

Eastern Illinois University
Department of Journalism
Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for the Major and Minor
Adopted by Journalism Faculty, April 23, 2004
(Revised Aug. 17, 2004)
(Revised spring 2007)
(Revised spring 2008)
(Revised spring 2012)

The purpose of adopting and implementing this plan is three-fold: (1) to comply with the *Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning* adopted by Eastern Illinois University; (2) to comply with Standard Nine of the ACEJMC (Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication); and (3) to evaluate student competencies. This plan is designed to meet goals in both a quantifiable and systematic manner. It is intended to provide the department with feedback and information on an annual basis. The sources of feedback will be from students in both the major and minor where applicable, from alumni and from professionals who employ our students and graduates in internships and in full- and part-time positions. Assessment efforts will include both majors and minors in courses from the journalism core. No differentiation will be made between majors and minors in reporting assessment results. Assessment efforts in other courses, from internships and exit interviews will involve only majors.

EIU Criteria for Assessment

In the academic setting, the term “assessment” generally is used to mean the evaluation of learning at the program level as distinguished from evaluation of individual students. Faculty members rightfully assert that they assess students through grading and testing. These evaluations, however, are restricted to learning that occurs within only one course. The curricula of academic programs encompass numerous courses as well as other learning experiences such as internships and practica. Students are expected, therefore, to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes from the combination of experiences in the entire curriculum. Assessment of student learning focuses on this “macro” level rather than on the “micro” level of individual students.

Assessment of student learning is an integral part of curriculum development and revision. It documents that learning has occurred and provides a rational basis for making purposeful changes to curriculum. While the goal of assessment is improvement of student learning, it also can be used for other purposes. Assessment information, for example, might indicate other changes needed in the academic program. Assessment data can be useful in recruiting students and faculty and in highlighting students’ strengths for potential employers. Moreover, assessment results may document how the program supports the mission of the university, the goals of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the expectations of other external bodies.

This plan for assessment of student learning at Eastern Illinois University is based on the principle of shared governance and is therefore faculty driven. Faculty, students, and administrators have been involved in the development of the plan and will continue to be involved in academic assessment. EIU’s plan creates a two-tiered process for assessment of student learning. Assessment is conducted at the *university* level to evaluate students’ achievement of university-wide student learning goals (general education student learning goals). Assessment is conducted at the *department/academic unit* level to evaluate students’ achievement of the learning goals of the academic programs (majors and minors).

Assessment of student learning is a continuous and dynamic process. This process can be described as a series of steps. As one cycle of steps is completed, another cycle begins. The process thus is recursive; each subsequent cycle is dependent on the information gathered in the previous cycle. Regardless of the type of learning program that is being assessed, the assessment process encompasses five general steps:

1. Identify student learning goals and objectives;
2. Select assessment measures to evaluate students’ achievement of those objectives;
3. Develop and implement procedures for systematic collection of assessment data using the selected assessment measures;
4. Analyze, summarize, and report the assessment data; and
5. Use the assessment data to improve student learning.

Once the cycle has been completed, the process begins anew: review and revise (if needed) the student learning goals and objectives, reevaluate and consider new methods to measure student learning; review and revise (if needed) the assessment procedures; and analyze and use the data to improve student learning.

ACEJMC Criteria for Assessment

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. The Council evaluates curricula and instruction in the light of evidence and expects programs seeking accreditation to assess students' attainment of professional values and competencies. Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- (1) Awareness: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- (2) Understanding: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- (3) Application: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

Student learning is evaluated to: (1) develop curriculum, improve teaching, and enhance student learning; (2) document what students have learned; and (3) provide accountability. Evaluation of student learning also enables the Council and its representatives to make fairer and more consistent judgments across units and programs.

Goals of the Assessment Plan

1. To comply with university criteria regarding assessment.
2. To comply with ACEJMC criteria regarding assessment and accreditation.
3. To evaluate student learning outcomes and competencies on a program and concentration-specific basis.
4. To establish a systematic method of gathering data that enables evaluation on an annual basis.
5. To offer students and alumni regular, accessible vehicles for feedback and commentary.
6. To enable faculty to assess effectiveness of curriculum and other instructional methods.
7. To improve student learning.

Student learning goals and objectives

Assessment will be based upon 12 core values and competencies established by the ACEJMC in its Accreditation Standard Two—Curriculum and Instruction:

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

1. understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
4. demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
5. understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
6. demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
7. think critically, creatively and independently;
8. conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
9. write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
10. critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical

correctness;

11. apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

12. apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work;

Assessment Measures

Most of the values and competencies are covered in several courses in the curriculum. However, to make assessment as manageable as possible, a limited number of courses have been chosen to assess each core value and competency. In most cases a course has been chosen because its primary focus revolves around a particular value and competency. Once courses and core values and competencies were matched, appropriate assessment measures were identified.

1. understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the United States, as well as understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 4771	Communication Law

Measurement tools: (1) Selected exam/quiz questions from JOU 4771; (2) Alumni surveys; (3) Exit interviews; (4) Assessment pre-test given to students in JOU 2001 and 2091 and post-test given to students in JOU 4771

2. demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications:

Courses used for assessment:	HIS 3940	History of American Journalism
	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 4771	Communication Law

Measurement tools: (1) Selected exam/quiz questions from HIS 3940; (2) Selected questions from the pre-test given to students in JOU 2001 and 2091 and post-test in JOU 4771; (3) Alumni surveys; (4) Exit interviews

3. demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 3903	Women and the Media
	JOU 3920	Public Relations in Society
	JOU 3951	Minorities and the Media
	JOU 3952	International Journalism
	JOU 3953	Perspectives on Sports and the Media
	JOU 4102	Journalism Ethics
	JOU 4771	Communication Law

Measurement tools: (1) Selected exam/quiz questions from JOU 3903, 3920, 3951 and 3953; (2) Alumni surveys; (3) Internship evaluations; (4) Exit interviews; (5) Selected questions from pre-test in JOU 2001 and 2091 and post-test in JOU 4771; (6) Ethics essay in JOU 4102

4. demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 3903	Women and the Media
	JOU 3920	Public Relations in Society
	JOU 3951	Minorities and the Media

	JOU 3952	International Journalism
	JOU 3953	Perspectives on Sports and the Media
	JOU 4771	Communication Law
Measurement tools:	(1) Selected exam/quiz questions from JOU 3903, 3920, 3951, 3952 and 3953; (2) Alumni surveys; (3) Exit interviews; (4) Selected questions from pre-test in JOU 2001 and 2091 and post-test in JOU 4771	

5. understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2950	Introduction to Visual Communication
	JOU 3001	Photojournalism
	JOU 3002	Introduction to Multimedia Journalism
	JOU 3300	Publication Design
	JOU 3620	Advanced Broadcast News Writing

Measurement tools:	(1) Selected exam/quiz questions from JOU 2950; (2) Standardized assessment assignments for JOU 3001, 3002, 3300, 3620; (3) Alumni surveys; (4) Internship surveys; (5) Exit interviews	
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6. demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 4102	Ethics
	JOU 4771	Communication Law

Measurement tools:	(1) Ethics essay from JOU 4102; (2) Internship evaluations; (3) Alumni surveys; (4) Exit interviews; (5) Selected questions from pre-test in JOU 2001 and 2091 and post-test in JOU 4771	
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7. think critically, creatively and independently:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2001	Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 2091	Honors Journalism and Democracy
	JOU 4102	Ethics
	JOU 4771	Communication Law

Measurement tools:	(1) Selected exam/quiz questions from JOU 4102 and 4771; (2) Internship evaluations; (3) Watson-Glaser exam given in JOU 2001/2091 and in senior seminars; (4) Alumni surveys; (5) Exit interviews	
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8. conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2101	News Writing
	JOU 3000	Advanced Reporting & Research

Measurement tools:	(1) Standardized assessment assignments in the courses; (2) Internship evaluations; (3) Alumni surveys; (4) Exit interviews	
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9. write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve:

Courses used for assessment:	JOU 2101	Newswriting
	JOU 3000	Advanced Reporting & Research
	JOU 3001	Photojournalism
	JOU 3102	Feature Writing
	JOU 3610	Broadcast News
	JOU 3620	Advanced Broadcast News
	JOU 3705	Public Relations Writing

Measurement tools:	(1) Standardized assessment assignments in the courses; (2) Internship evaluations; (3) Alumni surveys; (4) Exit interviews; (5) University Electronic Writing Portfolio scores	
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Standardized Assessment Assignments Procedure:

Each journalism course that has a standardized assessment assignment in the assessment plan will have a folder on the department assessment server. Instructors in these courses will be responsible for assigning, collecting and storing the standardized assessment assignment on the server. Deadline: One week after the end of the fall and spring semesters.

In the summertime every two years, a group of outside evaluators, made up of professional journalists and journalism educators from other universities, will be brought to campus to evaluate a random sample of 30 percent of the standardized assessment assignments using designated rubrics for the core values/competencies identified for each course.

