College of Liberal Arts

School of Communication & Journalism

Communication - Radio/TV/Film - Broadcast Journalism, BA

Expected Outcome 1: Students develop basic design, production and technological skills.

Assessment Method 1: Exit survey

Assessment Method Description
The comprehensive 11 question survey on Qualtrics (as cited in previous SLO) includes multiple statements relevant to the production skills SLO: 1) I learned concepts and theories in design and production; 2) I learned how to create and communicate messages across a variety of media platforms; and 3) I know how to edit my own creative work; and 4) I am prepared with the appropriate tools and technologies for my chosen media profession. The evaluation scale range is: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither agree/Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Findings
There were 14 responses. There were no “Strongly disagree” marks in any category, which is good news. We are pleased that the majority (82%) of the responses aligned favorably at “Strongly Agree” (8, 8, 9 and 7 out of 14 responses in the four categories) or “Agree” (3, 5, 4 and 2 out of 14). The mean in two of the categories (“communicating messages across multiple platforms” and “editing my own work”) received the highest mean (4.50) of any of the questions in the survey. There were a total of 4 “Disagree” responses; and 6 “neither.” The most notable “Neutral” cluster was for the question on being “preparation with the appropriate tools and technologies for my chosen media profession.” While the number is not that glaring, and perhaps may be attributed to the uncertainty of a career direction, there is some concern.

How did you use findings for improvement?
We would obviously like to reduce the number “neither” responses into
a more positive range with regard to professional preparation. The findings overall indicate that students have developed solid design sensibilities and production and technological skills.

Additional Comments
Assessment Method 2: Internship evaluations

Assessment Method Description
Every RTVF major is required to do a semester-long internship upon completion of their coursework. Each internship supervisor provides an evaluation of the student performance in three categories: writing, production skills and oral communication. The evaluation utilizes a basic five-point scale: 5=Excellent; 4=Above Average; 3=Average; 2=Below Average; 1=Poor. There is also an N/A option if a skill is not applicable to the internship. Supervisors are also asked to provide a general Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade for the student experience, and any comments if they choose.

Findings
Student production skills received very good marks from internship supervisors. Out of 67 evaluations, 46 (69%) were Excellent; 17 (25%) Good; and 4 were Average. None were Below Average or Poor. All of the interns were graded “Satisfactory” for their overall performance.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Both assessment methods indicate a pattern of students demonstrating proficiency in production skills. The internship surveys also suggest students are capable of applying these skills in a variety of media environments. We would like to sustain and build upon that track record by maintain a rigorous sequence of production courses. Our program will continually adapt the rapidly evolving technological advances. (The title make over from Radio-Television-Film to Media Studies reflects a more contemporary sensibility.) One of the key improvements is our newly designed and implemented Visual Media track which will be a cornerstone of our Media Studies curriculum. The sequence will expand the production skills parameters to creative application of technology that includes documentary, narrative film, new and engaged media, and interactive multimedia for the web. We expect that this will better prepare students for any professional experiences, from internship to career path.

Additional Comments
While our curriculum is committed to a balanced approach, there is increased emphasis on production and technological skills. The Visual
Media track grew out of our ongoing assessment of the RTVF program, its curriculum, student interests and goals, and awareness of the evolving technologies and media landscape. In addition, students will continue to have exciting opportunities to acquire production experience, and develop, refine and apply technological skills in a variety of areas. Our School’s partnership with Raycom, the emergence of the SEC Network and the ongoing Chattahoochee Heritage Project, and student media outlets WEGL radio and Eagle Eye television provide unique hands-on production opportunities.

**Expected Outcome 2: Students develop basic writing skills for media.**

**Assessment Method 1:** Internship evaluations

**Assessment Method Description**

Students receive 3 hours credit for the internship, which is a full semester assignment. Our internship evaluations provide an important sampling of data and indicators of a specific set of student skills that are among the program’s learning objectives. Among other measures, they provide an indicator if student preparedness and practical application of their skills within a professional environment. Internship supervisors are asked to evaluate the student intern’s performance in three categories--writing, production and oral communication. The evaluation utilizes a basic five-point scale: 5=Excellent; 4=Above Average; 3=Average; 2=Below Average; 1=Poor. Supervisors also have a N/A option if a skill is not applicable to the internship. Supervisors are also asked to provide a general Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade for the student experience, and comments if they choose.

