

| Learning Outcomes | Related Courses |
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| 1. Analyze communication interactions which take place in our society. | COM 206, 211, 225, 235, 245, 285, 286, 287 |
| 2. Effectively communicate with others in interpersonal, small group and public speaking situations. | COM 206, 211, 225, 235, 285, 287 |
| 3. Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, evaluate and apply basic communication theories. | COM 206, 211, 212, 225, 235, 245, 275, 286, 287 |
| 4. Examine past and present practices of media operations, analyze media messages and effect the impact of mass media on individuals and society. | COM 201, 290 JOU 101, 102 |
| 5. Lay out communication courses commensurate with freshman/sophomore courses leading to a baccalaureate degree at four-year institutions. | COM 201, 206, 211, 225 |

III. **Assessment Method(s):** A measurable indicator of success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s). The methodology should be both reliable and valid. Please describe in detail.

- a. **Formative Assessment Method(s) and Description:** a measurable indicator of student in-progress success in attaining the stated learning outcome(s).

Through an interdisciplinary effort led by one of the Communication Arts faculty members, exercises were created to address conceptual content coverage and application in the Interpersonal Communication (COM 206) course. This workbook is used in all COM 206 course sections. The exercises provide uniformity and consistency of content coverage and application. Students receive feedback related to skill application from faculty and peers.

A similar course guide and workbook has been being developed for the Effective Speaking course (COM 211). This workbook provides consistency in course assignments, assignment weight, examinations, feedback tools, course expectations and requirements. Starting Winter 1999 all COM 211 courses have taken classes in a fully equipped classroom located in the Center for Interactive Learning (CIL). This change has enhanced both the consistency of course content delivery and the faculty-to-student ratio. In this new format competencies are standardized because outcomes, based on competencies, have been standardized.

Formative assessment in COM 211 is available in a variety of forms. From the faculty member, students receive oral and written comments relating to their public

speaking competence using a departmental assessment tool. From peers, students receive feedback regarding their speaking strengths and limitations. Students also complete a self-assessment of their public speaking skills based on videotape of their presentation. Greater inter-rater assessment reliability is anticipated due to the common assessment critique sheets being implemented.

Communication majors have on-going contact with faculty in the department. Each student is provided with a list of faculty and each faculty member's area of expertise. Students are encouraged to contact a specific faculty member when the need arises or if they wish to discuss career opportunities.

Four communication courses represent a core for COM majors, including: COM 206, Interpersonal Communication; COM 201, Mass Communication; COM 211, Public Speaking; and COM 225, Small Group Communication. COM majors are required to enroll in these four courses in addition to other COM courses. Each core course requires at least one written assignment that demonstrates the competencies for each course. These four courses are prerequisites to the summative capstone course. In addition, each core course syllabus explains that COM majors are required to maintain a portfolio containing a sample piece of writing from each of the core courses to be used in the summative capstone course.

- b. Summative Assessment Method(s) and Description: a measurable indicator of end-of-program success in attaining the stated program learning outcome(s).

COM majors are required to enroll in COM 278 (Communication Capstone), a one-credit hour independent study class. The student works with a faculty member on an individual basis and develops a portfolio which demonstrates communication competency through written and/or oral means. Audio and/or videotapes can be used, although students usually use written means of demonstrating their level of competency. The capstone course was piloted during the spring of 1994. The portfolio includes: a written, audio tape, or video tape demonstration of communication competencies from COM 201, 206, 211, 225, and one other Communication course; an introduction to the portfolio that explains why the student chose Communication as a major and what they feel is the most important item they learned from the Communication courses; a paragraph that introduces and explains each of the pieces in the portfolio; and a closing essay that provides some conclusions for the reader. The Independent Study Portfolio is graded based on the quality of the demonstration of competencies, the introductions, and the completeness of the portfolio.

Informal feedback is received from faculty at Wright State University and University of Dayton regarding Sinclair Community College graduate performance. Informal feedback is also received from SCC faculty about the performance of students who have taken communication classes.

