2016-2017
Annual Assessment Report Template

For instructions and guidelines visit our **website**
or **contact us** for more help.

Please begin by selecting your program name in the drop down. If the program name is not listed, please enter it below:

BA Communications

OR

Question 1: Program Learning Outcomes

Q1.1.
Which of the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Sac State Baccalaureate Learning Goals (BLGs), and emboldened Graduate Learning Goals (GLGs) **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, Competency, and Perspectives**
- ☐ 13. Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ 14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning
- ☐ 15. **Global Learning and Perspectives**
- ☐ 16. Integrative and Applied Learning
- ☐ 17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge
- ☐ 18. **Overall Disciplinary Knowledge**
- ☐ 19. **Professionalism**
- ☐ 20. 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 including how your specific PLOs are **explicitly** linked to the Sac State **BLGs**/**GLGs**:

The three major learning outcomes align with the University's Baccalaureate learning goals. For the Critical Thinking PLO:

1. Students will appraise messages in written and oral form in order to construct responses (BLG: Integrative Learning).

2. Students will analyze messages from multiple formats with a range of complexities (BLG: Intellectual and Practical Skills).

3. Students will distinguish messages from different disciplines in order to respond effectively (BLG: Competence in the Disciplines).

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", see http://degreeprofile.org) 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 **OR** type in **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):

Critical Thinking

If your PLO is **not listed, please enter it here**:

Q2.1.1.
Please provide more background information about the **specific PLO** you've chosen in Q2.1.

Critical Thinking:
1. Explanation of issues
2. Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion
3. Influence of context or assumptions
4. Student's positions (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)
5. Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)

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 attached. Students will achieve 3.0 or better on each criterion.

📎 CriticalThinking rubric.pdf
102.36 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:
☑	☑	☐	1. In **SOME** course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
☐	☐	☐	2. In **ALL** course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
☐	☐	☐	3. In the student handbook/advising handbook
☑	☑	☐	4. In the university catalogue
☑	☑	☐	5. On the academic unit website or in newsletters
☑	☑	☐	6. In the assessment or program review reports, plans, resources, or activities
☐	☐	☐	7. In new course proposal forms in the department/college/university
☐	☐	☐	8. In the department/college/university's strategic plans and other planning documents
☐	☐	☐	9. In the department/college/university's budget plans and other resource allocation documents
☐	☐	☐	10. Other, specify:

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:

Instructors from 7 different senior seminar classes were asked to randomly select 5 student projects to evaluate. Two instructors voluntarily sampled 10 student projects. Instructors then rated student's projects 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 (key assignments, projects, portfolios, course work, student tests, etc.) 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 **provide** the direct measure (key assignments, projects, portfolios, course work, student tests, etc.) you used to collect data, THEN **explain** how it assesses the PLO:

Instructors were asked to use a capstone project but in cases where those projects were not yet submitted, other key assignments were used for evaluation.

The direct measures assess the Critical Thinking PLO by instructing students to appraise scholarly writings, evaluate what message components are necessary in order to support a student's argument, and distinguish different types of messages (e.g., scholarly vs. journalistic) when using the information to support conclusions.

A sample direct measure of a capstone class is attached.

📎 **Sample Final Project Instructions.doc**
40 KB

📎 **No file attached**

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?

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7
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Q3.5.1.
How many faculty members participated in the **evaluation** of the assessment data for the selected PLO?

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1
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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.)?

Random sample from senior seminars.

Q3.6.1.
How did you **decide** how many samples of student work to review?

Precedent by previous evaluations.

Q3.6.2.
How many students were in the class or program?

approximately 25 per class

Q3.6.3.
How many samples of student work did you evaluated?

45

Q3.6.4.
Was the sample size of student work for the direct measure adequate?

- ● 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know

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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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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(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 in **Q2.1**:

2016-2017 Data (N=45)

Results for Critical Thinking Skills

Five Criteria (Areas)	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Explanation of Issues	42.2%	42.2%	8.8%	4.4%
Selecting and Using Information	26.6%	42.2%	22.2%	8.8%
Influence of Context	24.4%	53.3%	17.7%	4.7%
Student's Positions	33.8%	42.2%	22.2%	2.2%
Conclusions	20%	35.5%	42.2%	3.1%

📎 2016-2017 Assessment Summary.docx
15.51 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?

Standards of performance and expectations: We expect 100% students to have scores of at least 3.0 in all areas of the AAC&U's VALUES Critical Thinking 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, i.e., most of the students met the goal. Most problematic are students' rating for the **Conclusions** and **Selecting and Using Information** criterion where almost 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 Critical Thinking rubric, most students met or exceeded the milestone rating.

