

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR Group 1: Cycle 1 - Fall 2017 - Summer 2019

Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications is to improve and strengthen the societal roles of the professions of journalism and mass communications by:

- providing an undergraduate instruction within a liberal arts context that leads to a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications and prepares students for an increasingly multinational, multicultural professional work environment.
- providing graduate instruction, leading to master's and Ph.D. degrees, that prepares students for leadership and management roles in the journalism and mass communications professions and in the professorate.
- educating students, both majors and those in disciplines outside the School, about roles in the journalism and mass communications professions and in the professorate.
- educating students, both majors and those in disciplines outside the School, about the roles and functions of the mass media and of mass communications industries so that they can be informed consumers of information.
- adding to the body of knowledge for the professions and for the general public through research, scholarship and creative professional activity.
- providing service to journalism instruction at the middle and high school levels in South Carolina and the Southeast, and to journalism and mass communications professions in South Carolina and at the regional, national, and international levels through such activities as continuing education programs, workshops and constructive commentary on current media, advertising and public relations practices.

Goal 1.

Students should be prepared for an increasingly multinational and multicultural professional work environment in an evolving media landscape.

MM JM Curriculum Map

Curriculum

Courses in the curriculum are associated with specific learning outcomes, and cited throughout the report. See also attached Curriculum Map for SJMC Multimedia Journalism majors.

Learning Outcome 1.

Demonstrate the ability to conduct research, gather information, write clearly and correctly and present relevant news or persuasive information at a professional level.

Curriculum: JOUR 291, 303, 361, 471, 580, 586, 588, 590

Measures and Criteria

- Grammar Exam (direct measure): Students enrolled in JOUR 291, our introductory writing course that is required across majors, take a diagnostic grammar and writing exam twice during the course. The first administration of the exam takes place before concentrated teaching of grammar, spelling and style. The second administration of the exam takes place after this instruction and is a direct measure of accomplishment and learning. The SJMC faculty has not identified a standard of performance for scores from incoming students because this information is used primarily as a baseline measure of what incoming students actually know. It is our expectation that the mean score for all students on the *post*-test should be at least 70%.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluation (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students' performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.
- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation (direct measure): Using a shared rubric, industry professionals from advertising, public relations, multimedia journalism, broadcast journalism, visual communications and mass communications evaluate content generated in SJMC capstone courses, examining final projects and/or professional portfolios for professional standards in their respective fields. LO1, LO2 and LO5 are measured in this way. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Capstone Rubric LO1, LO2, LO5

Methods

- Diagnostic Grammar Exams are given by every faculty member in every JOUR 291 course. Pre/post data are submitted to the assessment team, synthesized and evaluated at the end of each academic year.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather

the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation: Each Fall, SJMC sequence heads provide a sample of senior-level student work for evaluation. The work was produced during the Spring semester of the preceding academic year. Industry practitioners on the SJMC Advisory Board evaluate that work to determine whether it meet industry standards in their respective fields. Each project is evaluated by at least two members of the board. Evaluators examine the work on eight standards that parallel LO1, LO2 and LO5. Each variable is measured on a Likert scale: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Yes & No, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. Once complete, responses are typed into an excel spreadsheet, then uploaded into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis by the assessment team.
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC employs three direct measures to assess this learning outcome: A grammar assessment, a supervisor evaluation of student interns and an evaluation of senior capstone projects by industry professionals.

Grammar Assessment

In the 2017/2018 academic year, more than 400 students took the SJMC's grammar assessment, once at the start of their first required writing course (JOUR 291) and again towards the end. Nearly 600 took it during the following academic year. The SJMC faculty has not identified a standard of performance for scores from incoming students because this information is used primarily as a baseline measure of what incoming students actually know. It is our expectation that the mean score of the *post*-test should be at least 70%. Although mean scores rose for all students nearly 10% in 2017/2018 and just under 9% this past academic year, student scores did not reach expectations.

The mean score for journalism majors missed our target by two-hundredths of a percent, so officially, just shy of expectations in 2017/2018, but met expectations the following academic year. On measure 1 (grammar assessment), the LO was not met year one but was met year two.

