and evaluate it more in the Introduction to MA studies and other MA-level (5000-7000 level) courses.

Reporting to Stakeholders:

The results of the assessment will be put as a discussion item on the agenda for a meeting of the graduate committee, posted on our department website, and distributed to graduate faculty and students in September 2022.

Communication: MA in Communication Assessment # 2

Assessment Method:

Evaluation of major assignment from theory-relevant courses using a rubric that assesses both the evaluation and the application of theory.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) asked instructors from Fall 2020 theory courses (COM 6140 (Public Relations Theory), COM 6250 (Organization Communication), and COM 7520 (Theories of Media Effects)) to submit sample MA student papers for assessment. Out of that sample, six papers (two from each course) were randomly selected for assessment. The DGS and one other reviewer assessed the two papers. The results of each reviewer's assessment were averaged.

The assessment rubric consists of two evaluation categories: theoretical understanding and analysis. Each category had four evaluation levels: Excellent, good, weak, and unacceptable, with a detailed description of each level for each of the categories. Based on the evaluation level of the individual categories, an overall summary evaluation level was also assessed. An overall average of 3.0 met our expectations for student learning.

MA Assessment: Rubric for Assessment of Final Paper from Theory Courses for Assessing Student Learning Outcome 2

See separate PDF with MA Assessment Rubric for LO 1 & 2

Data:

Learning Outcome 2	
Theoretical Understanding	Analysis
5	3
3	4
4	4
2	2
4	4

3	3
3	4
4	4
4	4
4	3
3	2
39	37
3.55	3.36

Learning Outcome 2	
Theoretical Understanding Analysis	
2	2
4	4
1	1
4	4
2	2
2	3
4	4
4	4
23	24
2.88	3

Results:

Average scores ranged from 2.88 to 3, with an average of 3.20. This is an improvement in student performance from last academic year, when the range was 2.0-3.5, with an average of 2.92. Based on the assessment data, 13 of the 19 students met or exceeded expectations. Average student performance was above expectation at 3.24 (3.0 was expectation).

Program Action Plan:

The results suggest that our MA students are mostly at expectation level in terms of application of communication theory. The category with the lowest average ratings was theoretical understanding at 2.88.

The results suggest that while students have improved in their data analysis, similar to the results of assessment of LO 1, they somewhat struggle with theoretical concepts and fundamental theoretic foundations. As with the Action Plan for LO 1, we will discuss how to improve students' understanding of theoretical foundations and concepts.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation:

The graduate committee will discuss next year in September 2022 how to improve students' theoretical understanding in our theory course offerings.

Reporting to Stakeholders:

The results of the assessment will be put as a discussion item on the agenda for a meeting of the graduate committee, posted on our department website, and distributed to graduate faculty and students in September 2022.

Communication: MA in Communication Assessment # 3

Assessment Method:

Not measured in AY 21-22.

Communication: MA in Communication Assessment # 4

Assessment Method:

Not measured in AY 21-22.

Communication: MA in Communication Assessment # 5

Assessment Method:

Not measured in AY 21-22.

Results :

N/A