

Annual Departmental Report

Amended for 2020-2021 Academic Year to Accommodate and Reflect Adjustments due to Pandemic

*There are amended instructions throughout this document to reflect the special circumstances of this academic year (AY20-21) that you will find **red**. As an institution and as departments we have learned that we can use our creativity to deliver learning even in the most difficult of circumstances.*

Program Information

Program/Department: B.S. in Communications Media/Communications Media

Department Chair: Mary Baker

Department Assessment Committee Contact: Randy Howe

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research & Planning by June 1, 2021.

A. Departmental Special Section for AY2021

Department Lessons Learned and Accomplishments

In thinking through the academic year, report on how the department adapted to changes brought on by the pandemic. Reflect on actions that surprised you, on lessons learned that will help in the future, and major accomplishments.

Within the Communications Media major, Graphic Design, Photography, Professional Communication, and Theory classes adapted well to online, onsync, and hybrid modalities. The pandemic had a greater impact on the Theater and Technical Theater concentrations because indoor, in-person performances were not possible. Outdoor performances were considered before we decided video-based or online performances would be the safest option for this year. Likewise, the Film/Video concentration was more significantly impacted by the pandemic. It was necessary to develop safety protocols that restricted group production work as well as enact more stringent equipment checkout policies in order to allow time to sanitize each piece of equipment between student checkouts. Faculty and students found ways to navigate these challenges; however, we learned there were a few classes we could not run this year.

Our internship program also faced challenges brought on by the pandemic. While some sites converted to remote or hybrid internships, many sites stopped accepting interns. In spite of this, we were able to secure internship placements for 102 students across the Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 terms.

In terms of accomplishments, the Communications Media major finalized new Program Learning Outcomes in December 2020. During the Spring 2021 semester, each area within the major (six concentrations and Theory) drafted concentration Student Learning Outcomes. Additional accomplishments include *Our Reckoning*, the video-based collection of Theater performances in the Fall semester, which received award nominations in several categories from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, a team of over 20 students participated in the National Student Advertising Competition, and the department held Visions as an online event with a virtual alumni panel.

B. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

I. List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment.

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?
1.	Students should demonstrate proficiency in the core tools and skills of their discipline.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-sciences/communications-media-department	Bi-annual	Spring 2021
2.	Students should be able to apply aesthetic principles to their work by developing and defending a portfolio that demonstrates	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-	Bi-annual	Spring 2021

	craftship and meets professional standards for their discipline.	sciences/communications-media-department		
3.	Students should be able to explain how their work fits in the historical and theoretical context of their discipline.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-sciences/communications-media-department	TBD – please note SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.	N/A – SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.
4.	Students should apply core theoretical principles to the analysis and critique of media.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-sciences/communications-media-department	TBD – please note SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.	N/A – please note these SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.
5.	Students should recognize and apply ethical perspectives to their work.	https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-sciences/communications-media-department	TBD – please note SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.	N/A – please note these SLOs were updated in December 2020. Timing of assessment is in development.

II. PLO Assessment (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4 th year, 1 st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the “loop closed”?
1	Portfolio review with rubric.	4 th year	All	An average rating of “Acceptable” or higher.	All students must present a portfolio of their work and meet the target set for the PLO in order to be approved to register for their capstone course: COMM 4880 Internship. Students who do not meet the PLO target must revise their portfolio and repeat their portfolio review.
2	Portfolio review with rubric.	4 th year	All	An average rating of	All students must present a portfolio

				“Acceptable” or higher.	of their work and meet the target set for the PLO in order to be approved to register for their capstone course: COMM 4880 Internship. Students who do not meet the PLO target must revise their portfolio and repeat their portfolio review.

If applicable, use the space below to report on PLO assessment impacted by the move to remote learning.

In AY21, portfolio reviews were conducted virtually.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you “closing the loop”? Please reflect on changes that the department has had to engage in given changes to teaching modality and especially capstone experiences.

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
<p>Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)</p>	<p>All students are required to pass a portfolio defense prior to their capstone course.</p>
<p>Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)</p>	<p>Student portfolios are reviewed by two members of the department: a faculty member from the student’s concentration and the Internship Director.</p>
<p>What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)</p>	<p>Portfolio reviews provide important data used to revise and update the curriculum in all concentrations.</p> <p>In AY21, the Program Learning Outcomes for the Communications Media major were updated. In addition, new Student Learning Outcomes for each concentration were developed. In AY22, Communications Media will work to update the portfolio defense evaluation form and rubrics to align with updated PLOs and concentration SLOs.</p>

C. Assessment Plan for Program/Department

- I. Insert the program or department Assessment Plan
- II. Explain any changes in the assessment plan including new or revised PLOs, new assessments that the program/department plans to implement and new targets or goals set for student success.
- III. If you do not have a plan, would you like help in developing one?

