

# Program Assessment Plan

## American University

### Academic Program: SOC: Journalism & Public Affairs - MA

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#### Learning Outcome: Define Ethical Issues

Define key ethical issues and legal guidelines facing journalists.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011

**Start Date:** 06/30/2010

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
Portfolios of student work including news, feature and investigative projects in digital, video, audio, broadcast, multimedia and print formats. (Direct) This direct measure has not yet been implemented due to resource issues (technology, faculty time and coordinating outside reviewers). <b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project	Students must demonstrate the outcomes that are relevant to each particular piece in the portfolio.	Annual or every two years.	Yes
Comprehensive Exams (Direct). Day-long exams include two components: a news-writing skills test (Outcomes 3, 4, 5) and two essays on issues involving journalism ethics and law (Outcomes 1 and 2). Each exam is reviewed by at least two faculty members. <b>Measure Type:</b> Quiz/ Exam	All students must pass the comps to get their degree.	Annual.	Yes
Capstone Projects--Seminar in Public Affairs and Seminar in Journalism, TV Documentary. <b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project	All students must complete a capstone project with a grade of B or better.	Annual--Capstones are reviewed by the faculty member teaching these seminar courses and discussed in curriculum/ syllabus review.	Yes
Course Assignments (Direct). <b>Measure Type:</b> Written Assignment	Grades of B or higher on most tests and assignments.	For each course -- reviewed by division faculty and discussed in syllabus and curriculum reviews.	Yes
Awards -- The Journalism Division looks to several awards, both internal and external, as measures of the achievement of outcomes. <b>Measure Type:</b> Other	Only high achieving students get awards.	Annual--Assessment is determined by both the number of awards received by students but also by the quality of the submissions.	Yes
Graduating Student Survey--assessment of student perceptions in achieving outcomes (Indirect). <b>Measure Type:</b> Survey	On average students will rate their academic career at least "very good" or "excellent."	Annual. The survey has been administered annually since 2005 to all graduating students. The results are tabulated and reviewed by the Associate Dean and Division Director.	Yes
Surveys among internship supervisors (Indirect). Internship supervisors (i.e. employers) currently evaluate students. This evaluation is reviewed by the faculty member	On average, internship supervisors will rate students' performance "very good" or	Each semester.	Yes

Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
responsible for internships. A uniform rating/ evaluation form will be developed in 2009-10. This form will ensure that the ratings are directly related to the outcomes. <b>Measure Type:</b> Field Work/ Internship	"excellent" in all categories. This categories directly address the learning outcomes.		
A survey of 3-5 year alumni (Indirect). <b>Measure Type:</b> Alumni Feedback	On average, alumni will rate their academic career "very good" or "excellent."	Every five years -- to assess their transition into and preparedness for the profession. Alumni who have been working for several years should be better able to assess their education.	Yes
Faculty Retreat and Ad Hoc Curriculum/ Syllabus Reviews (Indirect). The Journalism Division monitors its curriculum and uses input from its faculty (many of whom are practicing professionals), adjunct faculties (who are all professionals), and alumni (including the Dean's Advisory Council--a group of high level alumni who are professionals in the field). <b>Measure Type:</b> Focus Group	To ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the profession.	No schedule identified.	Yes
Ad Hoc Research Studies -- SOC Image Study, Writing Programs Survey, Career Center Survey, Alumni Focus Groups, Alumni Survey (Indirect). Studies have been conducted through the Development Office and also in Research Methods classes. Two studies in particular --the Writing Study and the Career Center Survey -- provided useful data to evaluate student perceptions toward our program. <b>Measure Type:</b> Other	Surveys conducted occasionally to address specific issues.	Occasional.	Yes
Institutional research -- Student Evaluations of Teaching, Campus Climate Survey, Graduation Census, National Survey of Student Engagement (Indirect). The School of Communication and Journalism Division routinely analyze other data available in order to provide the background by which to understand more specific data. <b>Measure Type:</b> Survey	To add context for the evaluation of other data.	Annual.	Yes

**Learning Outcome: Describe Role of Media**

Describe the role and context of media in democracy and in global society, including the rapidly changing industry and the impact of emergent media.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011

**Start Date:** 06/30/2010

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
Portfolios of student work including news, feature and investigative projects in digital, video, audio, broadcast, multimedia and print formats. (Direct) This direct measure has not yet been implemented due to resource issues (technology, faculty time and coordinating outside reviewers).	Students must demonstrate the outcomes that are relevant to each particular piece in the portfolio.	Annual or every two years.	Yes

