

2015-2016 Annual Assessment Report Template

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Report: BA Communications

Question 1: Program Learning Outcomes

Q1.1.

Which of the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Sac State Baccalaureate Learning Goals (BLGs) **did you assess?** [Check all that apply]

- ☐ 1. Critical Thinking
- ☐ 2. Information Literacy
- ☒ 3. Written Communication
- ☐ 4. Oral Communication
- ☐ 5. Quantitative Literacy
- ☐ 6. Inquiry and Analysis
- ☐ 7. Creative Thinking
- ☐ 8. Reading
- ☐ 9. Team Work
- ☐ 10. Problem Solving
- ☐ 11. Civic Knowledge and Engagement
- ☐ 12. Intercultural Knowledge and Competency
- ☐ 13. Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ 14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning
- ☐ 15. Global Learning
- ☐ 16. Integrative and Applied Learning
- ☐ 17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge
- ☐ 18. Overall Competencies in the Major/Discipline
- ☐ 19. Other, specify any assessed PLOs not included above:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Q1.2.

Please provide more detailed background information about **EACH PLO** you checked above and other information such as how your specific PLOs are **explicitly** linked to the Sac State BLGs:

The three major learning outcomes are the same across all Department programs, and align with the University's Baccalaureate learning goals. For Written Communication PLO:

- 1. Students will demonstrate communication effectively in written form (BLG: Competence in the Discipline).
- 2. Students will criticize information when constructing and consuming written message (BLG: Intellectual and Practical Skills).
- 3. Students will summarize program principles in written communication (BLG: Integrative Learning).

Q1.2.1.

Do you have rubrics for your PLOs?

- ☐ 1. Yes, for all PLOs
- ☒ 2. Yes, but for some PLOs
- ☐ 3. No rubrics for PLOs
- ☐ 4. N/A

☐ 5. Other, specify:

Q1.3.

Are your PLOs closely aligned with the mission of the university?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

Q1.4.

Is your program externally accredited (other than through WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC))?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☒ 2. No (skip to **Q1.5**)
☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q1.5**)

Q1.4.1.

If the answer to Q1.4 is **yes**, are your PLOs closely aligned with the mission/goals/outcomes of the accreditation agency?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

Q1.5.

Did your program use the *Degree Qualification Profile* (DQP) to develop your PLO(s)?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☒ 2. No, but I know what the DQP is
☐ 3. No, I don't know what the DQP is
☐ 4. Don't know

Q1.6.

Did you use action verbs to make each PLO measurable?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

(**Remember:** Save your progress)

Question 2: Standard of Performance for the Selected PLO

Q2.1.

Select **ONE(1)** PLO here as an example to illustrate how you conducted assessment (be sure you *checked the correct box* for this PLO in Q1.1):

Written Communication

Q2.1.1.

Please provide more background information about the **specific PLO** you've chosen in Q2.1.

Written Communication:

1. Communicate in written form
2. Criticize messages both in construction and consumption
3. Summarize program principles

Q2.2.

Has the program developed or adopted **explicit** standards of performance for this PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

☐ 4. N/A

Q2.3.

Please **provide the rubric(s)** and **standards of performance** that you have developed for this PLO here or in the appendix.

See Rubric in Attachment.

Standards of performance and expectations: We expect students to have a minimum score of 3.0 in all areas of the AAC&U's Values in Written Communication at the time of graduation.



WrittenCommunication rubric.pdf
86.95 KB



No file attached

Q2.4. PLO	Q2.5. Stdrd	Q2.6. Rubric	Please indicate where you have published the PLO , the standard of performance, and the rubric that was used to measure the PLO:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. In SOME course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. In ALL course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. In the student handbook/advising handbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. In the university catalogue
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. On the academic unit website or in newsletters
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6. In the assessment or program review reports, plans, resources, or activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. In new course proposal forms in the department/college/university
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. In the department/college/university's strategic plans and other planning documents
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. In the department/college/university's budget plans and other resource allocation documents
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Other, specify: <input type="text"/>

Question 3: Data Collection Methods and Evaluation of Data Quality for the Selected PLO

Q3.1.

Was assessment data/evidence **collected** for the selected PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No (skip to **Q6**)
☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q6**)
☐ 4. N/A (skip to **Q6**)

Q3.1.1.

How many assessment tools/methods/measures **in total** did you use to assess this PLO?

1

Q3.2.