Yes

D. Program Review Action Plan or External Accreditation Action Letter/Report

Annual Reflection/Follow-up on Action Plan from last Program Review or external accreditation (only complete the table that is appropriate for your program)

I. Programs that fall under Program Review:

- i. Date of most recent Review:
- ii. Insert the Action Plan table from your last Program Review and give any progress towards completing the tasks or achieving targets set forth in the plan.

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year

- iii. If you do not have an action plan, would you like help in developing one based on your last program review and needs of the program?

Yes

II. Programs with external Accreditation:

- i. Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the program/department.
- ii. Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.
- iii. Date and nature of next review and type of review.

List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.)(If required.)	Update on fulfilling the action letter/report or on meeting the key performance indicators.

E. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY 20-21 <small>Add more rows as needed</small>	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy <small>Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3</small>	Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
COMM FYE course submitted and approved by AUC.	Goal 1, Strategy 1.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMM 4880 Internship approved as IHIP in new General Education curriculum	Goal 1, Strategy 1.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased enrollment in M.S. in Applied Communication, Social Media Concentration.	Goal 1, Strategy 1.3	<input type="checkbox"/>

Virtual community discussions hosted by Communication Law & Ethics classes, Virtual alumni speaker (Nate McGarigal) in Fall 2020, Virtual Visions Alumni Panel in Spring 2021	Goal 3, Strategy 3.6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multiple faculty members awarded MSCA Professional Development Funds for professional development courses and research/creative practice projects	Goal 4, Strategy 4.4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly virtual department Admissions tours; faculty participation in Fall 2020 Virtual Open House, Spring 2021 Virtual Future Falcon Day, and departmental call campaign for accepted students	Goal 5, Strategy 5.3	<input type="checkbox"/>

Planned Initiatives for AY 2021-22 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Update portfolio defense evaluation form and rubrics to align with updated PLOs and concentration SLOs.	Goal 5, Strategy 5.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
FYE course	Goal 2, Strategy 2.5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

F. Departmental Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

- 1) *Initiatives that you may be considering for 22-23 academic year that you did not already capture above.*

We plan to continue work on the initiatives outlined in the action plan of our most recent program review.

- 2) *Reflect on how the department adapted to the pandemic. Reflect on actions that surprised you and on lessons learned that will help in the future.*

Overall, the Communication Media department was able to adapt to the challenges brought on by the pandemic. Some areas were more significantly impacted than others. Despite our best efforts, we learned there are some courses we cannot not run in a remote format given the hands-on nature of those classes.

**Communications Media Program Review
Action Plan in Table Format
December 5, 2019**

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan
Mission Statement					
1. Update Communications Media major mission statement to align with current University and School of Arts and Sciences mission statements	Work on updating the Communication Media major mission statement began in the Assessment Workshop in May 2019.	Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators, Communications Media faculty	Complete by May 2020		Report updated Communications Media major mission statements in Annual Departmental Plan Report for AY20
2. Revise Concentration mission statements (including Theory and Internship) to align with updated Communications Media major mission statement	As noted by the external evaluator, the mission statements for each concentration are not currently aligned with the mission statement for the major or each other.	Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators	Complete by December 2020		Report updated concentration mission statements in Annual Departmental Plan Report for AY21
Student Learning Outcomes					
3. Update Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the major	The SLOs for the major have not been updated in more than a decade.	Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators, Communications Media faculty	Complete by May 2020		Report updated SLOs in Annual Departmental Plan Report for AY20.

4. Develop Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each concentration, including Theory and Internship	At this time, the concentrations, including Theory and Internship, do not have formalized SLOs.	Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators, Communications Media faculty	Complete by December 2020		Report Concentration SLOs in Annual Departmental Plan Report for AY21.
5. Course Mapping of Student Learning Outcome (SLOs)	The department does not have a formal curriculum map with SLOs mapped to specific courses.	Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators, Communications Media faculty	Complete by May 2021		Report Concentration SLOs in Annual Departmental Plan Report for AY21.
Internship Assessment					
6. Update Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form	The current form can be developed further to provide more detailed assessment of student portfolios and align with updated SLOs.	Department Chair, Internship Director, UARC department representative, Concentration Coordinators	Complete by May 2021. Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form will incorporate updated major and concentration SLOs.		Include progress report update in Annual Department Plan Reports for AY20 and AY21.
7. Update Internship Performance Appraisal Form	The current form can be developed further to provide more detail about student intern performance and align with updated SLOs.	Department Chair, Internship Director, UARC department representative	Complete by May 2021. Internship Performance Appraisal Form will incorporate updated major and concentration SLOs.		Include progress report update in Annual Department Plan Reports for AY20 and AY21.
8. Develop template for a report with internship appraisal data to be delivered to faculty at the conclusion of each internship cycle.	At this time, internship appraisal data is not distributed to faculty.	Department Chair, Internship Director, UARC department representative	Finalize report template by May 2021.		Include progress report update in Annual Department Plan Reports.

