

**Point Loma Nazarene University**  
**Journalism Major**  
**Annual Assessment Report**  
**Literature, Journalism, and Modern Languages Department**  
**2013-14**

**Assessment Plan Description:**

**1. LJML Mission Statement** ([See Mission Statement Portion of Assessment Wheel](#))

Embodying the core values of a Christian liberal arts education in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and focusing on the power of language and story to shape us and our world, the LJML department and programs will provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences to equip them to understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts as linguistic and/or artistic expressions of diverse human experiences. We value reading, writing, researching, speaking, and discussing as profound means of participating in the redemptive work of God in all of creation.

**2. Journalism Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)** ([See Student Learning Outcomes Portion of Assessment Wheel](#))

We eliminated our department learning outcomes at the recommendation of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee since they were duplicated in our individual PLOs.

The only changes made to the PLOs were to PLO #2 (indicated in red) to better reflect the language of WASC's core competency requirement of quantitative reasoning. All other core competencies are embedded in the existing PLOs.

**PLO 1: Students will exhibit effective research and reporting practices.**

Rationale: Reporters must gather and present content from well-informed people and relevant documents. They must apprise themselves of current events and trends as well as seek historical context. They develop sources among voices representing various positions, communities, and cultures. They make use of the most current investigative tools, including computer-assisted reporting, as well as the personal interview.

**PLO 2: Students will display strong interpretive, analytic, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking skills in their assignments.**

Rationale: Journalists must think critically both about texts read and the broader texts of people, events, and institutions in the world. In their roles as watchdogs, journalists hold those in positions of power accountable, exercise habits of skepticism, and demand solid verification of claims. They read a variety of genres, including great literary texts, to recognize distinctive rhetorical purposes, such as to inform, to entertain, to warn, and to teach. From great writers, they experience great ideas about the human condition and valuable techniques to enhance their own craft as storytellers.

**PLO 3: Students will communicate ideas clearly and accurately in forms appropriate to the purpose, medium, and audience.**

Rationale: Journalists must present ideas with clarity and context in a variety of formats and platforms. In the multimedia world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, journalists must adapt their storytelling skills to a variety of print and electronic media. They develop both their writing and editing skills

working within the particular conventions and best practices of various media platforms and for various audiences.

**PLO 4: Students will employ appropriate ethical and legal standards and professional codes in their service to their communities and cultures.**

Rationale: Since the expression of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, freedom of the press has been preserved to inform citizens so they can participate most effectively within a democracy. Journalists encounter legal and ethical dilemmas and must exercise good moral decision-making in their professional practices as news gatherers and communicators.

Course Learning Outcomes for all courses with WRI prefixes, including those required in the Journalism Program, are also loaded in the Student Learning Outcomes portion of the Assessment Wheel. These CLOs will remain under on-going revision as needed.

**3. Curriculum Map** ([See Curriculum Map Portion of Assessment Wheel](#))

We updated PLOs to reflect changes we made. No other changes occurred.

**4. Multi-Year Assessment Plan** ([See Assessment Plan Portion of Assessment Wheel](#))

We assessed one assignment in WRI 250 – writing a news story that required all of the WASC core competencies except for Oral Communication – which is a formative assignment to measure PLO #2.

We also assessed one assignment in WRI 345 – editing a story that required all of the WASC core competencies except for Oral Communication – which is a summative assignment, also measuring PLO #2.

The same assignment was used for both classes, with the idea that the same assignment for PLO 2 would make the comparison between student performance in WRI 250 and WRI 345 more valuable since it would show where they are in an early journalism class and where they are in a later journalism class. The only difference is that the editing class (WRI 345) students were asked to switch papers and to copy edit the answers of another student to make the assignment more of an editing assignment.

We also used an indirect means of assessment by sending out a survey to our alums from the years 2004-2014. That information will be compiled and discussed at beginning of Fall 2014. Results will be uploaded on Assessment Wheel.

**5. Methods of Assessment and Criteria for Success** ([See Evidence Portion of Assessment Wheel](#))

The WRI 250 assignment was measured by the **AC&U Rubric for Written Communication** ([AAC&U VALUE Written Commun.](#)) and the goal was for students to achieve a 3 or higher on all five categories of the rubric. The data were collected by Professor Stephen Goforth on Feb. 27, 2014 in the room where the class met. The assignment was hand-delivered and typewritten. Professor Goforth tabulated and analyzed the results.

The WRI 345 assignment was measured by the AC&U rubric for written communication, and the goal was for students to achieve a 3 or higher on all five categories of the rubric. The data were collected by Professor Stephen Goforth on Dec. 5, 2013 in the room where the class met. The

assignment was hand-delivered and typewritten. Professor Goforth tabulated and analyzed the results.

#### 6. Summary of Data Collected (See Evidence Portion of Assessment Wheel)

The results for the assignment in WRI 250 are in the Table 1 below.