The department assessment coordinator will analyze all assessment data and write reports to the university and to share with journalism faculty.

Data from the assessment report will be used to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum and other instructional methods, and will be used to improve student learning. After analyzing the assessment data, the department Assessment Committee will report to the department Curriculum Committee any proposed curriculum changes.

This report was prepared by the department Assessment Committee: Lola Burnham, chair; Eunseong Kim, Bryan Murley, Brian Poulter & John Ryan.

Addendum 1: Journalism Courses being used for assessment

Departmental assessment is based upon the following 12 objectives, or core values and competencies:

1. understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the United States, as well as to receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
4. demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
5. understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
6. demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
7. think critically, creatively and independently;
8. conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
9. write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
10. critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
11. apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
12. apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Courses in which exam/quiz questions are to be used for assessment:

HIS 3940—Objective 2	JOU 3952—Objectives 3 and 4
JOU 2950—Objective 5	JOU 3953—Objectives 3 and 4
JOU 3903—Objectives 3 and 4	JOU 4102—Objectives 6 and 7
JOU 3920—Objectives 3 and 4	JOU 4771—Objectives 1 and 7
JOU 3951—Objectives 3 and 4	

Courses in which standardized assessment assignments are to be used for assessment:

JOU 2101—Objectives 8 and 9	JOU 3300—Objectives 5 and 12
JOU 2901—Objective 10	JOU 3610—Objective 9
JOU 3000—Objectives 8 and 9	JOU 3620—Objective 5, 9 and 12
JOU 3001—Objectives 5, 9 and 12	JOU 3705—Objective 9
JOU 3002—Objectives 5 and 12	
JOU 3102—Objective 9	

Courses in which math assessment test is to be used for assessment:

JOU 2101—Objective 11
JOU 2901—Objective 11
JOU 3000—Objective 11

Courses in which style assessment test is to be used for assessment:

JOU 2101—Objective 10
JOU 2901—Objective 10

Courses in which pre-test/post-test is to be used for assessment:

JOU 2001—Objectives 1, 2 3, 4 and 6
JOU 2091—Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6
JOU 4771—Objectives 1, 2 3, 4 and 6

Other assessment measurements and their applicable core values:

Alumni surveys—Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Exit interviews—Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Internship evaluations—Objectives 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Watson-Glaser exam for critical thinking—Objective 7

Addendum 2: Assessment responsibilities for individual faculty members

HIS 3940 History of American Journalism

1. Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions (Obj. 2)

JOU 2001 Journalism and Democracy

1. Administer the journalism assessment pre-test (Objs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6)
2. Administer the Watson-Glaser exam (Obj. 7)

JOU 2091 Honors Journalism and Democracy

1. Administer the journalism assessment pre-test (Objs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6)
2. Administer the Watson-Glaser exam (Obj. 7)

JOU 2101 News Writing

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Objs. 8, 9)
2. Administer the math assessment test (Obj. 11)
3. Administer the style assessment test (Obj. 10)

JOU 2901 Introduction to Copy Editing

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Obj. 10)
2. Administer the math assessment test (Obj. 11)
3. Administer the style assessment test (Obj. 10)

JOU 2950 Introduction to Visual Communication

1. Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions (Obj. 5)

JOU 3000 Advanced Reporting and Research

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to portfolio (Objs. 8, 9)
2. Administer the math assessment test (Obj. 11)

JOU 3001 Photojournalism

1. Submit two standardized assessment assignments to server (Objs. 5, 9, 12)

JOU 3002 Introduction to Multimedia Journalism

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Objs. 5, 12)

JOU 3102 Feature Writing

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Obj. 9)

JOU 3300 Publication Design

1. Submit standardized assessment assignments to server (Objs. 5, 12)

JOU 3610 Broadcast News

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Obj. 9)

JOU 3620 Advanced Broadcast News

1. Submit standardized assessment assignment to server (Objs. 5, 9, 12)

JOU 3705	Public Relations Writing	
1.	Submit standardized assessment assignment to server	(Obj. 9)
JOU 3903	Women and the Media	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Objs. 3, 4)
JOU 3920	Public Relations in Society	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Obj. 3, 4)
JOU 3951	Minorities and the Media	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Obj. 3, 4)
JOU 3952	International Journalism	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Obj. 4)
JOU 3953	Perspectives on Sports and the Media	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Obj. 3, 4)
JOU 4102	Journalism Ethics	
1.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Objs. 6, 7)
JOU 4771	Communication Law	
1.	Administer the journalism assessment post-test	(Objs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6)
2.	Submit results from selected exam/quiz questions	(Objs. 1, 7)