Table LO1a:	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Method of Assessment	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)
Grammar (Pre-test, all students)	66 (216)	61 (214)	58.7 (423)	59.04 (575)
Grammar (Post-test, all students)	74 (222)	68 (207)	68.38 (412)	67.88 (556)
(Percentage Change)	↑ 8 %	↑ 7 %	↑ 9.68 %	↑ 8.84 %
(Journalism)	74 (17)	72 (34)	69.98 (41)	71.71 (56)

Supervisor Evaluation (Internships)

A second direct measure used to assess LO1 is the student internship evaluation. It is the faculty's expectation that student scores meet or exceed 4.0 on a five-point scale. In the 2017/2018 academic year, 137 SJMC students completed internships for credit and were evaluated by their supervisors on this variable. Another 133 supervisors evaluated students in 2018/2019. The mean scores for all SJMC majors combined were well above minimum standards and there were no significant differences by major. Journalism majors scored 4.86 and 4.63, respectively. On measure 2 (internship evaluation), the LO was met.

Table LO1b:	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Method of Assessment	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)
Internship Evaluations – All	4.50 (133)	4.73 (89)	4.72 (137)	4.68 (133)
(Journalism)	4.86 (7)	5.0 (1)	4.86 (7)	4.63 (8)

Senior Capstone Projects

For the SJMC's third direct measure, industry professionals evaluate content generated by students in SJMC capstone courses. Using a shared rubric (see attached), practitioners examine final projects and/or professional portfolios to determine whether the work meets professional standards in their respective fields. It is the faculty's expectation that student scores meet or exceed 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Each semester, ten projects are randomly selected from each of our six majors for inclusion in the analysis. On occasion, when group projects are involved, that number is lower. Each project is evaluated holistically by at least two separate professionals, leading to 75 separate project evaluations in 2017/2018 and 107 in 2018/2019.

In both academic years, journalism majors fell below expectations. As Table LO1c reflects, the mean score for individual variables and combined/aggregate scores, were all below 4.0. In both academic years, students struggled especially on "presents information at a

professional level." On measure LO1c (capstone projects), the LO was not met either year.

Table LO1c: Method of Assessment	2016/2017 X (N)	2017/2018 X (N)	2018/2019 X % (N)	Gathers Info/Research	Writes clearly	Presents Info at prof. level
Senior Capstone Projects	LO1 - Combined	LO1 - Combined	LO1 - Combined			
Average - All Students	4.03 / 5 (61)	3.8 (75)	3.94 (107)	4.16 (103)	3.83 (106)	3.85 (104)
(Journalism)	3.419 (16)	3.31 (18)	3.65 (18)	3.75 (16)	3.78 (18)	3.39 (18)

Use of Results

The SJMC is generally satisfied with the performance of our journalism students as demonstrated by entry-level writing expectations. Based on trend data over the past four academic years (and if we were to round up our quantitative findings by two-hundreds of a percent in 2017/2018), these young writers would be meeting minimum expectations across the board. They consistently outperform many of their SJMC peers on the grammar test. Still, continued efforts are needed as regards student performance on this measure. Sophomore-level students tend to struggle mightily in this area. New in this academic cycle, we asked students if they had transferred into the program. On average, their performance was lower (64%) than the non-transfer students (70%). We plan to dig further into this and future data to determine whether more concentrated academic support is needed for this important student sub-group (transfer students).

Although grammar is not the sole measure of good writing, it is a critical component. And, while the JOUR 291 course is not a grammar course per se (it is designed instead to expose students to professional writing styles in print, broadcast, and public relations writing), it is our first opportunity to work directly with students on these foundations and we continue to work towards curricular solutions.