Was the data **scored/evaluated** for this PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No (skip to **Q6**)
☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q6**)
☐ 4. N/A (skip to **Q6**)

Q3.2.1.

Please describe how you collected the assessment data for the selected PLO. For example, in what course(s) or by what means were data collected:

The VALUE Written Communication rubric was used in order to directly assess 40 student papers from six different senior seminars and upper division electives (Coms 180-Senior Seminar in Organizational Communication; Coms 181- Senior Seminar in Small Group Communication; Coms 183-Senior Seminar in Mass Communication; Coms 187-Issue Management and Case Studies in Public Relations; Coms 188-Senior Seminar in Intercultural Communication;and Jour 136-Public Affairs Reporting). Most instructors randomly selected five student papers (with the exception of 10 each from Coms 183 and Coms 187) to assess and rate using the rubric.

(**Remember:** Save your progress)

Question 3A: Direct Measures (key assignments, projects, portfolios, etc.)

Q3.3.

Were direct measures (key assignments, projects, portfolios, course work, student tests, etc.) used to assess this PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No (skip to **Q3.7**)
- ☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q3.7**)

Q3.3.1.

Which of the following direct measures were used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. Capstone project (e.g. theses, senior theses), courses, or experiences
- ☒ 2. Key assignments from required classes in the program
- ☐ 3. Key assignments from elective classes
- ☐ 4. Classroom based performance assessment such as simulations, comprehensive exams, or critiques
- ☐ 5. External performance assessments such as internships or other community-based projects
- ☐ 6. E-Portfolios
- ☐ 7. Other Portfolios
- ☐ 8. Other, specify:

Q3.3.2.

Please **explain** and **attach** the direct measure you used to collect data:

Written reports for key assignments in senior seminars and elective upper division ComS and Journalism classes (see sample assignment in Attachment). The assignments themselves vary between classes, but generally represent the final written assignment for students in senior seminars and upper division electives.



Writing Assignments for Assessments.docx
13.42 KB



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Q3.4.

What tool was used to evaluate the data?

- ☐ 1. **No** rubric is used to interpret the evidence (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)
- ☐ 2. Used rubric developed/modified by the faculty who teaches the class (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)
- ☐ 3. Used rubric developed/modified by a group of faculty (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)
- ☐ 4. Used rubric pilot-tested and refined by a group of faculty (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)
- ☒ 5. The VALUE rubric(s) (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

- ☐ 6. Modified VALUE rubric(s) (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)
- ☐ 7. Used other means (Answer **Q3.4.1.**)

Q3.4.1.

If you used other means, which of the following measures was used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. National disciplinary exams or state/professional licensure exams (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)
- ☐ 2. General knowledge and skills measures (e.g. CLA, ETS PP, etc.) (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)
- ☐ 3. Other standardized knowledge and skill exams (e.g. ETC, GRE, etc.) (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)
- ☐ 4. Other, specify: (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

Q3.4.2.

Was the **rubric** aligned directly and explicitly **with the PLO**?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know
- ☐ 4. N/A

Q3.4.3.

Was the **direct measure** (e.g. assignment, thesis, etc.) aligned directly and explicitly **with the rubric**?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know
- ☐ 4. N/A

Q3.4.4.

Was the **direct measure** (e.g. assignment, thesis, etc.) aligned directly and explicitly **with the PLO**?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know
- ☐ 4. N/A

Q3.5.

How many faculty members participated in planning the assessment data **collection** of the selected PLO?

4

Q3.5.1.

How many faculty members participated in the **evaluation** of the assessment data for the selected PLO?

2

Q3.5.2.

If the data was evaluated by multiple scorers, was there a norming process (a procedure to make sure everyone was scoring similarly)?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☒ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know
- ☐ 4. N/A

Q3.6.

How did you **select** the sample of student work (papers, projects, portfolios, etc.)?

The faculty came to a *consensus* regarding which assignments exemplified student work.

Q3.6.1.

How did you **decide** how many samples of student work to review?

The faculty came to a *consensus* for a reasonable number of projects

Q3.6.2.

How many students were in the class or program?

Approximately of 25 students

Q3.6.3.

How many samples of student work did you evaluated?

8

Q3.6.4.

Was the sample size of student work for the direct measure adequate?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know

(**Remember:** Save your progress)

Question 3B: Indirect Measures (surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.)

Q3.7.

Were indirect measures used to assess the PLO?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☒ 2. No (skip to **Q3.8**)
- ☐ 3. Don't Know (skip to **Q3.8**)

Q3.7.1.

