

# **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**®

Department of Journalism  
and Strategic Media

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*The University of Memphis is an Equal  
Opportunity/Affirmative Action University. It  
is committed to education of a non-racially  
identifiable student body.*

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# Goals of Journalism & Strategic Media

The University of Memphis identifies its mission as follows:

*We provide the highest quality education by focusing on research and service benefiting local and global communities.*

As one of six units in the College of Communication and Fine Art, Journalism & Strategic Media follows CCFA's vision of being a rich and dynamic environment where creativity, culture and ideas flourish. Reflecting the ideals of the University and the College, Journalism & Strategic Media's mission is as follows:

*The University of Memphis Department of Journalism & Strategic Media is a learner-centered, professional program providing high-quality educational experiences while pursuing new knowledge through research, professional outreach and engaged scholarship.*

Journalism & Strategic Media centers research, creativity, professionalism, service and culture in its courses to meet its mission and the mission of the College and University.

All Journalism & Strategic Media courses are subject to the guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), which accredits the University of Memphis. The undergraduate majors and concentrations in Journalism & Strategic Media are also accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) and are subject to its guidelines. The public relations major is certified by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and is subject to its guidelines. All requirements and programs are subject to the University of Memphis Board of Trustees and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC).

## University of Memphis Assessment Requirements

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, & Academic Assessment coordinates the assessment and program review process at the University of Memphis. Major activities include administration of the State of Tennessee's higher education assessment program (quality assurance funding), senior testing of general education and the major, surveys of alumni and students, and program peer review. The office functions as the liaison to the SACSCOC and conducts all activities associated with regional accreditation. Programs that conduct more extensive testing, including the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media, provide data when necessary to the office for its various reports and tracking requirements.

## Purposes for Assessment

The goals of assessment in Journalism & Strategic Media are:

- To evaluate student learning department-wide and on an academic program-specific basis.
- To ensure a systematic method of gathering data that enables evaluation on a systematic basis.
- To offer students and alumni regular, accessible vehicles for feedback and commentary.
- To enable faculty to assess effectiveness of curriculum and other instructional methods.
- To guide the creation and adjustment of curriculum.
- To comply with mandates from THEC, SACSCOC, ACEJMC and PRSA.

# Student Learning Outcomes

In line with its mission and ACEJMC guidelines, Journalism & Strategic Media has adopted ACEJMC's professional values and competencies as its learning outcomes.

## **All undergraduate Journalism & Strategic Media graduates should be able to:**

1. Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and in the United States.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
3. Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, 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 evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications 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.

## **Assessment of Learning Outcomes**

Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria guide assessment of student learning:

- **Awareness:** Familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- **Understanding:** Assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- **Application:** Competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

## **Student learning is evaluated to:**

- Develop curriculum, improve teaching, and enhance student learning.
- Document what students have learned.
- Provide accountability.

# Curriculum Map

This curriculum map indicates which courses in the individual programs of study meet the 10 ACEJMC professional values and competencies. Numbers reference PVCs stated on page 4.

## Journalism & Strategic Media Core

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 1700	█	█	█			█				
JRSM 1750										
JRSM 2121										
JRSM 4700	█	█								
<i>And one of these</i>										
JRSM 4930	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
JRSM 4940	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

**Values elective:** Select two of these

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 4702	█	█	█			█	█			
JRSM 4704	█	█	█			█	█			
JRSM 4708	█	█	█			█	█			
JRSM 4716	█	█	█			█	█			
JRSM 4720	█	█	█			█	█			
JRSM 4910*	█	█	█		█	█	█			█
PBRL 4706*		█	█		█	█	█			█

\* Public Relations majors are required to take JRSM 4910 and PBRL 4706 in the Values Elective category.