**Findings**

Over the course of three semesters, 78 students were evaluated by internship supervisors. We are pleased that all received a “Satisfactory” grade for their overall performance. We do not expect otherwise. More specific to our program SLO, the writing skills appraisals were as follows: Excellent: 48 (62%); Good: 12 (15%); Average: 7 (8%). There were no “Below Average” or “Poor” rankings; and 11 (14%) “Not applicable.”

The findings within the intern evaluations of our student writing skills are positive. Having a pool of 78 evaluations is a good marker. More than three-fourths (77%) of our student interns were rated “excellent” or “good.” That’s encouraging (though it would be nice to edge into the
80 percentile range.) It is particularly pleasing that no students received “below average” or “poor.” The numbers indicate that our students have developed better than average writing skills during the course of their coursework, and that they can apply those proficiencies within a variety of professional media settings. Perhaps the most curious number is the 14% “Not Applicable.” This may be neither good nor bad. Our student internship assignments are varied, and obviously, in some cases, writing is not a major component of some internships. Should this number stay in that range or rise, we may examine more closely the context and if there is some action to be taken.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

While we are generally pleased that our students appear to be developing and demonstrating very good writing proficiencies as a result of our program and curriculum, we will continue to underscore writing as a fundamental of media studies. We consider writing an essential skill for every student to carry with them no matter their career pursuit or direction. Our goals are not only to maintain the consistently solid evaluation numbers for writing, but to improve upon them: 1) Reach the 80% range combined with “Excellent” and “good;” 2) Keep the “average” writing below 10%, focus on lowering the 8% to 5%, which would in turn boost the upper rankings. We are continually fine tuning writing courses and adapting to the changing media landscape. For example, we have gradually eliminated writing assignments for radio, while simultaneously increasing emphasis on writing styles for new and engaged media.

**Additional Comments**

None

**Assessment Method 2: Exit survey**

**Assessment Method Description**

We have designed an RTVF Exit Survey via Qualtrics that we kindly request, without requiring, of graduating seniors in the RTVF program. The 11 question survey solicits a general evaluation and overall rating; asks students why they chose the RTVF major, and to identify major strengths and weaknesses of the program. One of the most beneficial sections within the framework contains nine specific “In my RTVF classes” learning objectives, among them: law and regulation, media history, critical and creative thinking, communicating in various media platforms, diversity, and professional preparation. The writing statement reads: *I learned appropriate writing styles and formats applicable across media, including television, film and new media.* The response range is five-fold: Strongly Disagree, Disagree,
Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree.

**Findings**

There were 14 total responses. Strongly Disagree (0); Disagree (1); Neither Agree or Disagree (2); Agree (4); Strongly Agree (7).

[The mean: 4.21; Min.value: 2; Max.value: 5; Variance 0.95; Standard deviation 0.97]

Despite a relatively small response size, the numbers were favorable. Only one student disagreed, two were essentially “neutral,” and the majority (79%) responded positively to what they learned about writing styles and application within various media formats.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

Again, the results are consistent with the findings of assessment method 1 (internship evaluations). Both suggest a strength, and that we are on the right track with our curriculum and approach to teaching writing, not only the basic styles and formats, but the range of media platforms as well, from traditional to new. A potential next step could be to supplement our quantitative data of these two assessment methods with an additional writing evaluation, one that is analytical of content, technique and style. The triad of methods would provide a more comprehensive view of our learning objectives in relation to writing.

**Additional Comments**

Our exit survey is an instrumental evaluation tool for our program as it provides excellent first hand insights from students who completed their coursework into what and how we are doing what we do. Though the survey is in its early stages, we are a bit disappointed in the relatively small (14-16), though workable, number of respondents. A suitable sample size with any survey is often a challenge. Obviously, the more the merrier. We will continue to explore means to encourage student participation in the survey, with incentives short of begging, bribery and/or extra credit.
**Expected Outcome 3: Program, faculty and curriculum prepare students for professional media experience.**

**Assessment Method 1: Exit Survey**

**Assessment Method Description**
The RTVF exit survey is made available (on Qualtrics) to graduating seniors at the end of Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Students are strongly encouraged to participate. The survey seeks: a general evaluation and overall rating of the RTVF program; identification of major strengths and weaknesses; and nine specific questions about student learning objectives/outcomes in RTVF classes. The series is comprehensive, including history, concepts and theories, regulation, writing and production skills, creative and critical thinking skills, diversity and career preparation.