Which of the following indirect measures were used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. National student surveys (e.g. NSSE)
- ☐ 2. University conducted student surveys (e.g. OIR)
- ☐ 3. College/department/program student surveys or focus groups
- ☐ 4. Alumni surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- ☐ 5. Employer surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- ☐ 6. Advisory board surveys, focus groups, or interviews

☐ 7. Other, specify:

Q3.7.1.1.

Please explain and attach the indirect measure you used to collect data:

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 No file attached

Q3.7.2.

If surveys were used, how was the sample size **decided**?

Q3.7.3.

If surveys were used, how did you **select** your sample:

Q3.7.4.

If surveys were used, what was the response rate?

Question 3C: Other Measures (external benchmarking, licensing exams, standardized tests, etc.)

Q3.8.

Were external benchmarking data, such as licensing exams or standardized tests, used to assess the PLO?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☒ 2. No (skip to **Q3.8.2**)
- ☐ 3. Don't Know (skip to **Q3.8.2**)

Q3.8.1.

Which of the following measures was used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. National disciplinary exams or state/professional licensure exams
- ☐ 2. General knowledge and skills measures (e.g. CLA, ETS PP, etc.)

☐ 3. Other standardized knowledge and skill exams (e.g. ETC, GRE, etc.)

☐ 4. Other, specify:

Q3.8.2.

Were other measures used to assess the PLO?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☒ 2. No (skip to **Q4.1**)
- ☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q4.1**)

Q3.8.3.

If other measures were used, please specify:

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 No file attached

(**Remember:** Save your progress)

Question 4: Data, Findings, and Conclusions

Q4.1.

Please provide simple tables and/or graphs to summarize the assessment data, findings, and conclusions for the selected PLO for **Q2.1**:

2015-2016 Data				
Results for Written Communication Skills				



2015-2016 Assessment.docx
17.41 KB



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Q4.2.

Are students doing well and meeting the program standard? If not, how will the program work to improve student performance of the selected PLO?


Overall, our goal was partially met. We expected that the standard of performance for all students would be rated at 3 or better. The sample yielded at best only 82% of students rated at that level. More problematic are the areas of Genre and Disciplinary Conventions and Control of Syntax and Mechanics where more than one-third of all students were rated below the standard of performance. Students do not consistently use proper writing conventions. In order to address this situation, several considerations are in order:

Across the Communication Studies department, we are attempting to remedy the contingent of students who are unable to meet or exceed expectations by guiding students to mentoring and tutoring programs, such as DEGREES and the Peer Mentoring program on campus. Anecdotally, success stories emerge, but there is no way to require these programs so that there is a more uniform utilization of services for those in need.

The Communication Studies department recently reorganized advising for students at the sophomore and junior levels. This effort set up standing advising hours during peak times, such as class registration. The objective was multi-pronged in that we expect to identify students experiencing academic challenges (i.e., not/barely passing courses) and to aid them in selecting the appropriate coursework to complete their major successfully in a timely fashion.

Finally, the department hired several new faculty last year and anticipates hiring several more in the coming year. With these new faculty, we hope that their experience and expertise add to the existing talent in our department.

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 No file attached

Q4.3.

For the selected PLO, the student performance:

- ☐ 1. **Exceeded** expectation/standard
- ☐ 2. **Met** expectation/standard
- ☒ 3. **Partially** met expectation/standard
- ☐ 4. Did not meet expectation/standard
- ☐ 5. No expectation/standard has been specified
- ☐ 6. Don't know

Question 4A: Alignment and Quality

Q4.4.

Did the data, including the direct measures, from all the different assessment tools/measures/methods directly align with the PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know

Q4.5.

Were **all** the assessment tools/measures/methods that were used good measures of the PLO?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Don't know

Question 5: Use of Assessment Data (Closing the Loop)

Q5.1.

As a result of the assessment effort and based on prior feedback from OAPA, do you anticipate *making any changes* for your program (e.g. course structure, course content, or modification of PLOs)?

- ☒ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No (skip to **Q5.2**)
- ☐ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q5.2**)

Q5.1.1.

Please describe *what changes* you plan to make in your program as a result of your assessment of this PLO. Include a description of how you plan to assess the impact of these changes.

*These assessment data have the potential to inform curricular needs. As we move toward Program Review and with the consent of the full faculty, we can work toward addressing at least some of these assessment issues in the coming year (2016-2017). Specifics changes include:

1) Identify PLOs that are a priority, along with evaluating current criteria

2) Assessing the impact of this change can be evaluated at next year's assessment by the inclusion of new PLOs and evaluation criteria.

