

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR

Bachelor of Arts with a major in Communications (BA)

Instructional Degree Program

Spring 2003

Assessment Period Covered

August 2003

Date Submitted

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose Linkage:

Institutional Mission Reference:

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, is committed to the preparation of students for leadership roles in their chosen profession and in increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University is a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

College/University Goal(s) Supported:

To increase "(1) students' ability to communicate through the use of the written and spoken word; (2) their knowledge and appreciation of culture, fine arts, social integration; and (3) self realization. The College [COAH] also prepares students for a variety of professions and roles by providing a broad-based liberal arts education."

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes:

- 1.** Students completing the baccalaureate program in Communication will communicate competently in public and social contexts.
- 2.** Students completing the degree program will be able to explain main theoretical assumptions they make about the nature of communication while analyzing a practical or professional problem.
- 3.** Students will be able to approach practical communication problems in professionally valuable ways.

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Intended Educational (Student) Outcome:

NOTE: There should be one form for each intended outcome listed. The intended outcome should be restated in the box immediately below and the intended outcome number entered in the blank spaces.

1. Students completing the baccalaureate program in Communication will communicate competently in public and social contexts.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

In a self-report version of the widely used and empirically validated Communicative Competence Scale, 85% of the students will score at or above 144 (out of possible 180).

1a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Fall, 2002 (COMM 4350)

89% at or above 144; M = 155.5; Mdn = 156; n = 9

Spring, 2003 (COMM 4360)

82% at or above 144; M = 151.7; Mdn = 155; n = 11

1a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

See 1.c.

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

In a third-person version of the Communicative Competence Scale, administered either by an internship supervisor or a partner in an in-class project, 85% of the students will score at or above 144.

1b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Fall, 2002 (COMM 4340)

100%; M = 147.3; Mdn = 147; n = 3

1b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

In order to increase the response rate, program faculty decided to mail certificates of appreciation to internship supervisors in the letter that requests participation in the final evaluative survey (cf. 3.a.)

Third Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:**1c. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:**

85% of students submitting their senior portfolios will "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "Given my experiences this last year communicating in public and social settings, I feel able to communicate effectively and appropriately."

1c. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Fall, 2002 (COMM 4350)

100%; M = 4.7 (on scale of 1-5); Mdn = 5; n = 9

Spring, 2003 (COMM 4360)

100%; M 4.5 (on scale of 1-5); Mdn = 4; n = 11

1c. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

1. Criteria for success have been refined. In addition to the "passing rate" criterion (85%), the mean score for participants also should be at or above specified levels: $M \geq 155$ for self-report administration of the scale; $M \geq 146$ for third-person version; and $M \geq 4.5$ for self-reporting of confidence.
2. The faculty decided that all 3000- and 4000- level courses should require two oral presentations, each of which will receive written feedback and count toward the final grade.

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2. Students completing the degree program will be able to explain main theoretical assumptions they make about the nature of communication while analyzing a practical or professional problem.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

2a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

Students will submit an essay that focuses on the above objective as part of their work in the capstone course, COMM 4360 Communication Theory and Practice. Once a year, a committee consisting of two communication professors and one outside professor will evaluate the degree to which the essays written by seniors accomplish the identified analytical objective. An essay will count as demonstrating the desired outcome if a majority of the committee determines that the essay satisfactorily describes a particular problem (1), analyzes how communication practice constitutes a part of the problem (2), and explains main theoretical assumptions made about the nature of communication in that analysis (3). The program will consider the outcome successfully achieved if 75% of the students in each year's class submit an essay deemed satisfactory.

2a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Of the students who completed COMM 4360, 85% wrote final essays that demonstrated the desired analytical ability. According to the main evaluative standards (see above), the mean scores were as follows (scale was 1-3, with 2 = "satisfactory"): M = 2.5 for #2, and M = 2.3 for #3.)

2a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

1. We decided to raise the pass rate for which we aim to 85% (from 75%).

2. We reworded the third evaluative standard: that each satisfactory essay “clearly elaborate the main concepts used in the analysis.” This wording replaces the expectation this year that each essay “explain main theoretical assumptions made about the nature of communication in that analysis.” The faculty expects the revised standard to improve consistency in scoring.

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3. Students will be able to approach practical communication problems in professionally valuable ways.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

3a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

85% of internship supervisors completing a concluding questionnaire will agree or strongly agree with the statement, "The understandings of communication shown and applied by the intern were professionally valuable."

3a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

100%, M = 4.7 (on scale from 1-5); Mdn = 5; n = 3

3a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

1. In order to increase the response rate, program faculty decided to mail certificates of appreciation to internship supervisors in the letter that requests participation in the final evaluative survey (cf. 1.b.).

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

3b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

85% of students completing a concluding questionnaire will agree or strongly agree with the statement, "My academic study of communication proved to be professionally valuable during my internship."

3b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

100%; M = 4.6 (on scale from 1-5); Mdn = 5; n = 9

3b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

No change recommended or action taken.

Third Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

3c. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

As part of their work in the Internship class students will prepare and submit professional resumes that then will be kept in departmental portfolios. Once a year the full-time communication professors will evaluate the resumes on the extent to which they (1) target an entry-level professional position in the communication field, (2) clarify relevant practical skills, and (3) conform to common conventions for resumes in the field. The results will be considered successful if a majority of the professors judge the resumes of 85% the students completing the class to be satisfactory or higher on all three criteria.

3c. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Strict assessment of criterion #1: No

The panel of evaluators found only 30% of the submitted resumes were satisfactory or higher on all three criteria. Broken down by criterion, the mean scores were as follows (scale was 1-3, with 2 = "satisfactory"): M = 1.45 for #1, M = 2.6 for #2, and M = 2.58 for #3.

Having controlled for inattention to criterion #1 (by rating as "neutral" resumes that made no reference at all to a targeted position): Yes

Under this controlled count, 90% of the submitted resumes were judged satisfactory or higher on the considered criteria. In this analysis: M = 2.25 for #1, M = 2.6 for #2, M = 2.58 for #3.

3c. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

1. Added an assignment to COMM 3300 in which students will review resumes from the communication field and use a sample of resumes to analyze the range of entry-level positions within the field.
2. Refined the final essay assignment in COMM 4350 so that it requires a description not only of the position eventually desired within the field, but also of the type of position that could potentially serve an entry into the field.
3. Decided to add a third member to join the evaluation panel, from outside of the program if the number of full-time communication faculty remains only two. This change will make the criterion of a majority vote more meaningful.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

SOURCE	LOCATION/Special Instructions
Final Evaluative Survey	