

Campus Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Unit Name: Communication Assessment Summary Fall 2010-Spring 2011

What are the student learning outcomes in your unit?

The Communication Program has several primary student learning outcomes for majors in Communication:

-S121 Public Speaking is a campus-wide General Education foundational course requirement. The Student Outcomes for S121 (per the General Education committee) are to:

- demonstrate a clearly defined purpose through an effective delivery of oral presentations that manifest logical organization, proper grammar, appropriate word choices, and coherent sentence structure.
- present a central idea, clearly reasoned arguments, and an audience-centered perspective that takes account of communicative differences across cultures.
- engage in ethical practices that include citation of credible sources.
- demonstrate effective use of media and technologies that enhance the presentation.

-S122 Interpersonal Communication is a campus-wide General Education “Breadth-of Learning” course. The Student Outcomes for S122 (per the General Education committee) are to:

- Explain the Methods of Inquiry used by Social and Behavioral Scientists.
- Explain behavior using social or behavioral science theories and concepts.
- Explain the Factors that Influence How Different Societies Organize Themselves or How Individual Differences Influence Various Spheres of Human Activity

- Other Department of Communication Student Outcomes are - To use classroom study and Internship/ practicum experiences to:

- Understand rhetorical traditions and contemporary human communication processes toward the development of functional and effective communication.
- Acquire an ability to perform effectively within various communication contexts.
- Prepare for success in fulfilling careers that meet both personal and professional goals in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.
- Master the challenges of research, critical thinking, and preparation for possible graduate school entry in the Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) degree program at IU Northwest or in Masters programs at other universities.

Which Outcomes did you Assess this Academic Year?

All Outcomes were assessed.

- All S121 assessments of Student Outcomes were completed this year.
- All other Student and Department Outcomes (stated above) are in the process of being completed.

How did you assess their skills before, during and/or at the end of the semester/ academic year?

-S121 Public Speaking Student Outcomes – Were assessed through a massive data collection (1,800 speeches and completed evaluation forms) , analysis, and interpretation. The S121 assessment of all Student Outcomes was accepted by the Gen Edu Committee during Fall 2011. Separate, fuller PowerPoint presentation documents were submitted to the Gen Edu Committee and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

-S122 Interpersonal Communication Student Outcomes - We already submitted an initial plan for Assessment and we are Piloting the assessment plan Fall semester, 2011. We are holding faculty development sessions for Assessment with adjunct faculty at the end of Fall 2011. The actual S122 Assessment will take place during Spring 2011. It deals with assessing all Student Outcomes for S122 (stated above). The assessment involves specific content coverage of lecture/discussion material on social/behavioral Theory and Methods, a practical Exercise for students in social/behavioral methods, and students completing a sheet that will measure their learning of S122 student outcomes distributed with end-of-semester student evaluations. The data will be analyzed and reported to the Gen Edu committee during Summer 2012.

-General Dept. Outcomes - At the beginning, middle, or end of the semester, courses and co-curricular skills are assessed through oral and workshop presentations, project evaluations, written tests, analytical and response papers, journaling, grade distributions, GPA indices, student evaluations of teaching, individual and collaborative group peer evaluations, exit interviews, an exit examination from our Capstone S400 Course, as well as faculty and student observation of Senior Presentations. These are all considered in evaluating student learning outcomes.

Faculty submit Faculty Annual reports of their teaching, research, and service efforts also.

We will periodically complete another departmental self-study/external review that will enhance our ability to meet student needs. We also continuously examine program curriculum and determine the significance of certain academic emphases or major tracks to meet the changing face of the discipline as well as student needs and interests.

Please summarize the data you have collected this semester/academic year.

-S121 Public Speaking Student Outcomes: All student outcomes are being met in various degrees, per the data collected, analyzed, interpreted, and reported.

-S122 Interpersonal Communication Student Outcomes: This is pending data collection and analysis.

-General Dept. Outcomes: All departmental initiatives are progressing satisfactorily per plans and evaluations built into the academic infrastructure of the department, and as described above.

Research papers from the capstone course, Senior Projects, and exit examinations have been collected and discussed toward improvement, and continuous adjustments are being made accordingly.

There had been learning gaps when courses in the Major had been cancelled due to low enrollments. This has improved as we are allowed to run more courses for majors.

In Exit Interviews, student data reported students feeling disengaged. This is improving gradually as we have now spread more Advising to all full time faculty, revived the student group--Indiana University Northwest Communication Association (IUNCA), and more courses in the Major are running.

Please describe any programmatic changes you have made or are planning to make based on the data you have collected.

-S121 Public Speaking Assessment Changes – While students are meeting the Outcomes successfully, we are working on students holding both delivery and content effectiveness during persuasive speeches; clarify the order in which speeches are given--especially Special Occasion and ‘Other Speeches’), and whether or not there is grade inflation.

-S122 Interpersonal Communication Assessment Changes – Pending S122 Assessment Results at the end of Summer 2012

-General Dept. Assessment Changes

- Faculty members have developed foundational guidelines to promote consistency across multiple sections of our basic courses. We agreed that these need to be revised and we are doing so.
- We have defined new Emphasis Areas and are delivering courses based on the new academic Emphasis areas.
- We are replacing outgoing faculty positions aligned with the new Emphasis Areas.
- Work on Assessment initiatives described above is progressing.
- We will assess use of the book specifically designed, aligned with General Education outcomes and prepare to adjust it as needed.
- A Director has been named. The Director will have a two-year appointment, with the possibility of renewal or rotating to another faculty member.
- Faculty Development - As a result of the efforts mentioned earlier, more Faculty Development of part time and full time teachers is needed. Funding will be needed to support and sustain these efforts.

Data on Student Engagement shows slight improvement. We have addressed student Exit Interview data in several ways:

- Through more Advising to all full time faculty.
- Faculty who were administrators are returning to boost the department.
- Through reviving the student group, Indiana University Northwest Communication Association (IUNCA).