

**Communication Studies
Core Competencies
2019-2020**

Learning Outcome:

Critical Thinking: Students will be able to examine, critique and synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions.

Outcome Measure:

ETS Proficiency Profile Exam

Criteria for Success (how do you judge if the students have met your standards):

70% of the students will be marginal or proficient at Level 2 Reading/Critical Thinking

Aligned with DQP Learning Areas (highlight one or more but not all five):

1. Specialized Knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills/Core Competencies
4. Applied and Collaborative Learning, and
5. Civic and Global Learning

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Students Marginal or Proficient						
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
ETS Proficiency Profile Level 2 Reading	81.8%	62.5%	62.5%	68.8%	67.9%	56.4%	30.0%

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

This year's results show a precipitous decline in Reading/Critical Thinking skills, reporting at the 30% level. When looking at the specific numbers it was learned that only 10 students from the department took the exam for the entire department, well down from past years sample sizes. But the scores are low enough to draw concern despite anomalous sample sizes.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

As our department rebuilds its assessment infrastructure and culture of evidence, it would be useful to pay attention to whether this shortfall below targeted goals continues, including what potential factors may have contributed to the percentage decrease.

Additionally, with the availability of further longitudinal analysis, our department will be more readily prepared to identify areas needing improvement, then design and implement appropriate curricular or other changes as necessary.

If such is the case, a decline may be partly attributable to a high turnover of full-time faculty in the last four to five years, in distinct contrast to a relatively low turnover rate in the prior decade. The resulting stop gap measure was to rely on less experienced adjunct instructors while the department searched for several full-time replacements. The department's approved full time

faculty hire from last year was put on hold, and since then another full time faculty member has been deleted from our department due to a medical leave of absence for the fall and retirement in the spring. So the department is seriously understaffed, and due to economic restraints imposed by the recent pandemic and cost cutting measures, it is hard to say how soon that will be resolved.

Finally, in the academic year 2019-2020, the department went through an internal and external review and made some significant core changes for our majors that one hopes will have a positive impact on these critical thinking scores. If not, we should consider revisiting some of these core course requirements to include more critical thinking focused courses like Argumentation and Debate, currently only required of COM Majors, one of the three majors in our department.

More importantly, the department needs to do a better job of having its graduating seniors take the ETS proficiency profile exam. Such a small portion of the graduating seniors is probably not reflective of the overall scores. Spring of 2020 might have been impacted by the switching to online teaching mode, and that might not bode well for this upcoming year's results either.

Rubric Used: No rubric. We use the ETS Proficiency Profile test results.

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Learning Outcome:

Written: Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through written communication.

Outcome Measure:

ETS Proficiency Profile Exam

Criteria for Success (how do you judge if the students have met your standards):

70% of the students will be marginal or proficient at Level 2 Writing

Aligned with DQP Learning Areas (highlight one or more but not all five):

1. Specialized Knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills/Core Competencies
4. Applied and Collaborative Learning, and
5. Civic and Global Learning

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Students Marginal or Proficient						
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
ETS Proficiency Profile Level 2 Writing	81.8%	75.0%	66.7%	81.3%	71.4%	56.4%	60.0%

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

The results for 2019-20 show an improvement over the previous year's scores, though still fall short of the target of 70%.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

As noted above, the very small number of seniors taking the exam (10) needs to be improved upon to better note actual results. The department's revised major requirements now rely more on in-department courses that stress writing, versus those taken in other departments, which might not, so hopefully in a few years this will show better results. And, of course, being so understaffed currently may be contributing to some of the declines in productivity.

Rubric Used: No rubric. We use the ETS Proficiency Profile test results.

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Learning Outcome:

Quantitative Reasoning: Students will be able to solve problems that are quantitative in nature.

Outcome Measure:

ETS Proficiency Profile Exam

Criteria for Success (how do you judge if the students have met your standards):

70% of the students will be marginal or proficient at Level 2 Mathematics

Aligned with DQP Learning Areas (highlight one or more but not all five):

1. Specialized Knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills/Core Competencies
4. Applied and Collaborative Learning, and
5. Civic and Global Learning

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Students Marginal or Proficient						
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
ETS Proficiency Profile Level 2 Math	63.6%	75.5%	62.5%	68.8%	60.7%	48.7%	50.0%

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

This section on Math proficiency shows a slight improvement over 2018-19, yet still falls short of the goal of 70% or higher. And again the small number of students taking the exam this past year may skew the results being analyzed.

It is also hard to pinpoint a significant cause-effect relationship to mathematical skills development in a department largely devoid of instruction in math properties or relationships.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

Most of the courses offered in our department are of a qualitative nature and do not deal with quantitative matters, except for those few courses offering coverage in statistical research methods and measures, many of which are not required of all departmental students since the skills discussed are not viewed as essential for the proper mastery of targeted learning objectives. Because the curriculum in the department is particularly strong in the applied humanities rather than quantitative skills, one might expect weaker outcomes for this particular competency, in contrast to the written and oral communication competencies, for instance.

