

School of Media & Strategic Communications
2024-2025 ASSESSMENT PLAN

Submitted by:

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Approved by:

The faculty of the School of Media & Strategic Communications, **DATE**

SMSC Degree Programs Assessed:

- Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Journalism
- Bachelor of Science in Multimedia Journalism
- Bachelor of Arts in Sports Media
- Bachelor of Science in Sports Media
- Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication, Advertising and Public Relations
- Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication, Social Media
- Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication, Sports Communication
- Bachelor of Science in Strategic Communication, Advertising and Public Relations
- Bachelor of Science in Strategic Communication, Social Media
- Bachelor of Science in Strategic Communication, Sports Communication

SCHOOL OF MEDIA & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

SMSC Mission Statement:

The School of Media & Strategic Communications (SMSC) at Oklahoma State University has a proud tradition of preparing students for successful careers and providing them with a well-rounded foundation of skills and appreciation for the importance of mass communication in a **global** society. We are proud of what we have accomplished and of what we will accomplish in the future.

- To provide thorough, broadly-based professional education for the mass media professions

- To encourage liberal and cultural background in the arts, literature, languages, and social, biological and physical sciences
- To promote scholarly research and professional performance
- To provide media leadership and assistance in extension and public service through high school and college educators and professional communication associations
- To emphasize high standards of ethics and responsibility in mass communication

Accreditation

The School of Media & Strategic Communications at OSU has been continuously accredited through the Accrediting Council on Education and in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) since 1928. Accreditation provides a strong foundation of assurance that the program is properly administered, that the curriculum is relevant and valuable, and that faculty have significant professional expertise upon which to base their instruction. Further, accreditation also assures students, parents, faculty and alumni that degrees awarded from SMSC are of the highest value to the recipient and the public.

Accrediting Standards, ACEJMC:

The Accrediting Council on Education and in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) recognizes that each institution has its unique situation regarding cultural, social and religious context; mission; and resources. Thus, it does not define specific curricula, courses or methods of instruction. ACEJMC judges programs against the objectives that units and institutions set for themselves and against the standards that the Council sets forth for preparing students for professional careers. The following standards are considered for accreditation:

1. **Mission, Governance, and Administration:** The policies and practices of the unit endure that it has a well-lead, effective and fairly-administered working and learning environment.
2. **Curriculum and Instruction:** the unit provides a curriculum and instruction, whether on-site or online, that enables students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse domestic and global society.
3. **Assessment of Learning Outcomes:** The unit regularly assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures that engage communication professionals and annually “closes the loop” to make tangible improvements to curriculum and instruction.
4. **Diversity and Inclusiveness:** The unit demonstrates it has a diverse and inclusive program that embodies domestic and global diversity and empowers that traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, ability, and sexual orientation.
5. **Faculty:** The unit hires, supports, and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit’s mission. It supports

faculty as they contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that benefits the disciplines and society.

6. **Student Services:** The unit provides students with the support and services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their program of study.
7. **Resources, Facilities and Equipment:** The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.
8. **Professional and Public Service:** The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill obligations to its community, alumni and the public.

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Introduction:

The School of Media & Strategic Communications student learning goals are in line with the 10 professional values and competencies as suggested by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). These values align with SMSC's eight-learning outcomes titled the O-State 8.

Student Learning Mission:

To educate future leaders in media and strategic communication from Oklahoma, the nation and globally to be responsible and effective communicators who facilitate and promote participation in a democratic society through excellent practice, ethical behavior, a critical stance, and embracing change through lifelong learning. Oklahoma State University, School of Media & Strategic Communications will do this by promoting:

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Global Awareness
- Appreciation for the Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
- Adaptability
- Problem Solving Skills
- Diversity
- Leadership
- Community Involvement

AECJMC Professional Values and Competencies:

The Accrediting Council on Education and in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of students' particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

1. Understand and apply the principles of laws and freedom of speech and press in a global context and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that ensures an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;
4. Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
5. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
7. Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communication professions in which they work;
8. Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
9. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
10. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Student Learning Outcomes - The "O-State 8":

1. Students demonstrate understanding of the relevant constitutional freedoms, legal issues and ethical principles in mass communication.
2. Students demonstrate understanding of the relevance of diversity in mass communication.
3. Students demonstrate understanding of the history and social role of mass communication.
4. Students demonstrate critical, creative and individual thinking.
5. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relevant theories and concepts in mass communication.
6. Students demonstrate an understanding of the methods and techniques of research, information gathering.
7. Students demonstrate appropriate writing, editing and production techniques.
8. Students demonstrate an understanding of relevant planning and management methods in media and strategic communication.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT MEASURES

Direct Measure #1: Core Competencies Test

To measure student learning outcomes in core curriculum of all degree programs in SMSC, a test was developed to be administered to all incoming sophomores taking SC 2003, Media Style & Structure, and to outgoing/graduating seniors in the capstone courses.

The test includes 50 multiple-choice questions grouped into categories based on the professional values and competencies required by the ACEJMC and the O-State 8 learning outcomes. The questions and learning outcomes covered on this test will be covered in the following five core courses required by all SMSC students:

- MC 1143: Media in a Diverse Society
- MC 2003: Mass Media Style & Structure
- MC 2023/SC 2023: Electronic Media
- MC 4143: Ethics and Issues in Mass Communication
- MC 4163: Mass Communication Law

The percentage of the two groups answering each of the 50 questions correctly will be computed. Additionally, the percentage of the two groups answering each question correctly in each category and comparison results for each competency will be calculated.