For **Explanation of Issues** criterion, 84% of students met the capstone rating as demonstrated in writing with a clear statement of the issue to be analyzed. Relative to the other four criteria, this was the strongest ratings of the five criteria.

For **Influence of Context** criterion, the second highest rated, 77.7% of students were rated at or above the benchmark, indicating a thorough evaluation of the relevance of the context of evidence.

Similarly, for **Student's Positions**, 76% of sampled students were rated at or above the benchmark where students consistently take into account the complexities of an issue.

Overall, in this sample, a minimum of 55% of students were rated as at least having met milestone 3 on any of the five criteria.

The issue of re-evaluating the standard of 100% of students expected to be rated 3 or higher has been raised with the full faculty. Faculty members were divided on the issue of changing the program standard. It was decided that more attention should be devoted to discussing and potentially revising the program standard at a faculty retreat.

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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.

Based on the previous year's assessment feedback, the program made two changes and is considering a third one:

1) Based on evaluation feedback, program standards are expressed as a percentage, e.g., 100% of students expected to be rated 3 or higher. This change was implemented this year in the Assessment report.

2) Based on information from assessment trainings with OAPA, data were collected in the fall semester so that the Assessment Committee could make a preliminary evaluation based on the data. Results of this evaluation showed a continued pattern of students not meeting the program standard, i.e., 100% rated 3 or better. To address this issue, the Assessment Coordinator brought the matter to a full faculty meeting. Based on the heavily divided arguments for and against making revisions to the program standards, it was decided that the issue be a dedicated discussion item at a faculty retreat which affords more time and reflection on this issue.

3) Assessment feedback recommended that curriculum maps work in tandem with advising students for an academic plan. ComS was a pilot project for SmartPlanner which is a tool in academic planning. The issue should be considered further by faculty to discern how best to articulate PLOs as part of academic planning. This can be assessed at the retreat along with consideration of the program goals.

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.

Since your last assessment report, **how have the assessment data from then been used** so far?	1. Very Much	2. Quite a Bit	3. Some	4. Not at All	5. N/A

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Improving specific courses	○	○	○	○	○
2. Modifying curriculum	○	○	○	○	○
3. Improving advising and mentoring	○	○	○	○	○
4. Revising learning outcomes/goals	○	○	○	○	○
5. Revising rubrics and/or expectations	○	○	○	○	○
6. Developing/updating assessment plan	○	○	○	○	○
7. Annual assessment reports	○	○	○	○	○
8. Program review	○	○	○	○	○
9. Prospective student and family information	○	○	○	○	○
10. Alumni communication	○	○	○	○	○
11. WSCUC accreditation (regional accreditation)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Program accreditation	○	○	○	○	○
13. External accountability reporting requirement	○	○	○	○	○
14. Trustee/Governing Board deliberations	○	○	○	○	○
15. Strategic planning	○	○	○	○	○
16. Institutional benchmarking	○	○	○	○	○
17. Academic policy development or modifications	○	○	○	○	○
18. Institutional improvement	○	○	○	○	○
19. Resource allocation and budgeting	○	○	○	○	○
20. New faculty hiring	○	○	○	○	○
21. Professional development for faculty and staff	○	○	○	○	○
22. Recruitment of new students	○	○	○	○	○

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 to consider the following changes.

1. Hiring – The Department hired three new faculty members (Journalism, Intercultural/Communication Studies, and Public Relations) and expects to hire two additional full-
time faculty members 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.)

2. Modifications noted in 5.1.1.The faculty will consider modifying its current program standard (noted in that section of this report) as we prepare to collect data for the upcoming year as well as how to articulate the PLOs as part of academic advising.

Q5.3.

To what extent did you apply **last year's feedback** from the Office of Academic Program Assessment in the following areas?	1. Very Much	2. Quite a bit	3. Some	4. Not at All	5. N/A
1. Program Learning Outcomes	○	○	●	○	○
2. Standards of Performance	○	●	○	○	○
3. Measures	○	○	●	○	○
4. Rubrics	○	○	○	●	○
5. Alignment	○	○	●	○	○
6. Data Collection	○	○	●	○	○
7. Data Analysis and Presentation	○	●	○	○	○
8. Use of Assessment Data	○	●	○	○	○
9. Other, please specify:	○	○	○	○	○

Q5.3.1.
Please share with us an example of how you applied **last year's feedback** from the Office of Academic Program Assessment in any of the areas above:

The department is *considering* the idea of modifying program standards. By modifying the standards as suggested by OAPA, this would be a more realistic goal for the department. As mentioned, this is slated to be discussed at length at a future meeting.