SJMC Associate Professor Ernest Wiggins heads up our efforts in this area, taking a leadership role in the administration of the grammar test (as well as oversight of all our JOUR 291 sections). In past assessment reports, Mr. Wiggins noted that J291 instructors find it difficult to deliver sufficient, targeted instruction in standard English usage within the time allotted for the course. To address those concerns, in the 2017 academic year, Wiggins designed and implemented a separate set of intensive, online grammar modules that would place that basic skills component within the classroom setting. These nine standalone grammar lessons include accompanying quizzes. The grammar lessons were not created as drills for the students – for we know drilling doesn't improve writing though it does improve test scores -- but as tools to help students understand the foundational logic behind standard English usage, sentence construction and punctuation. Instructors are encouraged to use these PowerPoint lessons and quizzes to address grammar challenges throughout the semester, recommend additional individual exercises for acute problems and refer students with chronic difficulties to the Student Success Center and the Writing Center.

A new assessment instrument (that corresponds with grammar lessons in the course's common text) will be introduced in the Fall of 2019. The instrument was scrubbed of some of the more esoteric usage questions while still testing students on proper use of pronoun cases, matching nouns with the proper verbs and the proper uses of commas in a sentence – common errors among students. We hope this revised instrument will help us better gauge student grammar usage in the future. We also continue to consider a different measure - a writing test using a shared prompt and grading rubric for all JOUR 291 sections. Grammar would be part of the evaluation but other professional practices for style and presentation would also be included.

Writing Specific Curricular Enhancement: Sophomore/Junior Level

These are not the only efforts being made to enhance the quality of student writing. Based on trend data on this measure, in 2018, journalism faculty members designed and began offering a new course called Intensive Writing for Journalism. Offered as a JOUR 499 (Special Topics) course, this particular section of the course was crafted with journalism students in mind, providing them with advanced instruction on field specific writing conventions specific to journalistic industries. The course description is as follows:

No matter your job title, if you are a communicator, you have to write well. This is especially true for journalists whose job it is to critically analyze information and present news in a clear, concise and compelling fashion. Quality writing is consistently listed among the top-five skills expected of journalism students. Writing topics will rotate for this course, with different sections representing different journalistic traditions.

Although this particular section of the course placed emphasis on broadcast news writing styles, both broadcast and multimedia journalism students were encouraged to register. The course was approved for journalism majors only to provide specialized instruction although, in the end, several public relations students registered as well. The class syllabus is attached. The course proved popular and was offered again in Fall of 2019. A companion course – focusing on print/textual traditions – is currently in development with the goal of offering it in the Fall of 2020.

Prioritization of Writing in Capstone Courses

As regards the *second* measure in this section of our report, the SJMC is highly satisfied with the performance of our journalism students as demonstrated by internship supervisor evaluations. Clearly, journalism students are proving themselves and their abilities in the *workplace*. That said, the issue of *work product*, as evaluated by industry practitioners in our capstone course, continues to be a concern. The SJMC assessment team believes the Capstone Project Evaluation adds invaluable information to our examination of learning outcomes. In addition to quantitative findings included in this report, practitioners also make qualitative remarks on these projects, which we now regularly provide to faculty members in the sequence to guide further curriculum decisions.

For example, when it comes to professional presentation, comments frequently center around the quality of lead writing and copyediting mistakes. Passing that information along to faculty members who supervise those students helps them understand where a mean score (like $X = 3.31$) comes from.

Since implementing this measure in 2015/2016, and in an effort to “close the loop” on assessment, the SJMC assessment team has had several discussions with faculty members within the journalism sequence about these results in general (and student writing quality in particular). Some of those faculty members believe the evaluators – many of them “old-school, hard-nosed, green eyeshade print journalists” – give students little leeway for minor errors (that might be overlooked by less rigorous evaluators examining capstone work in other majors). Despite that, those same faculty members admit that the quality of student writing is a problem that requires additional, intensive instruction. In recent years, we brought new instructors in to work with senior-level students in these courses – one focusing on writing, the other on photojournalism. In the Fall of 2019, a third, part-time instructor was brought in to add additional editorial support so writing could be prioritized at this curricular level. The assessment team looks forward to gathering additional data to help us put these findings into context in the future.

In order to fully “close the loop” in the assessment process, the SJMC’s assessment committee plan to share findings of this report, as well as suggestions for future changes to assessment methods, with the full SJMC faculty at a meeting in April 2020. By sharing and discussing this report, we believe the SJMC faculty can continue to work collaboratively and diligently to improve, enhance and refine our measures and methods of assessment. We remain vigilant in addressing student deficiencies.