Responses are both written and quantified. The general evaluation, strengths and weaknesses are descriptive. The “overall” rating question measured on a scale of very good, good, neither good/poor, poor, very poor. The series of 9 coursework questions (as referenced in preceding assessments) are on a 5 part agree/disagree scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree.

**Findings**

The exit survey provides a wealth of valuable measurements, data and responses, both written and quantified, broad and specific, for the RTVF program, its performance and SLO outcomes. A synopsis of the survey data and text indicate the following:

- Program strengths include: flexibility; experienced, engaged, exceptional faculty, application of concepts, project based classes, relevant.
- Program weaknesses cited include: classroom space, production classes the only hands on, lack of / under emphasis of production classes, course selections, none
- In general, the majority of students are satisfied with the program. Of the 14 responses, 4 (29%) ranked the program very good; 7 (50%) good; 2 (14%) neither good nor poor; 0 (0%) poor and 1 (7%) very poor.
- The overwhelming majority (87%) of responses to the 9 specific questions registered in the agree/strongly agree, further indicting student fulfillment with the program. The SLOs and their subjects ranked from highest to lowest are:
  
  (4.50) Understanding of media history.  
  Communicate messages across variety of media platforms.
Edit my own creative work.
(4.43) Understanding of principles, laws and regulations that govern media
(4.29) Challenged to think creatively and critically
Diversity
(4.21) Concepts and theories for design, writing, production and management
(4.07) Prepared with tools and technologies for chosen media profession

The means suggest that the program is fulfilling its SLOs and providing a positive, balanced educational experience that prepares RTVF majors for their career paths. Perhaps one of the most concerning and curious findings is that the lowest score is in “preparedness” for media profession.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Faculty will continue to scrutinize and interpret the findings, addressing both strengths and weaknesses of the RTVF program as identified by student responses. While any feedback is helpful in some way, 14 is a minimal number of responses. We would like to increase the participation in the survey, and will continue to explore possibilities such as making the survey mandatory or briefly using class time for student to complete the questionnaire. We will also re-evaluate the assessment method: 1) revise questions to be more specific, separating creative and critical, writing and production. 2) Design an alumni survey to supplement existing methods and to measure professional placement and preparation. As previously mentioned, the development of the Visual Media track is in large part an action, improvement and direction rooted in student feedback and comments during assessment.

Additional Comments
The findings of both assessment methods indicate that the RTVF program is consistently preparing students well not only for the internship experience, but professional careers. The development and utilization of alumni survey could further complement these methods.

Assessment Method 2: Internship evaluations
Assessment Method Description
Upon completion of their coursework, RTVF majors are required to engage in an internship. Upon completion of the semester long internship, student performance is evaluated by their internship supervisor. The evaluations include a “satisfactory/unsatisfactory” dichotomy; and an excellent, good, average, below average, poor rating in three categories: writing, production and oral communication.

Findings
Our majors consistently receive high marks in all capacities of their diverse internships. Of 67 students, more than 80% receive Excellent or Good
ratings in all three categories: writing, oral communication and production skills. Approximately 8% are rated Average. No students have been “unsatisfactory,” Below Average or Poor.

How did you use findings for improvement?
The internship evaluations provide a highly relevant measure of student professional preparedness as the assignment is often their initial step in their professional path of pursuit. They also provide us with direct measure of student preparedness on multiple levels and SLOs. We will continue to rely on professional feedback to improve our approach to student preparedness for professional careers. We will also try to expand the feedback. More written comments from internship supervisors would be helpful, and provide context of each student’s internship experience, and perspective on how we are preparing students. We will encourage, if not require, that supervisors provide some written summary as well as the rankings of student skills and performance. Coursework, projects, emphases and assignments can be tailored to weaknesses or industry changes that are identified by internship supervisors.

Additional Comments
The findings of both assessment methods indicate that the RTVF program is consistently preparing students well not only for the internship experience, but professional careers. The development and utilization of alumni survey could further complement these methods.