Q5.1.2.

Do you have a plan to assess the *impact of the changes* that you anticipate making?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

Q5.2.

How have the assessment data from the last annual assessment been used so far? [**Check all that apply**]

	1. Very Much	2. Quite a Bit	3. Some	4. Not at All	5. N/A
1. Improving specific courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Modifying curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Improving advising and mentoring	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Revising learning outcomes/goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Revising rubrics and/or expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Developing/updating assessment plan	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Annual assessment reports	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Program review	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
9. Prospective student and family information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
10. Alumni communication	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. WSCUC accreditation (regional accreditation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
12. Program accreditation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
13. External accountability reporting requirement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
14. Trustee/Governing Board deliberations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
15. Strategic planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Institutional benchmarking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
17. Academic policy development or modifications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Institutional improvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
19. Resource allocation and budgeting	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. New faculty hiring	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Professional development for faculty and staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Recruitment of new students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Other, specify:

Q5.2.1.

Please provide a detailed example of how you used the assessment data above:

The Department will use assessment data from 2015-2016 to consider the following changes.

1. Curriculum – The assessment data will be instructive in determining the effectiveness of our new curriculum organization. The new General Communication concentration (implemented Fall 2014) was designed to streamline students' time to graduation and functionally require full-time faculty to be spread less thinly across required classes, thus allowing more full-time faculty to be devoted to the senior seminars.
2. Hiring – The Department hired two new faculty (one Film and one Public Relations) *and* expects to hire additional full-time faculty in the coming year. The assessment data will be useful in determining what areas the Department needs to focus in order to meet our PLO(s.)
3. See Findings. The Department will continue to modify its assessment measures (noted in that section of this report) as we prepare to collect data for 2016-2017.

(Remember: Save your progress)

Additional Assessment Activities

Q6.

Many academic units have collected assessment data on aspect of their program *that are not related to the PLOs* (i.e. impacts of an advising center, etc.). **If** your program/academic unit has collected data on program *elements*, please briefly report your results here:



No file attached



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Q7.

What PLO(s) do you plan to assess next year? [**Check all that apply**]



1. Critical Thinking



2. Information Literacy



3. Written Communication



4. Oral Communication



5. Quantitative Literacy



6. Inquiry and Analysis



7. Creative Thinking



8. Reading



9. Team Work



10. Problem Solving



11. Civic Knowledge and Engagement



12. Intercultural Knowledge and Competency



13. Ethical Reasoning



14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning



15. Global Learning



16. Integrative and Applied Learning



17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge



18. Overall Competencies in the Major/Discipline



19. Other, specify any PLOs not included above:

a.

b.

c.

Q8. Please attach any additional files here:



No file attached



No file attached



No file attached



No file attached

Q8.1.

Have you attached any files to this form? If yes, please list every attached file here:

Program Information (**Required**)

P1.

Program/Concentration Name(s): [by degree]

BA Communications

P1.1.

Program/Concentration Name(s): [by department]

Communications BA

P2.

Report Author(s):

Carmen Stitt

P2.1.

Department Chair/Program Director:

Gerri Smith

P2.2.

Assessment Coordinator:

Carmen Stitt

P3.

Department/Division/Program of Academic Unit

Comm. Studies

P4.

College:

College of Arts & Letters

P5.

Total enrollment for Academic Unit during assessment semester (see Departmental Fact Book):

Comm Studies: 1204 (excludes
Journalism: 146

P6.

Program Type:



1. Undergraduate baccalaureate major



2. Credential



3. Master's Degree



4. Doctorate (Ph.D./Ed.D./Ed.S./D.P.T./etc.)



5. Other, specify:

P7. Number of **undergraduate degree programs** the academic unit has?

5

P7.1. List all the names:

Communication Studies
Media Communication
Organizational Comm
Public Relations
Journalism

P7.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this undergraduate program?

5

P8. Number of **master's degree programs** the academic unit has?

1

P8.1. List all the names:

Communication Studies

P8.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this master's program?

N/A

P9. Number of **credential programs** the academic unit has?

0

P9.1. List all the names:

P10. Number of **doctorate degree programs** the academic unit has?

0

P10.1. List all the names:

When was your **assessment plan**...

	1. Before 2010-11	2. 2011-12	3. 2012-13	4. 2013-14	5. 2014-15	6. No Plan	7. Don't know
P11. developed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
P11.1. last updated?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

P11.3.