J499 - Intensive Writing F18

Learning Outcome 2.

Demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively and independently; evaluate their own work and the work of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity, style and correctness.

CURRICULUM: JOUR 101, 204, 291, 361, 471, 580, 586, 588, 590

Measures and Criteria

- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students’ performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty’s expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.
- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation (direct measure): Using a shared rubric, industry professionals from advertising, public relations, multimedia journalism, broadcast journalism, visual communications and mass communications evaluate content generated in SJMC capstone courses, examining final projects and/or professional portfolios for professional standards in their respective fields. LO1, LO2 and LO5 are measured in this way. It is the faculty’s expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Methods

- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation: Each Fall, SJMC sequence heads provide a sample of senior-level student work for evaluation. The work was produced during the Spring semester of the preceding academic year. Industry practitioners on the SJMC Advisory Board evaluate that work to determine whether it meet industry standards in their respective fields. Each project is evaluated by at least two members of the board. Evaluators examine the work on eight standards that parallel LO1, LO2 and LO5. Each variable is measured on a Likert scale: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Yes & No, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. Once complete, responses are typed into an excel spreadsheet, then uploaded into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis by the assessment team.
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC uses two direct measures to assess this learning outcome: Internships Supervisor Evaluations and Capstone Project Evaluations. It is the faculty’s expectation that student scores exceed 4.0 on a five-point scale for both measures.

Supervisor Evaluation (Internships)

In regard to the Internship Evaluations, As Table LO2a reflects, in the 2017/2018 academic year, the mean score for journalism majors was 4.71. In 2018/2019, the mean score was 4.38. Both means are above faculty expectations. On measure 1 (internship evaluations), the LO was met in both academic years.

Table LO2a: Method of Assessment	2015/2016 X (N)	2016/2017 X (N)	2017/2018 X (N)	2018/2019 X (N)
Internship Evaluations (All)	4.4 (133)	4.74 / 5 (91)	4.66 (143)	4.63 (139)
(Journalism)	4.57 (7)	5.0 (1)	4.71 (7)	4.38 (8)

Senior Capstone Projects

For our second direct measure, industry professionals evaluated 43 randomly selected senior-level capstone projects and portfolios in 2017 and another 49 in the 2018. As a point of clarification, Table LO2b reflects the *total number of individual evaluations* provided by industry professionals on all SJMC capstone projects *versus the total number of projects evaluated* (75 in 2017 and 107 in 2018).

On the whole, journalism students performed below expectations in both academic years (X=3.917 and X=3.58). When examining individual variables making up these aggregate scores, evaluators felt our students faced challenges on all four individual variables that make up our aggregate scores. On measure 1 (capstone projects), the LO was not achieved in either year.

Table LO2b: Method of Assessment	2017/ 2018 X (N)	2018/ 2019 X (N)	Think critically, creatively & independently	Meets prof. standards for accuracy & correctness	Meets prof. standards for fairness	Meets prof. standards for clarity & style
Capstone Projects	LO2 - Combo	LO2 - Combo				
Average - All Majors (Journalism)	3.79 (75) 3.17 (18)	3.88 (107) 3.58 (18)	3.96 (105) 3.61 (18)	3.88 (107) 3.67 (18)	3.95 (87) 3.61 (18)	3.72 (106) 3.44 (18)

Use of Results

Clearly, internship supervisors are pleased with our students' work while they are "in the field." Student performance on capstone projects, however, remained a challenge in these two academic years. Evaluators left relatively few qualitative remarks on these projects but several comments were instructive. For example, some said the writing had grammar and "style issues," included "run on sentences," lacked "creativity," or "left me wanting more." Others focused remarks squarely on story sourcing: "lacked attribution," "was single sourced," "one-sided," "lopsided," or "lacked context." These qualitative remarks, alongside the quantitative data in this report, have been provided to faculty members who supervise the course for their review and consideration. A number of additional curricular enhancements are being deployed to address these concerns (see LO1 Use of Results).

Learning Outcome 3.

Demonstrate an understanding the history of journalism and mass communications, the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications and the role of journalism and mass communications in society.

