

LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
ASSESSMENT PLAN
March 16, 2010

Mission

The primary mission of the Mass Media Communications Program is to provide quality education and training that will enable students to obtain entry level employment related to mass media communications and/or to pursue continued education regarding the various forms, and methods of mass media communication in institutions of higher education.

A secondary and complementary mission of the Program is to use its expertise to assist in the development of the area and its citizens by increasing the ability to identify, transmit, analyze, and create or enhance mass media communication services and products that will encourage economic growth and improve the quality of life.

Learning Outcomes: Competencies and Values

The core student competencies for the Program have been developed to be consistent with the requirements of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. The Program learning outcomes are related to understanding and appreciating mass media communications, the ability to think critically, the ability to communicate, an awareness of influences on and roles of the student regarding mass media communications, and the ability to master fundamental mass media communications' technologies. Students graduating from the program will be able:

- Describe the purposes, functions, and scope of mass media communications in society today.
- Describe the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping mass communications.
- Demonstrate the skills to gather, assess, and organize information and to compile information in clear, concise, balanced, and ethical ways.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions.
- Summarize and explain the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press.
- Apply concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Describe and apply professional ethical principles and in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences, and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate proficiencies in the use of tools and technologies applicable to the professions for which is student is preparing

Assessment Plan

Curriculum

Mass Media Communications is a dynamic and rapidly evolving field. As such, the curriculum for the Program must be consistently assessed and modified as necessary to keep pace with the technical, process, and infrastructure changes in the field as they occur. A primary goal of the curriculum is to be appropriately aligned with the curriculum of other colleges and universities, particularly with the New Mexico institutions to which LCC students are most likely to transfer.

Curriculum assessment activities consist of:

- Conduct research to identify curriculum and course master syllabi used by other institutions offering mass media communications or similar programs.
- Conduct research to identify entry level employment requirements in the mass media communication industries.
- Annual review and analysis of the requirements of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.
- Transmit existing and proposed curriculum and course master syllabi to the four major universities serving New Mexico for review and comment.
- Conduct student course satisfaction and evaluation surveys

Based on the curriculum assessment activities, Program curriculum and master syllabi are modified to incorporate changes in mass media communications technology and processes, and to assure that the Program and courses can be articulated with the four major universities serving New Mexico.

The effectiveness of the Program curriculum is measured by:

- Program and course articulation agreements with the four major universities serving New Mexico.
- The number and percentage of graduates obtaining employment or careers related to mass media communications within six months of graduation.
- The number and percentage of graduates transferring to an institution of higher learning or technical training program in the field of mass media communications.

Student Learning Outcomes and Competencies Assessment Methods

The Program uses a variety of methods to assess student learning outcomes and core competencies. The following describe the major assessment methods.

1. Capstone Course

The Mass Media Communications Capstone Course, a course that is a prerequisite to earning the degree, integrates coursework, knowledge, skills and experiential learning to enable the student to demonstrate a broad mastery of learning across the curriculum for a promise of initial employability and further career advancement.

The Capstone Course uses two main methods to comprehensively measure expected proficiencies and competencies. An objective test of knowledge mastery, a comprehensive exam, is developed as part of the course. The exam incorporates questions that assess the knowledge outcomes of each of the Program's core curriculum

courses. A Capstone project or thesis is the second component of the course to demonstrate a student's ability to acquire, develop, convey, and integrate knowledge and information and to critically examine issues related to mass media communications.

2. Objective Tests of Knowledge Mastery

Standardized midterm and final exams are used for each of the courses to help assure that course content is consistently structured to achieve expected learning outcomes and competencies. In addition, random and scheduled quizzes are used to measure progress toward expected knowledge acquisition and proficiencies.

3. Certification Exams

Certification exams developed and widely accepted by the computer industry, when available and applicable, are used to measure proficiencies in specific communications computer software program training courses.

4. Performance Based Assessments

Performance based assessments are a key ingredient of the program. This method is used to assess performances, portfolios, and projects. Effective writing skills are measured using both objective and performance based assessments. Assessments of demonstrations of technical proficiencies and the integration of such proficiencies with communications, aesthetic, and design principles include faculty, student, self, and "juried show" evaluations.

5. Research Methods in Mass Media Communications

As a prerequisite for the Associate of Arts Degree, each student must successfully complete this Research course in which an in-depth research paper is required. Through this course, students demonstrate the ability to conceptualize a significant research problem in mass media communications and to effectively conduct that research project. The student presents the research paper to a committee of evaluators and makes a final oral presentation that may include audio, video, and/or computer generated material.

6. Grades

A review of grades for each student majoring in the program is completed at the end of each semester with a final review during the semester of application for graduation. Grades reflect how well a student has met each of the competencies for each of courses within the Program.

7. Student Evaluations

A student evaluation form to gather students' feedback on their own learning progress, effort, and motivation, as well as their perceptions of the instructor's use of instructional strategies and teaching methods is developed and implemented for each course of the program.

8. Graduate Exit Interviews

An exit interview is conducted for each graduating student earning an Associate of Arts Degree in Mass Media Communications. The interview solicits the student's overall

evaluation of the program, its strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement.

9. Tracking Special Student Achievements

Special student achievements such as awards in national and state competitions, student publications, and student presentations at national and state meetings are monitored and documented.

Faculty Evaluation and Professional Development

Each faculty of the program, including adjunct faculty, receives an annual performance evaluation. The evaluation is based on established pedagogical criteria and includes professional development goals mutually developed by each faculty in conjunction with the Department Director.

Implementation of the Assessment Plan

The new Mass Media Communication Program is in the process of initial development. Master syllabi are still being developed and faculty is in the process of being hired. It is projected that all of the above described assessment tools will be developed and methods will be implemented by Fall 2010. It can be expected that changes in assessment procedures will occur regularly. A general review of the Assessment Plan will be conducted in FY2011.

Use of Assessment for Continuous Improvement

The Assessment Plan is developed and evaluated in terms of its contribution to continuous program improvement. It is expected that changes in curriculum, instruction, and practices will result from assessment efforts. The process of assessment can itself improve the quality of teaching and learning by bringing faculty together to articulate shared standards and expectations or by improving communication between faculty and students. The results of assessment help to identify components of the curriculum that need to be strengthened or demonstrate that an effort to improve has succeeded.

Assessments are reviewed and analyzed at the end of each semester. Changes toward improving the Program are implemented based on the analysis of the assessment results.