Please attach your latest **assessment plan**:



Assessment Plan.docx
14.6 KB

P12.

Has your program developed a **curriculum map**?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☒ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

P12.1.

Please attach your latest **curriculum map**:



No file attached

P13.

Has your program indicated in the curriculum map where assessment **of student learning** occurs?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☒ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

P14.

Does your program have a capstone class?

- ☒ 1. Yes, indicate:
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

P14.1.

Does your program have **any** capstone project?

- ☒ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No
☐ 3. Don't know

(**Remember:** Save your progress)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Framing Language

This writing rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of educational institutions. The most clear finding to emerge from decades of research on writing assessment is that the best writing assessments are locally determined and sensitive to local context and mission. Users of this rubric should, in the end, consider making adaptations and additions that clearly link the language of the rubric to individual campus contexts.

This rubric focuses assessment on how specific written work samples or collections of work respond to specific contexts. The central question guiding the rubric is "How well does writing respond to the needs of audience(s) for the work?" In focusing on this question the rubric does not attend to other aspects of writing that are equally important: issues of writing process, writing strategies, writers' fluency with different modes of textual production or publication, or writer's growing engagement with writing and disciplinarity through the process of writing.

Evaluators using this rubric must have information about the assignments or purposes for writing guiding writers' work. Also recommended is including reflective work samples of collections of work that address such questions as: What decisions did the writer make about audience, purpose, and genre as s/he compiled the work in the portfolio? How are those choices evident in the writing -- in the content, organization and structure, reasoning, evidence, mechanical and surface conventions, and citational systems used in the writing? This will enable evaluators to have a clear sense of how writers understand the assignments and take it into consideration as they evaluate.

The first section of this rubric addresses the context and purpose for writing. A work sample or collections of work can convey the context and purpose for the writing tasks it showcases by including the writing assignments associated with work samples. But writers may also convey the context and purpose for their writing within the texts. It is important for faculty and institutions to include directions for students about how they should represent their writing contexts and purposes.

Faculty interested in the research on writing assessment that has guided our work here can consult the National Council of Teachers of English/ Council of Writing Program Administrators' White Paper on Writing Assessment (2008; www.wpacouncil.org/whitepaper) and the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2008; www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123784.htm)

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- Content Development: The ways in which the text explores and represents its topic in relation to its audience and purpose.
- Context of and purpose for writing: The context of writing is the situation surrounding a text: who is reading it? who is writing it? Under what circumstances will the text be shared or circulated? What social or political factors might affect how the text is composed or interpreted? The purpose for writing is the writer's intended effect on an audience. Writers might want to persuade or inform; they might want to report or summarize information; they might want to work through complexity or confusion; they might want to argue with other writers, or connect with other writers; they might want to convey urgency or amuse; they might write for themselves or for an assignment or to remember.
- Disciplinary conventions: Formal and informal rules that constitute what is seen generally as appropriate within different academic fields, e.g. introductory strategies, use of passive voice or first person point of view, expectations for thesis or hypothesis, expectations for kinds of evidence and support that are appropriate to the task at hand, use of primary and secondary sources to provide evidence and support arguments and to document critical perspectives on the topic. Writers will incorporate sources according to disciplinary and genre conventions, according to the writer's purpose for the text. Through increasingly sophisticated use of sources, writers develop an ability to differentiate between their own ideas and the ideas of others, credit and build upon work already accomplished in the field or issue they are addressing, and provide meaningful examples to readers.
- Evidence: Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, writers' ideas in a text.
- Genre conventions: Formal and informal rules for particular kinds of texts and/or media that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices, e.g. lab reports, academic papers, poetry, webpages, or personal essays.
- Sources: Texts (written, oral, behavioral, visual, or other) that writers draw on as they work for a variety of purposes -- to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3 2		Benchmark 1
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

Sample Written Assignment Instructions for Written Final Project

The purpose of the written final project for the Mass Media Seminar is a demonstration of students' knowledge in their chosen interest of mass media. Students select an area of mass media and then organize a coherent written 10-12 pages of text (i.e., not including references or graphs/tables/charts) of their literature review, synthesis, analyses, and conclusion.