CURRICULUM: JOUR 101, 204, 291, 303, 471, 580, 586

Measures and Criteria

- SJMC Student Knowledge Pre-Test/Post-Test (direct measure): The SJMC gauges student learning for this outcome using a measure first pilot-tested in the 2016/2017 academic year, then further refined in 2017/2018. Students in JOUR 101 (our Mass Media & Society course) take a test – once during the first week of the course and again during the last week of the semester – which examines their knowledge about journalism and mass communication history, the role of journalism in society, and diversity concerns. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students on the *post-test* should be at least 70%.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students' performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Methods

- SJMC Student Knowledge Pre-Test/Post-Test (direct measure): JOUR 101 is mandatory for all majors and is taught at a freshman/entry level. The assessment team works closely with faculty members to devise and deploy the instrument in all sections of the course. During the first week of class, professors provide students a link enabling them to take the test online (via desktop, laptop or mobile phone). The test consists of both true-false and multiple-choice questions. Students take the test again at the end of the course, receiving a completion grade for the first test and an actual score for the second test. Data are downloaded into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analyzed by SJMC Assessment Committee members. Results are then compared between time one and time two.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty

meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC employs two direct measures to assess this learning outcome: an entry/exit test in our Mass Communications & Society Course (JOUR 101) and supervisor evaluations of student interns.

JOUR 101 Assessment

We are now in our third academic year administrating a 12-item test in J101. Our assessment chair has worked closely with the SJMC's full-time faculty members to develop the instrument and the assessment process. Since the Spring of 2017, we've revised the instrument and our methods for deploying it in the classroom three different times – slightly amending and revising both since our pilot test. Faculty distribute the pre-test during the first two weeks of class and the post-test during the last week of the class. Results are then compared.

JOUR 101 is most often taken by freshman- or sophomore-level students in our program. As Table LO3a demonstrates, mean scores for all majors have consistently risen on this measure since 2015. Faculty who teach this course have worked diligently to craft an instrument that adequately gauges core concepts we expect all SJMC students to know (namely history, the role of media in society, and diversity).

All SJMC students are required to take this course. As Table LO3a reflects, the mean score for all students rose more than 20% from pre-test to post-test in 2017/2018 and even higher, by more than 33%, in the 2018/2019 academic year.

Although only three journalism students took this course in the spring of 2018 and 2019, their performance on these variables outpaced their SJMC peers (scoring 75% on the post-test in 2018 and 83.33% on the post-test in 2019). Like other students, the journalism student who took the test in 2019 struggled on diversity questions. That issue will be addressed in some detail shortly (see Use of Results). Relying on the aggregate scores, however, on measure 1 (J101 pre/post-test) the LO was met both year.

Table LO3a:	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019			
Method of Assessment	LO3 - Combo	LO3-Combo	LO3-Combo	LO3-Combo	History	Role	Diversity
J101 Pre-test all	57.71 (211)	55.8 (112)	50 (232)	42.32 (152)	52.30 (153)	33.17 (153)	41.99 (153)
J101 Post-test all	73.67 (213)	71.2 (119)	70.7 (149)	75.78 (181)	81.11 (180)	79.83 (176)	69.09 (181)
(% Change)	↑ 15.96 %	↑ 15.40 %	↑ 20.7 %	↑ 33.46 %	↑ 28.81 %	↑ 46.66 %	↑ 27.10 %
(Journalism)	79.23 (10)	82.05 (3)	75.00 (2)	83.33 (1)	100 (1)	100 (1)	50 (1)

Note: As a point of comparison, data included in the table above (for the 2015/2016 academic year) feature scores from the previous freshman/senior exam, not the newer J101 within-course pre/post-test.

Supervisor Evaluation (Internships)

As noted above, J101 is commonly taken by students in their freshman or sophomore years. Our second measure assesses student performance when they're a bit further along in their studies. SJMC students most commonly take internships during their junior and senior years. Data in Table LO3b demonstrate that internship supervisors appear quite pleased with our students by the time they get out into the field.