## Advertising

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
ADVR 3300	█	█	█			█	█			
ADVR 3310	█	█	█	█	█	█			█	█
ADVR 3320	█	█	█		█	█			█	
ADVR 3321	█	█	█	█	█	█			█	█
ADVR 3324	█	█	█	█	█	█			█	█
ADVR 3330	█	█	█			█		█		█
ADVR 4326	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
ADVR 4527	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
ADVR 4328	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
JRSM 3905		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

## Broadcast Journalism

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 1800	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JRSM 3900	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 3526	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 3629	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4629	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4639	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4998	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4124	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4150	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4160	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4165	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4170	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4180	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4185	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4190	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4530	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 4535	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4140	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4500	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4526	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4550	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4600	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4920	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

## Creative Mass Media

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 3900	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
ADVR 3321	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
ADVR 3324	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
JOUR 3526	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4500	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4900	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
ADVR 4328	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4140	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4220	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4526	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4550	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4560	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4600	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
CRMM 4920	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

## Journalism

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 3900										
JOUR 3120										
JOUR 3526										
JOUR 4998										
JOUR 4124										
JOUR 4150										
JOUR 4160										
JOUR 4165										
JOUR 4170										
JOUR 4180										
JOUR 4185										
JOUR 4190										
JOUR 4155										
JOUR 4530										
JOUR 4535										
CRMM 4140										
CRMM 4500										
CRMM 4526										
CRMM 4550										
CRMM 4920										

## Public Relations

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JOUR 3526										
JRSM 3905										
PBRL 3400										
PBRL 3421										
PBRL 3431										
PBRL 4440										
PBRL 4301										
PBRL 4421										
PBRL 4430										
PBRL 4431										
PBRL 4432										
ADVR 3300										
ADVR 3310										
ADVR 3320										
ADVR 3330										
CRMM 4600										
CRMM 4920										
PBRL 3441										
PBRL 4450										

## Sports Media

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JRSM 3900										
JOUR 3120										
JOUR 3526										
JOUR 4150										
JOUR 4155										
JOUR 4535										
PBRL 3400										
PBRL 3421										

## Strategic Social Media

	1. Law	2. History	3. Diversity	4. Visuals	5. Writing	6. Ethics	7. Research	8. Stats	9. Evaluate	10. Tech
JOUR 3526										
JRSM 3905										
PBRL 3400										
PBRL 3421										
PBRL 3431										
PBRL 3441										
PBRL 4450										
ADVR 3324										
ADVR 3330										



# Assessment Measures

ACEJMC articulated the importance of using multiple measures in its “Guide to Assessment of Student Learning in Journalism and Mass Communications.” The Council also indicated at the beginning of that document that it “seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation.” Additionally, both direct and indirect measures were recommended for programs to use in their analysis of effectiveness. A direct measure is based on a sample of actual student work, including reports, exams, demonstrations, performances and completed works. An indirect measure is based upon a report of perceived student learning. The reports can come from many perspectives, including students, faculty, internship supervisors, transfer institutions, and employers. Thus, we have outlined our measures below:

## Direct Measures

### Capstone projects

Students in the capstone courses (ADVR 4328, CRMM 4900, JOUR 4998, PBRL 4440, PBRL 4450) complete a substantial final project reflecting the sum of their work in the program. These projects are reviewed by outside professionals and alumni working in the profession for direct assessment of five learning outcomes (PVCs 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10). For these, reviewers are asked to assess the quality of work as it relates to the outcome. Assessments are done on a scale of 1-5 with a goal of 85% of students scoring a 3 or better.

### Student portfolios

Students are required to prepare a portfolio of their best work from courses, internships, student media, and freelance work as part of their studies. Portfolios encompass a range of work in a variety of formats, including newswriting, print designs, audio clips, videos, infographics, media plans, media kits, and campaigns.

Student portfolios are used to satisfy the senior-level review and major field test as required by THEC. To satisfy these requirements, all portfolios must be reviewed by an external audience. We choose a diverse group of alumni and professionals to review the final portfolios in every program of study. A standardized department-wide rubric is used to evaluate portfolios, both for a grade in courses and for external reviewers. The rubric used for evaluation is based on what employers say they expect from our graduates entering the job market along with an opportunity for reviewers to give us qualitative feedback on the quality of work. The rubric scores students out of 30 with a goal of 85% of students scoring a 21 or better.

### Aggregate internship evaluations

All students in Journalism and Strategic Media are required to complete one or more work experiences before graduation. A majority of students pursue the external internship option; however, a portion choose internal experiences in student media. The Internship and Career Services Coordinator gathers systematic feedback from each professional supervisor or student media adviser and analyzes the evaluations on an aggregate basis to determine the level of student preparedness and performance in professional work settings. Supervisors are asked to evaluate interns on five measures of career readiness as well as their ethical conduct in the profession (PVC 6). Additional qualitative feedback from supervisors is used as further suggestions for curricular and programmatic changes.