Final projects topics fall into one of the following categories, but others may be approved by instructor:

1) A proposed empirical study of a mass media topic (including literature review, contribution of knowledge, and proposed sample, study design, and measures) 2) A proposal for a project that benefits and can give back to the community (e.g., media literacy program) including how you would complete your project, sources and media used, intended audience 3) An ethical analysis of a media issue with supporting evidence (e.g., the use of social networking while on-the-job, representation of minorities in television, movies, or sports, political topic coverage in news articles, gratuitous violence in film and games) 4) Critical analysis of a contemporary mass media issue (e.g., corporate media ownership, Web advancements for marginalized groups, social networking sites, the use and regulation of broadband, indecency and obscenity on the Web, Web advertising for products with age limits to children, online gaming) 5) A combination of the above four options

Writing style-Throughout the paper, you, the writer, have moved beyond simply summarizing articles and reporting them, instead, to now using them to your advantage and writing one seamless paper about your thesis. Write simply and be succinct. Jargon is kept to a minimum. If idiosyncratic terms are used, they are explained completely so that anyone could understand what they mean.

2015-2016 Data

Results for Written Communication Skills

Five Criteria (Areas)	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)	Total (N=40)
Context of and Purpose for Writing	35%	47.5%	17.5%	0%	3.18 (100% , N=40)
Content Developmen t	27.5%	50%	20%	2.5%	3.03 (100% , N=40)
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions	20%	42.5%	35%	2.5%	2.55 (100% , N=40)
Sources and Evidence	30%	50%	17.5%	2.5%	2.58 (100% , N=40)
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	32.5%	35%	30%	2.5%	2.98 (100% , N=40)

Standards of performance and expectations: We expect students to have scores of at least 3.0 in all areas of the AAC&U's VALUES Written Communication at the time of graduation. Based on the data in the table above our goal was partially met our goal in having all students score at least 3.0 all areas. Most problematic are the **Genre and Disciplinary Conventions** and **Control of Syntax and Mechanics** criteria where one-third or more of our sample did not meet the 3.0 expectation.

Looking elsewhere in the data, based on the standards and criteria from the Written Communication rubric, most students met or exceeded the milestone rating.

For **Context and Purpose of Writing** criterion, 82% of students met the capstone rating as demonstrated in writing, a thorough understand of context, audience, and purpose responsive to the assigned task. Relative to the other four criteria, this was the highest rated average.

For **Content Development** criterion, the second highest rated average, 77.5% of students rated at or above the benchmark, indicating use of appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context.

Similarly, for **Sources of Evidence**, 80% of sampled students were rated at or above the benchmark where students consistently demonstrate use of credible and relevant sources.

Overall, in this sample, a minimum of 62.5% of students were rated as at least having met milestone 3 on all five criteria.

Assessment Plan

1. Suspend the department's portfolio requirement, beginning with the 2006-2008 catalog.
2. Suspend the three common goals for all ComS majors. Redefine department assessment goals exclusively in terms of program exit knowledge, competencies and/or abilities.
3. Retain the existing departmental assessment structure including the departmental assessment committee, subject area committees, and office support staff.
4. Beginning with the 2006-2008 catalog, require all ComS and Jour majors to complete a capstone course: senior seminar (ComS 168, 180, 181, 182, 183, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191), senior project course (ComS 184A/B or 185), Journalism course(s) or senior research course (e.g., a revamped ComS 171).
5. Prior to Fall 2005 area committees will designate a suitable capstone exercise for respective capstone courses. Exercises will facilitate assessment of area exit knowledge, competencies and/or abilities. Area capstone exercises may include papers, projects or research reports. Area committees will, however, designate a single common exercise. Capstone instructors execute capstone exercises.
6. As a graduation requirement students shall submit a *copy* of their capstone exercise to the department office prior to the last day of their final semester of coursework. Faculty who teach the capstone courses are responsible for keeping a copy of the capstone exercises or other relevant documents. Formative evaluation of a random *sample* of capstone exercises by area committees will take place during the following semester (e.g., Spring 07 capstone exercises would be assessed during the Fall 07 semester).
7. Area committees will continue to use the existing "four question" assessment format until area committees can formulate suitable assessment rubrics.
8. The current portfolio assessment plan will remain in force until fall semester 2005. During fall 2005 and Spring 2006 semesters students not including a qualifying capstone course within their graduation petitions will submit a portfolio as per the department's existing assessment plan. Area assessment committees will continue to examine a sample of these portfolios during the 2005-2006 academic year.
9. The department Assessment Committee will, at its discretion, conduct senior surveys, alumni surveys and focus groups as deemed appropriate.
10. The department will include in the 2006-2008 CSUS catalog all necessary enabling language.