The results show that 13 of 22 students (59%) reached the goal of 80% proficiency on the assignment and 18 of the 22 students (82%) reached at least 70% proficiency. Since WRI250 is the first journalism class for most of these students (whether the student is a journalism major or not), the results indicate most of the students grasp the concepts related to “interpretive, analytic, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking skills” taught in the course and required for completion of the assignment.

**Table 1: WRI 250 Objective Assessments**

Finding	Numeric Result out of 5	Percentage Result	Relative to Class Avg.	Journalism Majors	Met Target
1	3	75	-5	NO	N
2	3.7	92	12	NO	Y
3	2.9	73	7	NO	N
4	3.85	96	16	NO	Y
5	4.75	95	15	NO	Y
6	4.2	84	4	NO	Y
7	4.4	88	8	NO	Y
8	4.65	93	13	NO	Y
9	4.55	91	11	NO	Y
10	4.05	81	1	NO	Y
11	4.1	82	2	NO	Y
12	4.4	88	8	NO	Y
13	4.7	94	14	NO	Y
14	4.9	98	18	NO	Y
15	5	100	20	NO	Y
16	3.5	70	-10	NO	N
17	3.3	66	-14	NO	N
18	3.5	70	-10	NO	N
19	3.55	71	-9	NO	N
20	4.7	94	14	NO	Y
21	5	100	20	NO	Y
22	1.85	37	-33	NO	N

The results for the assignment in WRI 345 are in the Table 2 below.

The results indicate that 12 of 13 students (92%) reached the goal of 80% proficiency, an increase of 33%. All of the journalism majors reached this goal. In fact, 10 of the 13 students reached 90%

proficiency. WRI345 is an upper level journalism class, typically taken when students are well along (or completing) their unit requirements. Therefore, we believe no changes are necessary, given that the results indicate a superior student competency has been achieved when compared to the results of the WRI250 assignment related to “interpretive, analytic, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking skills.”

**Table 2: WRI 345 Objective Assessments**

Finding	Numeric Result out of 5	Percentage Result	Relative to Class Avg.	Journalism Majors	Met Target (Y/N)
					All students met target
1	4.64	92	0	YES	
2	4.66	93	1	YES	
3	5	100	8	YES	
4	4.66	93	7	NO	
5	4.5	90	-2	YES	
6	4.4	88	-4	NO	
7	4.72	94	2	NO	
8	4.72	94	2	YES	
9	4.76	95	3	NO	
10	4.78	96	4	YES	
11	3.96	79	-13	NO	
12	4.7	94	1	YES	
13	4.16	83	-9	YES	

## 7. Use of Results

It appears that it would be useful in the future to set a goal that at least 70 percent of the students meet the assignment targets in WRI 250 and WRI 345.

Once results of alumni survey are in, we (Dean Nelson and Stephen Goforth) will discuss results at opening meetings in Fall 2014 and develop and implement further measurements and improvements throughout the year.

There may be additional changes in preparation for our Program Review Self Study and APC Proposal requirements. Abstracts for APC proposals are due Oct. 10, 2014, and proposals themselves are due November 7, 2014.

## Appendices

- 1) WRI 250 & WRI 345 Key Assignment (same assignment used in both classes)

**Appendix 1: WRI 250 & WRI 345 Key Assignment (same assignment used in both classes)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Using Numbers in News Quiz**

***Do not use a calculator for this exercise.***

1. *This is a real article from a South Carolina TV station. What's wrong with it?*

**Gas Prices Doubling**

COLUMBIA, SC (WOLO)-- Gas prices nearly doubled over the week, prompting concern from drivers.

Here in the Midlands, ABC Columbia news found prices ranging from \$3.29 a gallon to \$3.45 a gallon.

That's nearly 30 cents higher than prices were two weeks ago, when midlands drivers were paying an average of \$3.08 per gallon.

Experts say that prices could spike even more as we near August, then the Labor Day holiday.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. A student's GPA rose from 3.0 during the fall semester to 4.0 in the spring semester. Express the increase as a percentage.

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Define each of the following terms, explaining the different between them.

3. Mean

4. Median

5. Mode

The rainfall in January for the past five years has been 5 inches, 6.5 inches, 4 inches, 6 inches and 4.5 inches.

6. What the average amount of rainfall? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What's the median amount of rainfall? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Change  $\frac{3}{20}$  into a decimal. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Use the following information to write a lead for a news story. Please include a *percentage* indicting the difference between the number of crimes reported each year.

Topic: Crime

When: Wednesday morning (you are writing for publication online Wednesday afternoon)

Location: Atlanta, Georgia

Where: The county's H. Lee Dennison Building in downtown Atlanta

Includes: Both violent and property offenses

Source: news conference of Fulton County Executive Steve Bellone

Crimes reported:

2009 - 5,326

2014 - 4,724



10. Use the following information to write a lead for a short news story. Please include a *percentage* indicating how much the employment rate changed.

When: information released in a press release, October 2, 2014

Source: WorkForce West Virginia, located in Parkersburg

Unemployment rate for Cabell County, West Virginia:

August 2013 - 5.6 percent

September 2014 - 6.7 percent