Enrollment					
<p>9. Increase the number of courses offered that can fulfill a LA&S requirement</p>	<p>As an incremental strategy to address a decline in enrollment, the external evaluator recommended making more Communications Media courses available to students outside the major. Specifically, he recommended making an introductory production class available to fulfill a general education requirement.</p>	<p>Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators</p>	<p>Submit AUC proposals in AY20 and AY21, ahead of the implementation of the new LA&S curriculum in Fall 2021.</p>		<p>Include progress report update in Annual Department Plan Reports for AY20 and AY21.</p>
Major Structure					
<p>10. Revision to the program structure and move to distinct majors.</p>	<p>The external evaluators for the 2014 Program Review and 2019 Program Review recommended investigating moving from the current concentration structure to distinct majors.</p>	<p>Department Chair, Concentration Coordinators, Communications Media faculty</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>Include progress report update in Annual Department Plan Reports.</p>

Facilities					
11. Address deferred maintenance and infrastructure updates to Film/Video and Photography facilities.	There has been a long-standing need to update the infrastructure in the facilities used by the Film/Video and Photography concentrations as noted by external evaluators for the 2014 Program Review and 2019 Program Review.	Department Chair, Dean of Arts and Sciences, Capital Planning and Maintenance	Ongoing		Include progress report on updates to infrastructure in Annual Departmental Plan Report

Concentration Student Learning Outcomes Drafted Spring 2021

Theory

1. Students should critically evaluate communication practices with attention to their broader context in media history
2. Students should explain how theory has guided/impacted/shaped their creative, research, and professional practice
3. Students should recognize and assess the ethical implications of their practice

Professional Communication

1. Lead and manage a complex Marketing Communication client project from inception to completion;
2. Plan, produce, and present a comprehensive plan (e.g., a proposal, plans book, or PR plan) for an integrated marketing communication campaign;
3. Collaborate successfully with a team to produce a complex Creative Advertising or Marketing Communication client project;
4. Conceive, write, and design professional caliber Marketing Communication media (i.e., tactics) that embody a creative strategy, respond to a client's situational exigency, and communicate effectively with an intended target audience;
5. Perform market research (e.g., surveys, focus groups, social media analytics, and KPI data analysis) that guide and inform Creative Advertising and Marketing Communication strategy development and media production for a professional client.

Film/Video

1. Students will learn and apply best practices in pre-production, production and post-production
2. Students will learn and apply the fundamentals of cinematic structure, aesthetics and storytelling
3. Students will learn and apply the interpersonal skills necessary to collaborate effectively as a member of a filmmaking team
4. Students will demonstrate proficiency in at least one filmmaking career specialization (eg, directing, editing, screenwriting, etc).
5. Students will demonstrate competency with traditional and current filmmaking tools providing a foundation that prepares them to integrate evolving tools and techniques into their practice

Graphic Design

The student should possess:

1. Auto-didactic competency
2. Effective use of design process and risk taking
3. Critical thinking toward visual form, content, and context
4. Effective use of visual systems
5. Sufficient technical skill and craftsmanship

Theater & Technical Theater (These learning outcomes apply to both concentrations.)

By the time they graduate, students majoring in theater and technical theater will be able to:

1. analyze a play, performance work or production, using multiple communication skills.
2. reflect on the social relevance of any play, particularly in relation to issues of community engagement, inclusiveness, social justice, and historical context.
3. create a performance or production by synthesizing research.
4. differentiate new developments in contemporary theater and performance from historical practices.
5. design any component of a theatrical performance/production using an industry-standard skillset
6. use effective leadership skills, including collaboration, time management, problem-solving, effective communication, constructive critique, to perform key functions in a theatrical production.
7. apply specific production elements to affect an interpretation of the artist's work
8. differentiate the roles within a professional theater company to determine a career path in theater, including playwright, producer, director, performer, actor, technical director, dramaturg, scenic/lighting/costume/sound/projection designer, production manager, dramaturg, and stage manager
9. create a professional-level theater portfolio using industry-standard skills

Photography - TDB