### **Course-embedded assessments**

Student coursework is used to satisfy direct assessment of the remaining PVCs. A series of embedded questions in the final exam of JRSM 4700, Media Law, assesses mastery of the law student learning outcome (PVC 1). The goal is for 85% of students to score a 7 or better on the 10-item series.

Similarly, a series of embedded questions in the final exams of JRSM 4702, Media, Diversity and Society, and PBRL 4706, Public Relations Ethics and Advocacy, assesses mastery of the history student learning outcome (PVC 2). The goal is for 85% of students to score a 7 or better on the 10-item series.

Final projects in JOUR 3526, Multimedia Storytelling (Journalism major and concentrations, Public Relations major and concentration) and ADVR 3324 (Advertising major) are used to assess the visuals student learning outcome (PVC 4). These projects are reviewed by outside professionals and alumni working in the profession. Reviewers are asked to assess the quality of work as it relates to the outcome. Assessments are done on a scale of 1-5 with a goal of 85% of students scoring a 3 or better.

An examination of scores on the midterm and final exam of JRSM 2121, Media Writing II, assesses the evaluation student learning outcome (PVC 9). The tests examine students' ability to edit for grammar, style and fairness. The goal is for 85% of students to earn passing scores on the midterm and the final.

### **Indirect Measures**

#### **Internship and practicum reports**

Students completing an academic internship or practicum are required to write an extensive report about their experiences that includes a critical evaluation of their undergraduate courses and preparation for work. These insights are summarized in the annual assessment report.

#### **Exit surveys**

Each spring, a link to an online exit survey is sent to students enrolled in the capstone classes that academic term. Typically, the survey has about a 40 percent response rate. Students are asked to rate their educational experience in Journalism & Strategic Media. Questions include how students perceive their career preparedness, our extracurricular programs, what skills they would like to have included in the curriculum, and about their employment prospects. Data is reviewed each fall by the faculty.

#### **Alumni surveys**

Journalism and Strategic Media surveys its graduates every three years asking graduates about the quality of their educational experience at the University and what they are now doing. This survey helps to calculate placement rates and gives alumni an opportunity to share insights about skills in our curriculum.

#### **Career placement**

Journalism and Strategic Media evaluates its effectiveness by its annual job placement statistics. Job placement data is collected annually in the senior exiting survey and every three years in the alumni survey.

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# Timeline

## August

- Report findings to Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, & Academic Assessment as required (Assistant Chair).
- Report findings from previous assessment to full faculty at back-to-school faculty meeting (Assistant Chair).

## September

- Adjust curriculum for upcoming catalog, if needed (Curriculum & Assessment Committee).

## December

- Collect data from fall courses (Curriculum & Assessment Committee).

## April

- Send Exit Survey to students in capstone courses (Assistant Chair & Capstone Instructors).
- Collect data from spring courses (Curriculum & Assessment Committee).

## June

- Review career placement statistics from senior surveys (Curriculum & Assessment Committee).
- Every three years, send alumni survey to graduates from previous six years (Curriculum & Assessment Committee).

# Review Schedule

## Year 1 (Odd AY)

PVCs: 1, 5, 7, 8, 10.

## Year 2 (Even AY)

PVCs: 2, 3, 4, 6, 9.

## Oversight

Journalism & Strategic Media has a joint committee for Curriculum and Assessment made up of the coordinators for each academic program. The assistant department chair leads the committee. The assistant department chair works with the University's Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, & Academic Assessment to coordinate reporting to general accreditors. The committee convenes as needed to process and review data and prepare reports to faculty and the University as well as to implement appropriate curricular change.

## Use of Information/Closing the Loop

All assessment data is be shared with faculty in an aggregate report every fall at the August faculty retreat. Coordinators for each program meet with faculty in their programs to discuss how to adjust courses and curriculum based on the assessment findings. Small adjustments can be made immediately for the upcoming academic year. If any major curricular change is needed, the curriculum committee reviews the proposed changes and moved it toward approval by the Department, College and University.

The committee chair shares data with the University's Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation, & Academic Assessment for reporting to THEC and SACSCOC.