(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:

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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, Competency, and Perspectives**

☐ 13. Ethical Reasoning

☐ 14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning

☐ 15. **Global Learning and Perspectives**

☐ 16. Integrative and Applied Learning

☐ 17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge

☐ 18. **Overall Disciplinary Knowledge**

☐ 19. **Professionalism**

☐ 20. 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**)

Program:

[   ]

(If you typed your program name at the beginning, please skip to Q10)

Q9.
Program/Concentration Name: [skip if program name appears above]

BA Communications

Q10.
Report Author(s):

Carmen Stitt

Q10.1.
Department Chair/Program Director:

Gerri Smith

Q10.2.
Assessment Coordinator:

Carmen Stitt

Q11.
Department/Division/Program of Academic Unit

Comm. Studies

Q12.
College:

College of Arts & Letters

Q13.
Total enrollment for Academic Unit during assessment semester (see Departmental Fact Book):

1,631

Q14.
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: [   ]

Q15. Number of **undergraduate degree programs** the academic unit has?

4

Q15.1. List all the names:

Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies-General Communication

Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies-Public Relations

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

Bachelor of Arts in Film (reported in its own assessment report)

Q15.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this undergraduate program?

Don't know

Q16. Number of **master's degree programs** the academic unit has?

1

Q16.1. List all the names:

Master of Arts in Communication Studies

Q16.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this master's program?

0

Q17. Number of **credential programs** the academic unit has?

0

Q17.1. List all the names:

Q18. Number of **doctorate degree programs** the academic unit has?

0

Q18.1. List all the names:

When was your **assessment plan**...	1. Before 2011-12	2. 2012-13	3. 2013-14	4. 2014-15	5. 2015-16	6. 2016-17	7. No Plan	8. Don't know
Q19. developed?	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Q19.1. last updated?	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q19.2. (REQUIRED)
Please **obtain** and **attach** your latest **assessment plan**:

📎 **No file attached**

Q20.
Has your program developed a **curriculum map?**

○ 1. Yes

● 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

Q20.1.
Please **obtain** and **attach** your latest **curriculum map**:

📎 No file attached

Q21.
Has your program indicated in the curriculum map where assessment **of student learning** occurs?

○ 1. Yes

● 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

Q22.
Does your program have a capstone class?

● 1. Yes, indicate: [   ]

○ 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

Q22.1.
Does your program have **any** capstone project?

● 1. Yes

○ 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

(**Remember**: **Save your progress**)

ver. 5.15/17

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.

The purpose of the written final project for the Seminar is a demonstration of students' knowledge in their chosen topic of mass media. Students select an area of mass media and then organize a coherent written 10-12 page paper (i.e., not including references or graphs/tables/charts) including a literature review, analyses of the problem, proposal, and conclusion. It must be APA format throughout.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS IN THIS ORDER:
- ✓ **Title Page** including title, author name and running head.
- ✓ **Abstract** of no more than 200 words, block-justified on its own page with title of paper at the top, and, following title, the word "Abstract" is centered.
- ✓ **Introduction** includes an overview of the paper, including goals/contributions of the proposal; no more than one-page long.
- ✓ **Background and literature review** explaining the media issue, what is at stake, what is known about it, and why the topic is important.
- ✓ **Theoretical explanation** of the mechanisms and concepts that explain your topic
- ✓ **Analysis and proposed changes** to address the media issue
- ✓ **2-3 Conclusions and closing remarks** about your analysis
- ✓ **References** in APA format; begin on a new page
- ✓ At least ***one original graph, table, or chart*** created by you. This may be created using secondary or hypothetical data. More are welcomed and may be borrowed from other sources *with* proper credit to the source.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:
- ✓ *Limit* **one (1) direct quote**. Otherwise, paraphrase and cite the source.
- ✓ **Ten to twelve pages of text (i.e., ending at _page 12_)** is a guide for the depth of written text to be presented. Points will not be deducted if papers are one (1) page outside of these guidelines. However, papers that are substantially shorter or longer will be viewed as an inability to work within the assignment instructions.
- ✓ **Upload as one (1) Word document**
- ✓ **Minimum 10 references, five of which must be peer-reviewed articles published within the last five years.**

Writing style-Throughout the paper, you, the writer, are expected to have moved beyond simply summarizing articles and reporting them, instead, use sources to your advantage and write 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.