Journalism majors had a mean score of 5.0, or "strongly agree" on this measure in 17/18 and 4.4 in 18/19, above the minimum standard of 4.0 set by SJMC faculty. On measure 2 (internship evaluations), the LO was met both years.

Table LO3b:	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Method of Assessment	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)
Internship Evaluations (All)	4.54 (133)	4.63 (60)	4.54 (95)	4.62 (104)
(Journalism)	4.17 (7)	4.0 (1)	5.00 (4)	4.40 (5)

Use of Results

The SJMC is generally satisfied with the performance of our students on this learning outcome as demonstrated by supervisor evaluations. The entry/exit exam in J101, particularly issues surrounding the diversity questions, require further consideration. There are four diversity questions on the instrument. The assessment team plans to meet with faculty members who teach this course in December of 2019 to discuss item analysis and determine what might be done to enhance student performance in this area, be it additional instruction and/or further revision of the instrument. To be sure, diversity is a key concern for the SJMC and we intend pursue the matter with due diligence.

The assessment team plans to review all of these results with the full SJMC faculty at the first scheduled faculty meeting in Spring of 2020.

Learning Outcome 4.

Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical concepts, legal implications, considerations and practices that guide the mass media professions.

CURRICULUM: JOUR 101, 204, 291, 303, 361, 471, 580, 586

Measures and Criteria

- SJMC Student Knowledge Pre-Test/Post-Test (direct measure): The SJMC gauges student learning for this outcome using a measure first pilot-tested in the 2016/2017 academic year, then further refined in 2017/2018 and again in 2018/2019. Students in JOUR 303 (our Law & Ethics course) take a test – once during the first week of the course and again during the last week of the semester – which examines their knowledge about key legal concepts affecting mass communicators. It is the faculty’s expectation that the mean score of the *post*-test should be at least 70%.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students’ performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty’s expectation that student scores meet or exceed 4.0 on a five-point scale

Methods

- SJMC Student Knowledge Pre-Test/Post-Test (direct measure): JOUR 303 is mandatory for all majors and is taught at a junior level. The assessment team works closely with faculty members to devise and deploy the instrument in all sections of the course. During the first week of class, professors provide students a link enabling them to take the test online (via desktop, laptop or mobile phone). The test consists of both true-false and multiple-choice questions. Students take the test again at the end of the course. They receive a completion grade for the first test and an actual score for the second test. Data are downloaded into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analyzed by the SJMC assessment team. Results are then compared between time one and time two.
- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC employs two direct measures to assess this learning outcome: an entry/exit test in our Law & Ethics course (JOUR 303) and supervisor evaluations of student interns.

JOUR 303 Assessment

We are now in our third academic year administrating a 10-item test in our Media Law & Ethics course (JOUR 303), which is required for all majors. Our assessment chair has worked closely with the SJMC’s two full-time faculty members to develop the instrument and the assessment process. Since the Spring of 2017, we’ve revised the instrument and our methods for deploying it in the classroom three different times – slightly amending and revising both since our pilot test. Faculty members distribute the pre-test during the first two weeks of class and the post-test during the last week of the class. Results are then compared.

Overall, data show student learning *is* taking place. Trending from 2015 to present, mean student scores have risen significantly since we began focusing on how and when these items are measured. In 2017/2018, mean student scores rose by 18% and by more than 25% in 2018/2019. Nonetheless, scores remain below the minimum standard set by faculty for most of our majors.

In 2017/2018, journalism students scored approximately 68% but that number rose to 79% the following year, outpacing their SJMC peers by more than ten percentage points. On measure 1 (J303 pre/post-test), the LO was not met in year one but was met in year two.

Table LO4a: Method of Assessment	2015/2016 % (N)	2016/2017 % (N)	2017/2018 % (N)	2018/2019 % (N)
J303 (Pre-test, all students)	44.79 (211)	45.5 (226)	48.92 (284)	43.48 (180)
J303 (Post-test, all students)	60.33 (213)	61.5 (244)	66.72 (239)	69.11 (169)
(Percentage Change)	↑15.54 %	↑16%	↑ 18.01 %	↑ 25.63 %
(Journalism)	63.75 (10)	65.0 (12)	68.13 (16)	79.17 (8)

Note: As a point of comparison, data included in the table above (for the 2015/2016 academic year) feature scores from the previous freshman/senior exam, not the newer J303 within-course pre/post-test.

