Program: **Minor Film Studies**

Department: **Communication Studies/Interdisciplinary**

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011: 8

Faculty member completing template: **Jenny Stark** (Date: 1/26/2012)

**Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present**

1. *Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?*

   At a summer 2011 retreat, the Department of Communication Studies met to discuss the need to revise our assessment plan. We decided that the existing assessment plan was outdated, labor intensive and no longer fully reflected our expectations for what we want students to know upon graduating from our program.

   As a result of the retreat, we shifted a majority of the day-to-day information covered in faculty meetings to the listproc in order to spend our regularly scheduled faculty meetings focusing on assessment. As a result of this shift, we were able to spend all of our normally scheduled Fall 2011 meeting times devoted to assessment. Starting from the ground up, we revamped most of our learning outcomes and completely changed the methods used to collect data. We shifted from using portfolios to using new rubrics. Using AAC&U’s rubrics as a guide, we created rubrics specific to Film and Digital Video Production, a highly specialized professional area. We brought in our rubrics that we currently use in our courses and aligned them with those of the AAC&U and updated them to reflect current practices in the industry. Finally, we aligned the Film/Digital Video learning outcomes with those of the general Communications major as much as possible.

   Our efforts enabled us to produce outcomes that are assessable, align with the Baccalaureate Learning Goals and use appropriate rubrics. The revised data collection process is sustainable, less labor intensive and relies on the efforts of a broad cross-section of faculty, rather than a small committee. All of our learning outcomes were created with assistance from the University Assessment Coordinator (Amy Liu).

   Our efforts have resulted in a faculty that is more engaged in the assessment process. We collected pilot data in Fall 2011 to reflect the changes in the assessment plan. Additional data will be collected in Spring 2012.
Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

**Goal 1: Students will have knowledge of digital video discipline principles and practices:**

Demonstrate a mastery of general discipline knowledge: Understand contemporary practices in digital video and cinema; identify the historic development of media and film in its evolution into digital forms.

**Goal 2: Students will communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.**

Use appropriate organizational strategies, include evidentiary support material; show proficiency in written English, including proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.

**Goal 3: Students will think critically when constructing and consuming messages.**

Demonstrate higher-level thinking through interdisciplinary video and film critique: Analyze messages in film and video; evaluate the aesthetics of media productions; explain the values, ideologies and cultural influences in cinematic messages.

For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

The department’s learning outcomes for this program aligns nicely with the BLGs. The BLGs include five areas and the outcomes adopted for this program overlap with four of them, including: Competence in the Discipline, Intellectual and Practical Skills, Personal and Social Responsibility and Integrative Learning.

Particular emphasis is placed on Competence of discipline (see for example learning outcome 2 in question 2) Intellectual and Practical Skills (see Goal1, Goal 2 and Goal 3) Integrative Learning see (Goal 3)
4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:

a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.

Students will have knowledge of digital video discipline principles and practices:

For this learning outcome a random sampling of papers from Coms 121, Media Aesthetics and English 105, Film Theory and Criticism will be scored on a rubric assessing the students’ knowledge of the following cinematic conventions: Cinematography, Sound, Video Editing and Post Production technique. A media Aesthetics exam will also be used to assess students’ knowledge of digital video. Each dimension is scored on a 5 point scale that ranges from a value of “0” indicating that it does not meet the benchmark to “4” indicating Capstone or complete proficiency.

Students will communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.

Show proficiency in written English, including proper spelling, grammar and punctuation. For this learning outcome, papers from upper-division students ComS 121 Media Aesthetics and English 105, Film Theory and Criticism will be randomly selected and assessed. The assessment rubric that will be used is comprised of five dimensions that include: clarity of writing, thesis statements, organization, appropriate evidentiary support material and employment of grammar conventions. (See Appendix A)

Goal 3: Students will think critically when constructing and consuming messages. A random sampling of papers from Coms 121 Media Aesthetics and from English 105, Film Theory and Criticism will be used to assess the students’ ability to critique film, analyze mediated messages and explain the values, ideologies and cultural influences in cinematic messages.

b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.

All data is a random sampling of program majors. Data collected is spread across the entire academic year. All learning outcomes are included in the annual data collection.
c) **Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.**

We will be using two rubrics and one exam to assess this area. One rubric is attached, one rubric is in development and a Media Aesthetics Exam (Coms 121) is currently being updated for the purposes of assessment.

d) **Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.**

The department began a pilot study of the assessment plan in Fall 2011. Data has been collected and will be reviewed by the entire faculty in Spring 2012. Additional data is being collected in Spring 2012, which will cover all learning outcomes presented here.

5. **Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.**

As indicated in this document, the Communication Studies Department and Film Committee are in the process of collecting data to reflect the refined learning outcomes that were approved in Fall 2011. In Spring 2012, the entire faculty will meet to review collected data on all of the learning outcomes. We will review the data and discuss any perceived deficiencies in the department. We expect that any changes to curriculum deficiencies will be implemented in Fall 2012.

6. **Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.**

The department has not previously gathered data from our minors in a systematic way. Film Studies minors come from a variety of major disciplines, so it would be difficult to assess the program based on their varied experience.

7. **Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?**
The minor does not pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting institution, but we incorporate industry standards outlined by National Association of Broadcasters and the American Society of Cinematographers.

8. **Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?**

The department of Communication Studies and the Film Committee have made great progress in adapting our Learning Outcomes to the BLGs. Working with the University Assessment Coordinator during all iterations was helpful in refining our expectations. It is a priority for the University to maintain this support and it was invaluable in our Departments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component of Written Communication</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content and Clarity</td>
<td>Clear and concise; enthusiastic and compelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization and Structure</td>
<td>Logical and coherent; appropriately divided into sections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of Language</td>
<td>Appropriate and effective use of language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>Well-developed ideas and arguments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Use of Visuals</td>
<td>Use of visuals that are relevant and engaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar and Mechanics</td>
<td>Error-free and well-composed</td>
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*Note: The table above outlines the key components of effective written communication.*