Final Written Project Grading Rubric

_____(2 points)   APA formatting- the paper meets formatting requirements, including APA style throughout as noted on the first page of instructions.

_____(3 points)   Brief introduction-includes a thesis statement, provides a broad overview of the paper, including goals of the proposal.

_____(15 points)   Background and literature review-provides an explanation of why you chose to study this topic and why it is important. This can be from a personal perspective as well as a more global, political, or social perspective. Review what is known from the literature and other sources (e.g., news, legal sources, etc.).

_____(10 points)   Theoretical rationale-identifies a mass communication theory and it is _explained in detail_. Explain why the theory supports your topic. Connects how theory fits with analysis by giving examples. If there another competing theory that also fits it is be mentioned and explained why you didn't you the other theory. If noted, mention how the secondary theory adds to the explanatory value. Does it account for variables that the primary theory does not?

_____(20 points)   Analysis of the topic and 3 proposed changes-Stake a claim to your position and provide your own insights to the issue, offering evidence through scholarly and other sources, incl. your observations of human behavior. _Student ideas come first_. Write in your own words, paraphrasing with citations; use smooth transitions to minimize jagged transitions (i.e., the "voice" in the paper should not move steeply from casual conversation in one paragraph to an academic explanation of a study in the next). Then, propose 3 ways to change or remedy the media situation. Why would these work and be beneficial? These suggestions should be steeped in what is known about _media effects and communication_.

_____(5 points)   2-3 conclusions and closing remarks about topic-remind the reader about 2-3 key ideas of the paper. Address the future and any expectations or speculation regarding this topic.

_____(10 points)   References-a separate reference section APA-style of minimum 10 references titled "References" at the top of the page. Five must be peer-reviewed communication articles published within the last 5 years. Each reference includes the author(s) name, date of publication, year/(month where applicable) of publication, title of publication, media/book/website and other identifying information.

_____(10 points)   Graph/table/chart-at least one graph or table or chart APA-style _created by you_ is appended following the references section (using the software program of your choice) that illustrates a key point in your paper. _Must be referred to in text._ More than one is allowed and, with proper citation, you may reuse others' charts. Clearly labeled. Include a few sentences below it to describe it.

2016-2017 Data (N=45)
Results for Critical Thinking Skills

Five Criteria (Areas)	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Explanation of Issues	42.2%	42.2%	8.8%	4.4%
Selecting and Using Information	26.6%	42.2%	22.2%	8.8%
Influence of Context	24.4%	53.3%	17.7%	4.7%
Student's Positions	33.8%	42.2%	22.2%	2.2%
Conclusions	20%	35.5%	42.2%	3.1%

Standards of performance and expectations: We expect 100% students to have scores of at least 3.0 in all areas of the AAC&U's VALUES Critical Thinking 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, i.e., most of the students met the goal. Most problematic are students' rating for the **Conclusions** and **Selecting and Using Information** criteria where almost 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 Critical Thinking rubric, most students met or exceeded the milestone rating.

For **Explanation of Issues** criterion, 84% of students met the capstone rating as demonstrated in writing with a clear statement of the issue to be analyzed. Relative to the other four criteria, this was the strongest ratings of the five criteria.

For **Influence of Context** criterion, the second highest rated, 77.7% of students were rated at or above the benchmark, indicating a thorough evaluation of the relevance of the context of evidence.

Similarly, for **Student's Positions**, 76% of sampled students were rated at or above the benchmark where students consistently take into account the complexities of an issue.

 Overall, in this sample, a minimum of 55% of students were rated as at least having met milestone 3 on any of the five criteria.

CRITICAL THINKING 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 by shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of possibilities. Critical thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. Assignments that cut across presentation mode might be especially useful in some fields. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., how information sources were evaluated regardless of whether they were included in the product) is important, assignments focused on student reflection might be especially illuminating.

Glossary

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

- Ambiguity: Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.
- Assumptions: Ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are "taken for granted or accepted as true without proof." (quoted from www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/assumptions)
- Context: The historical, ethical. political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events.
- Literal meaning: Interpretation of information exactly as stated. For example, "she was green with envy" would be interpreted to mean that her skin was green.
- Metaphor: Information that is (intended to be) interpreted in a non-literal way. For example, "she was green with envy" is intended to convey an intensity of emotion, not a skin color.

CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

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Association of American Colleges and Universities

Definition
Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

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	Milestones		Benchmark
	4	3	2	1
Explanation of issues	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
Evidence *Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion*	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.