Supervisor Evaluation (Internships)

Results are much better when our second direct measure is considered. Supervisor evaluations demonstrate that SJMC students are doing quite well on LO4 while in the workplace. Mean scores for all majors combined are well above minimum expectations on this variable. As shown in Table LO4b, in the 2017/2018 academic year, the mean score for journalism majors was 4.71 out of 5. In 2018/2019, that score was 4.40. Both were well above minimum expectations. On measure 2 (internship evaluations), the LO was met.

Table LO4b: Method of Assessment	2015/2016 X (N)	2016/2017 X (N)	2017/2018 X (N)	2018/2019 X (N)
Internship Evaluations (All)	4.53 (133)	4.73 (71)	4.55 (114)	4.66 (113)
(Journalism)	4.29 (7)	4.0 (1)	4.71 (7)	4.40 (5)

Use of Results

Trend data on the J303 entry/exit exam show significant growth, year-over-year, on this measure for Journalism students, improving from approximately 64% in 2015/2016 to a 79% in 2018/2019. It is unclear what's leading to this particular finding when students from other majors struggled so mightily. Faculty members who teach our J303 course argue that this may not be the best method for evaluating student learning although suitable alternatives have not yet been identified. That said, it is clear, student scores are consistently rising and faculty members are committed to teaching and measuring the same concepts across different sections of the course. The assessment chair plans to meet again with the faculty members in December 2019 to discuss results and methods of deployment further. It is a continuous process of development to which the SJMC is dedicated.

Assessment data show journalism students also fare well when it comes to performance in the workplace (as witnessed and evaluated by their supervisors. All results will be shared with the full SJMC faculty in the Spring of 2020.

Learning Outcome 5.

Demonstrate the ability to apply tools and technologies appropriate for the production, editing and presentation of visual, aural, textual or other media content.

CURRICULUM: JOUR 361, 471, 580, 586, 588, 590

Measures and Criteria

- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students' performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.
- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation (direct measure): Using a shared rubric, industry professionals from advertising, public relations, multimedia journalism, broadcast journalism, visual communications and mass communications evaluate content generated in SJMC capstone courses, examining final projects and/or professional portfolios for professional standards in their respective fields. LO1, LO2 and LO5 are measured in this way. It is the faculty's expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Methods

- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Capstone Project/Portfolio Evaluation: Each Fall, SJMC sequence heads provide a sample of senior-level student work for evaluation. The work was produced during the Spring semester of the preceding academic year. Industry practitioners on the SJMC Advisory Board evaluate that work to determine whether it meet industry standards in their respective fields. Each project is evaluated by at least two members of the board. Evaluators examine the work on eight standards that parallel LO1, LO2 and LO5. Each variable is measured on a Likert scale: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Yes & No, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. Once complete, responses are typed into an excel spreadsheet, then uploaded into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis by the assessment team.
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC uses two direct measures to assess this learning outcome: Internships Supervisor Evaluations and the Capstone Project Evaluation. It is the faculty's expectation that student scores exceed 4.0 on a five-point scale for both measures.

Supervisor Evaluation (Internships)

In 2017/2018 academic year, 137 supervisors evaluated student interns on LO5 and another 134 in 2018/2019. The mean score for all SJMC majors were well above expectations. For journalism majors, the mean scores were 4.71 and 4.62 across these two academic years. On measure 1 (internship evaluations), the LO was met.

Table LO5a: Method of Assessment	2015/2016 X (N)	2016/2017 X (N)	2017/2018 X (N)	2018/2019 X (N)
Internship Evaluations (All)	4.58 (133)	4.76 (86)	4.72 (137)	4.73 (134)
(Journalism)	4.67 (7)	4.0 (1)	4.71 (7)	4.62 (13)

Senior Capstone Projects

Scores were somewhat lower when professionals evaluated senior-level student work – a new measure employed starting the 2016/2017 academic year. Industry practitioners were asked whether each capstone project, taken as a whole, meets professional standards for production, editing and presentation of content in their respective industries. This learning outcome was measured as a single variable (versus multiple elements). Professionals evaluated student work on a five-point Likert scale. Answer options included: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Yes & No, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.