The purpose of the Core Competencies Test is to establish a reasonable benchmark for student achievement of the different areas by the time students graduate. In addition, the test will determine whether (and by what percentage) the outgoing/graduating seniors score higher on average than the incoming/sophomore group.

SMSC began administering the Core Competencies Test during the 2016-2017 academic year. Analysis will be conducted on an academic calendar basis, and results will be compared longitudinally. The following competency categories and learning outcomes will be assessed:

Competency Categories:

- Truth, accuracy and fairness
- Freedom of the speech and the press
- Ethical ways of thinking
- History and role of media in society
- Diversity of audiences in a global age
- Application of theories
- Understand data and statistics
- Understanding planning and management methods

“O-State 8” Learning Outcomes Addressed:

- (#1) Students demonstrate understanding of the relevant constitutional freedoms, legal issues and ethical principles in mass communication.
- (#2) Students demonstrate understanding of the relevance of diversity in mass communication.
- (#3) Students demonstrate understanding of the history and social role of mass communication.
- (#5) Students demonstrate an understanding of the relevant theories and concepts of mass communication.
- (#8) Students demonstrate an understanding of relevant planning and management methods in media and strategic communication.

Direct Measure #2: Capstone Portfolio

SMSC offers a Capstone Course for all Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degree options: Multimedia Journalism (MMJ), Sports Media (SPM) and Strategic Communication (SPM). Students in each degree sequence submit the portfolio to the capstone professor for review and evaluation during their capstone course. The portfolio artifacts of graduated students will be used to assess the learning outcomes. The links to the graduated students' digital portfolios will be compiled in a spreadsheet. Using online randomizing tools, 15 portfolios from each degree sequence will be selected and sent to 3 external reviewers. Each professional will review 5 graduated student portfolios. These media and strategic communication professionals will be asked to assess the portfolios based on the assessment rubric.

The following “O-State 8” Learning Objective will be measured:

- (#4) Students demonstrate critical, creative and individual thinking.
- (#6) Students demonstrate an understanding of the methods and techniques of research, information and news gathering.
- (#7) Students demonstrate appropriate writing, editing and production techniques.

The assessment values are the same for all learning outcomes. The following Likert scale will be used to assess the learning outcomes:

- 1 = No or Poor representation of learning outcomes
- 2 = Somewhat poor representation of learning outcomes
- 3 = Average representation of learning outcomes
- 4 = Good representation of learning outcomes
- 5 = Outstanding representation of learning outcomes

Indirect Measure #1 Internship Evaluation

SMSC students are strongly encouraged to earn 3 hours of credit through professional internship. As part of their internship process, students submit internship artifacts to their digital portfolios, keep a weekly journal of professional activities, and compile a summary experience report.

Students and internship supervisors complete an evaluation form that includes assessment of ACEJMC's 8 values and competencies.

Students are asked to rate their internship experience within the context of the learning outcomes/competencies (listed below) using the scale (shown below) by indicating the degree to which they believe they were able to do the following during of the internship ("I can do XXX").

The following learning outcomes/competencies will be assessed by this measure:

1. Understands the tools and technology required to get assigned tasks completed.
2. Practices professional and ethical principles.
3. Demonstrates an understanding of the role of the profession in society.
4. Demonstrates respect for colleagues of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
5. Presents data, texts, and images in a professional manner.
6. Writes correctly and clearly.
7. Critically evaluates their own work and others' work to ensure quality.
8. Conducts research and demonstrates the ability to evaluate information.
9. Solves problems creatively and resourcefully.

The following Likert scale will be used to assess the learning outcomes:

- 1 = No or Poor representation of learning outcomes
- 2 = Somewhat poor representation of learning outcomes
- 3 = Average representation of learning outcomes
- 4 = Good representation of learning outcomes
- 5 = Outstanding representation of learning outcomes

Indirect Measure #2: Alumni Survey

The purpose of the survey is to examine recent graduates' perceptions of how well SMSC is preparing graduates for today's jobs in communications. The survey will be disseminated to all SMSC recent graduates beginning in Fall 2025. Having just entered the job market, these graduates will have the most recent recollections of what they were taught while attending OSU.

Indirect Measure #3: Senior Exit Interviews

SMSC graduating seniors will be offered the opportunity to visit with the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies at the end of the spring semester. Embedded in this discussion are direct questions concerning the learning outcomes, in which students are asked to rate their perceptions of how they might be able to discuss each topic. Students from each degree sequence will be randomly selected and asked to participate in the interviews. Although participation is not required, the interviews provide good representation of students and offer qualitative insight into their perceptions of their educational experience is SMSC.

ANALYSIS AND USE OF RESULTS

Upon completion of the yearly Assessment Report, trends in the assessment will be investigated by the SMSC Curriculum Committee. Based on trends in the data, proposals for adjustments to the curriculum will be made by the curriculum committee. Annual Assessment Report results and recommendations will be presented to the SMSC faculty at a faculty meeting. When appropriate, votes to curriculum changes will be sought. Additionally, the Assessment Report will be submitted to the College of Arts & Sciences at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, longitudinal results will provide a foundation to the assessment report provided to ACEJMC for national accreditation.

The current plan is an update of past successful assessment methods. SMSC uses the assessment tools to evaluate current learning outcomes and to make curricular adjustments based on feedback from SMSC students, alumni and professionals.