### Assessment Plan

Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
<b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project			
Comprehensive Exams (Direct). Day-long exams include two components: a news-writing skills test (Outcomes 3, 4, 5) and two essays on issues involving journalism ethics and law (Outcomes 1 and 2). Each exam is reviewed by at least two faculty members.	All students must pass the comps to get their degree.	Annual.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Quiz/ Exam			
Capstone Projects--Seminar in Public Affairs and Seminar in Journalism, TV Documentary.	All students must complete a capstone project with a grade of B or better.	Annual--Capstones are reviewed by the faculty member teaching these seminar courses and discussed in curriculum/ syllabus review.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project			
Course Assignments (Direct).	Grades of B or higher on most tests and assignments.	For each course -- reviewed by division faculty and discussed in syllabus and curriculum reviews.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Written Assignment			
Awards -- The Journalism Division looks to several awards, both internal and external, as measures of the achievement of outcomes.	Only high achieving students get awards.	Annual--Assessment is determined by both the number of awards received by students but also by the quality of the submissions.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Other			
Graduating Student Survey--assessment of student perceptions in achieving outcomes (Indirect).	On average students will rate their academic career at least "very good" or "excellent."	Annual. The survey has been administered annually since 2005 to all graduating students. The results are tabulated and reviewed by the Associate Dean and Division Director.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Survey			
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<b>Measure Type:</b> Field Work/ Internship			
A survey of 3-5 year alumni (Indirect).	On average, alumni will rate their academic career "very good" or "excellent."	Every five years -- to assess their transition into and preparedness for the profession. Alumni who have been working for several years should be better able to assess their education.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b> Alumni Feedback			
Faculty Retreat and Ad Hoc Curriculum/ Syllabus Reviews (Indirect). The Journalism Division monitors its curriculum and uses input from its faculty (many of whom are practicing professionals), adjunct faculties (who are all professionals), and alumni (including the Dean's Advisory Council--a group of high level alumni who are professionals in the field).	To ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the profession.	No schedule identified.	Yes
<b>Measure Type:</b>			

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Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
Focus Group			
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### Learning Outcome: Digital Skill Sets

Demonstrate multiple digital skill sets and apply them across varied platforms.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011

**Start Date:** 06/30/2010

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Comprehensive Exams (Direct). Day-long exams include two components: a news-writing skills test (Outcomes 3, 4, 5) and two essays on issues involving journalism ethics and law (Outcomes 1 and 2). Each exam is reviewed by at least two faculty members. <b>Measure Type:</b> Quiz/ Exam	All students must pass the comps to get their degree.	Annual.	Yes
Capstone Projects--Seminar in Public Affairs and Seminar in Journalism, TV Documentary. <b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project	All students must complete a capstone project with a grade of B or better.	Annual--Capstones are reviewed by the faculty member teaching these seminar courses and discussed in curriculum/ syllabus review.	Yes
Course Assignments (Direct). <b>Measure Type:</b> Written Assignment	Grades of B or higher on most tests and assignments.	For each course -- reviewed by division faculty and discussed in syllabus and curriculum reviews.	Yes

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Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
Awards -- The Journalism Division looks to several awards, both internal and external, as measures of the achievement of outcomes. <b>Measure Type:</b> Other	Only high achieving students get awards.	Annual--Assessment is determined by both the number of awards received by students but also by the quality of the submissions.	Yes
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**Learning Outcome: Publish Professional Quality Work**

Publish or air professional quality work in the news industry through internships and/ or a deadline-driven news outlet.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011

**Start Date:** 06/30/2010

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

<b>Assessment Plan</b>			
<b>Assessment Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Schedule/Cycle</b>	<b>Active</b>
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### Learning Outcome: Report Complete News Story

Report, write, and edit an accurate, balanced and complete news story in long-form print, online and radio style.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010

2010-2011

**Start Date:** 06/30/2010

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Assessment Plan			
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Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
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**Assessment Plan**

Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
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--the Writing Study and the Career Center Survey -- provided useful data to evaluate student perceptions toward our program.

**Measure Type:**

Other

<p>Institutional research -- Student Evaluations of Teaching, Campus Climate Survey, Graduation Census, National Survey of Student Engagement (Indirect). The School of Communication and Journalism Division routinely analyze other data available in order to provide the background by which to understand more specific data.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Survey</p>	<p>To add context for the evaluation of other data.</p>	<p>Annual.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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