The mean score for all SJMC majors – combined – was below expectations on this variable for both academic school years featured in this report. Journalism majors in particular scored 3.28 and 3.99 respectively. On measure 2 (capstone projects), the LO was not met in either year of this assessment cycle.

Table LO5b: Method of Assessment	2016/2017 X (N)	2017/2018 X (N)	2018/2019 X (N)
Capstone Projects – All	3.77 (61)	3.64 (76)	3.78
(Journalism)	2.938 (16)	3.28 (18)	3.39 (18)

Use of Results

The SJMC is satisfied with the performance of our students on this learning outcome as demonstrated by supervisor evaluations. We are also pleased to see slow but steady progress with scores on capstone projects. Trend data show scores improving from 2.9 in 2016/2017 to 3.4 in the most recent academic year.

We believe the capstone evaluation process is extremely valuable for our program. Having industry practitioners review the work of our students helps us gauge their readiness for the workplace. It is not surprising that, upon close examination, professionals see elements of student work not *quite yet* meeting industry standards. Evaluators left few qualitative remarks on these most recent projects for faculty to go by, but they did leave a few. Of those who did make comments on this variable, some questioned layout and design of the website or location/use of infographics. Some of these issues are beyond student control because they use a website “template” for their work. The SJMC redesigned the main website (<http://carolinanewsandreporter.org/>) and students are no longer allowed to use a generic website builder for their individual resume pages. Faculty members who work with these students hope such changes enable evaluators to focus more squarely on the content of students’ work in future academic years.

Learning Outcome 6.

Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts and methods appropriate for the communications professions.

CURRICULUM: JOUR 471, 580, 586

Measures and Criteria

- Internship Supervisor Evaluations (direct measure): As part of our normal evaluation of interns from the school, employers are asked to assess our students’ performance on the job as well as their ability to demonstrate core values and competencies in the workplace. Each learning outcome is measured separately. These data help us to accumulate outside opinion about the extent to which prospective employers and communications professionals believe our students are prepared for their respective fields of practice. It is the faculty’s expectation that the mean score for all students meets or exceeds 4.0 on a five-point scale.

Methods

- Internship Supervisor Evaluation are required for all students who complete an internship for course credit. Faculty members gather the reports at the end of each semester and submit those surveys to our assessment team. Survey results are synthesized and analyzed by team members using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- The SJMC Assessment Committee is responsible for aggregating, analyzing, storing and sharing the data for all direct measures listed above. The Committee Chair shares results with the SJMC faculty at least once per year, typically during an open faculty meeting where all faculty members can raise questions and discuss results. During the annual reporting of results, the Assessment Committee also discusses proposed revisions and/or additions to assessment measures. In cases where student performance does not meet minimum faculty expectations, the Assessment Committee shares more detailed data with sequence heads (including individual item analysis and open-ended responses by evaluators), working to address concerns and/or establish curricular changes needed to enhance student performance on those learning outcomes.

Results

The SJMC uses a single direct measure to assess this final learning outcome: Internship Supervisor Evaluations.

Supervisor Evaluations (Internships)

Overall, SJMC majors, as a whole, scored quite well on LO6. 107 supervisors rated their interns on this measure in 2017/2018 academic year, and another 115 in 2018/2019. There were no significant differences by major. Broadcast journalism majors scored 4.8 and 4.45, year-over-year. On measure 1 (internship evaluation), the LO was met.

Table LO6a:	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Method of Assessment:	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)	X (N)
Internship Evaluations (All)	4.61 / 5 (133)	4.65 (57)	4.68 (107)	4.63 (115)
(Journalism)	4.33 (7)	4.0 (1)	4.80 (5)	4.50 (6)

Use of Results

The SJMC is satisfied with the performance of our broadcast journalism students on this learning outcome as demonstrated by supervisor evaluations. Therefore, no changes to curriculum are recommended at this time.