Overall, to enhance quantitative reasoning outcomes in Communication seniors, one recent curricular change has been to require more of our students to take an additional statistical

methodology course at the 2000 level, to provide a clearer understanding of mathematical principles used in Communication research. It will likely take a few years for this to show benefits to our graduating seniors on this exam though.

Rubric Used

No rubric. We use the ETS Proficiency Profile test results.

**Communication Studies
Core Competencies
Spring 2020**

Learning Outcome:

Oral Communication: Student will be able to speak about their work with precision, clarity and organization.

Outcome Measure: COM 4085 Oral Exam

The WSCUC Core Competencies are assessed in COM 4085 Communication, Value, and Society. Instructor of record: Professor Wally Williams.

Criteria for Success (if applicable): 70% of students will score 80% or above on exam

Aligned with DQP Learning Areas (highlight one or more but not all five):

1. Specialized Knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills/Core Competencies
4. Applied and Collaborative Learning, and
5. Civic and Global Learning

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Students Receiving a Score of 80% or Higher				
	SP 17	SU 17	SP 18	SP 19	SP 20
	N = 16	N = 6	N = 15	N = 33	N = *
Com 4085 Oral Exam	93.8%	66.7%	80.0%	72.7%	*

*2020 data not available due to Covid-19 pandemic

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

There is some question about how past years' percentages were calculated when the assessment process was under different leadership. For the current 2020 term, there is no data available in this category due to the Covid-19 pandemic. With the course's sudden transition to an online format, the oral exam upon which this data is based was replaced by a different assignment.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

No changes. Continue to collect data.

Rubric Used: COM 4085 Oral Exam Rubric (see below).

COM 4085 Oral Exam Rubric

	Inadequate (1pt)	Novice (2pts)	Good (3pts)	Excellent (4pts)
Precision	Little or no ability to cogently cite pertinent concepts.	Some ability to cite cogently pertinent concepts, but obvious omissions.	Good general understanding of the pertinent concepts, but lacking in certain areas.	Cogent mastery of pertinent concepts. No obvious omissions.
Clarity	Little or no clarity of thought.	Minimal but measurable ability to express ideas clearly.	Generally good expression of clear ideas, but lacking in certain areas.	Very clear expression of key ideas.
Organization	Little or no ability to organize or defend statements.	Some measurable ability to organize and defend statements.	Generally good organization of thoughts, but lacking in certain areas.	Well-organized, strongly expressed and defended thoughts.
Recall	Little or no ability to recall course material without notes.	Recalls some course material but does not differentiate ideas well.	Generally good recall of course material, but lacking in certain areas.	Recalls material with ease and cross references ideas without notes.
Dialogic Competence	Demonstrates poor language use and little or no dialogic skill.	Adequate use of language, style, etc., but lacking finesse.	Good use of language and style, but lacking in one or two areas.	Excellent use of language, clear dialogic connection, very few performative pauses.

**Communication Studies
Core Competencies
Spring 2020**

Learning Outcome:

Information Literacy: Student will be able to identify, locate, evaluate and effectively and responsibly use and cite information for the task at hand.

Outcome Measure: COM 4085 poster session with a research component

Note: Data for WSCUC Core Competencies will be collected in COM 4085 Communication, Value, and Society. Instructor of record: Professor Wally Williams.

Criteria for Success (if applicable): 70% of students will score 80% or above on their poster session

Aligned with DQP Learning Areas (highlight one or more but not all five):

1. Specialized Knowledge
2. Broad Integrative Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills/Core Competencies
4. Applied and Collaborative Learning, and
5. Civic and Global Learning

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Students Receiving a Score of 80% or Higher				
	SP 17	SU 17	SP 18	SP 19	SP 20
	N = 16	N = 6	N = 15	N = 33	N = 23
Com 4085 Poster Session	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

The 70% targeted learning threshold has been significantly exceeded as evidenced in this particular assignment.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

No changes. Continue to collect data.

Rubric Used: COM 4085 Poster Session Rubric (see below).

COM 4085: Poster Session Rubric

	Inadequate (1pt)	Novice (2pts)	Good (3pts)	Excellent (4pts)
Author Contextualization	Little or no clarity to the information or inference about the author.	Some pertinent information about the author, but very little inference.	Good general inference(s) and understanding of the author, but lacking in certain areas.	Excellent inference(s) about the author drawn from researched and cited material.
Information Competence	Poor use of available information with few supported conclusions.	Minimal but measurable ability to use information to support ideas.	Generally good use of available information, but lacking in line of reasoning to conclusions.	Clear and responsible use of available information to draw cogent and compelling conclusions.
Message Organization	Little or no message organization.	Some measurable ability to organize, but difficult to follow at important junctures.	Generally good organization of message, but lacking in certain areas.	Well-organized, strongly expressed, and clearly explained thoughts.
Ethical Integration	Little or no integration of ethical awareness in presentation.	Deals with ethical awareness but draws poorly considered conclusions.	Generally good discussion of ethical impacts, but lacking in certain areas.	Strong integration of ethical considerations and impacts throughout message.
Creativity	Demonstrates little or no creativity or individuality in presentation.	Some creativity, but generally 'safe' in structure and style.	Generally creative and willing to take risks, but not well actualized.	High creativity and independence of thought. Surprisingly fresh presentation.