Articulation agreements for the Communication Arts program are in place with Wright State University, University of Dayton and Central State University.

- IV. **Results:** A description of the actual results of overall student performance gathered from the summative assessment(s). (see III.b.)

Feedback received from Wright State University faculty is excellent. Wright State University and University of Dayton willingly accept any COM course from Sinclair due to the recognition of the high quality program and level of previous student transfers to Wright State University and University of Dayton. Students do not report difficulty transferring to either institution.

Information about transfer students indicates that students who major in Communication Arts do as well or better than their counterparts in four-year institutions.

To date, student acceptance of the capstone course is very positive. The faculty have noted that the capstone course allows students to demonstrate depth in competency levels but it has been difficult to determine the breadth of their competency. Faculty are currently exploring ways that might be used to assess the breadth of student competency level. The capstone course has afforded the department an opportunity to check the instructional consistency across all levels of faculty in the department. Changes in the COM 211 and COM 206 courses have come in large part due to weaknesses identified through the summative assessment process.

- V. **Analysis/Actions:** From analysis of your summative assessment results, do you plan to or have you made any adjustments to your program learning outcomes, methodologies, curriculum, etc.? If yes, describe. If no, explain.

The Communication Arts Department developed the Oral Communication Skills Checklist that has been adopted by faculty for use across the institution to assess oral communication skills in any class.

The faculty are considering the possibility of including an interview in the summative capstone course whereby the student would be interviewed by the faculty, taped and then assessed.

Faculty are exploring means to assess the breadth of COM majors' communication skills at the conclusion of their program.

- VI. **General Education:** A description of where and how within the major the three primary general education outcomes* (communication, thinking, values/citizenship/community) are assessed.

- a. Where within the major do you assess written communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

The ability to communicate in a written form is a key skill for a Communication Arts major. All courses included written components including, workbook applications, self-reflection assignments, speech outlines, and research papers. Each instructor works to provide meaningful feedback to students regarding the effectiveness of their written work. While all instructors are encouraged to use the General Education writing checklist, no one tool is mandated throughout the department.

Generally first quarter student writing competency varies broadly. All students are currently required to complete successfully a largely text based portfolio in order to complete their degree. While end of program competence varies the department is generally satisfied with the degree of writing competence exhibited.

- b. Where within the major do you assess oral communication? Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Communication skills are the central focus of the Communication Arts program thus all courses emphasize the development of communication skills. Student skills are assessed through speeches, role-plays, group presentations and interviews. A few majors were interviewed as part of a General Education assessment project. The students were found to be highly competent with respect to thinking and communication skills in the interview situation.

- c. Where within the major do you assess thinking? Thinking might include inventing new problems, seeing relationships and/or implications, respecting other approaches, demonstrating clarity and/or integrity, or recognizing assumptions. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Critical thinking is integrated into every COM class as a result of writing exercises which emphasize the higher order thinking skills in Bloom's cognitive domain. Thinking skills are emphasized through group problem solving, position papers, persuasive speeches, and critical listening practice. Again, the General Education assessment interview found communication majors exhibited competent thinking skills.

- d. Where within the major do you assess values/citizenship/community? These activities might include behaviors, perspective, awareness, responsibility, teamwork, ethical/professional standards, service learning or community participation. Describe the assessment method(s) used. Describe assessment results if available.

Values/citizenship is incorporated throughout the curriculum. For example, COM 211 and COM 206 have components which deal with values/citizenship. There are discussions about the "we" and not "me" focus, empathy/sympathy, persuasion, respect, ethics etc. Inherent in an "other orientation" to communication are considerations for values and citizenship.

- * Note: The oral communication checklist and the written communication checklist developed by the General Education Committee were adopted for college-wide use during the 1997-98 academic year by Academic Council. Thinking Guidelines developed by the General Education Committee are being piloted by faculty during the 1998-99 academic year.