

Weber State University  
Biennial Report on Assessment of Student Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Department of Communication General Education  
Academic Year of Report: 2019-2020  
Date Submitted: November 13, 2020  
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We have updated the Institutional Effectiveness website, which includes an update for each program page. All Biennial Assessment and Program Review reports will now be available on a single page. Please review your page for completeness and accuracy, and indicate on the list below the changes that need to be made. Access your program page from the top-level [results](#) page. Select the appropriate college and then your program from the subsequent page.

**A. Mission Statement**

**Information is current; no changes required.**

Update if not current:

**B. Student Learning Outcomes**

**Information is current; no changes required.**

Update if not current:

**C. Curriculum** (please note, we are using Google Sheets for this section so that updates are easier to make)

**Information is current; no changes required.**

Update if not current (you may have access to the Google Sheet if that is easiest, or we can make the updates):

**D. Program and Contact Information**

**Information is current; no changes required.**

Update if not current:

**E. Assessment Plan** (please see our website for details on how to develop a [program assessment plan](#))

**Information is current; no changes required.**

**New: High Impact Educational Experiences in the Curriculum**

In response to the recent USHE requirement that all students have at least 1 HIEE in the first 30 credit hours and 1 HIEE in the major or minor we are asking programs to map HIEEs to curriculum using a traditional curriculum grid. This helps demonstrate how and where these goals are accomplished.

Courses	HIEE 1	HIEE 2	HIEE 3
COMM 1020 HU Principles of Public Speaking	Deliver multiple public speeches, resulting in a competition called Speech Showcase		
COMM 2010 HU Mass Media and Society		An assignment allows students to analyze artifacts and is the basis of assessment.	
COMM 2110 HU Interpersonal and Small Group Communication			Participate in a small group service-learning project to apply the principles and skills learned

HIEEs include capstone courses or experiences, community-engaged learning, evidence-based teaching practices, internships, project-based learning, study abroad/away, supplemental instruction, team-based learning, undergraduate research, pre-professional/career development experiences. Additional information (HIEE planning, assessment, or other information):

**F. Report of assessment results since the last report:**

**A. Evidence of Learning: General Education, Humanities Courses**

## COMM 1020 HU Principles of Public Speaking

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse philosophical, communicative, linguistic, or literary traditions, as well as of key themes, concepts, issues, terminology, and ethical standards in humanities disciplines.	Measure 1:  Students will demonstrate their understanding by answering correctly 7 of 10 assessment questions embedded in exams.	Measure 1:  10 standardized test questions are included on all exams.	Measure 1:  Students will achieve 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 1:  Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 1:  Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with the COMM 1020 HU course.	Measure 1:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 1020 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 1:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.
		Measure 2:  N/A	N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will analyze cultural artifacts within a given discipline, and, when appropriate, across disciplines, time periods, and cultures.	Measure 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding by preparing and presenting a speech on a topic of personal relevance. Students will also respond	Measure 1:  Speech of personal relevance	Measure 1:  Students will earn 70 points out of 100 for a score of at least 70%.	Measure 1:  Students met or exceeded the threshold.	Measure 1:  Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 2.	Measure 1:  We will continue to refine the assignment to ensure students meet General Education Outcome 2.	Measure 1:  We hold an annual retreat, at which assessment results are discussed. We use a common rubric to ensure students are

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
	correctly to assessment questions at a rate of 70% or higher.	Measure 2:  Assessment questions	Measure 1:  Students will achieve at least 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with the COMM 1020 HU course.	Measure 2:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 1020 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	graded on the same criteria across all sections.  Measure 2:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.

<b>GE Learning Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Method of Measure.</b>	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate their understanding of humanities materials in written, oral, or graphic forms.	Measure 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding by preparing and presenting an informative speech on a topic of their choice. Students will also respond correctly to assessment questions at a rate of 70% or higher.	Measure 1:  Informative speech	Measure 1:  Students will earn 70 points out of 100 points for a score of 70% or more.	Measure 1:  Students met or exceeded the threshold.	Measure 1:  Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 3.	Measure 1:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 1020 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 1:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.
		Measure 2:  Assessment questions	Measure 2:  Students will achieve at least 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with the COMM 1020 HU course.	Measure 2:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 1020 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 2:  We hold an annual retreat, at which assessment results are discussed. We use a common rubric to ensure students are graded on the same criteria across all sections.

\*At least one measure per objective must be a direct measure.

## **Executive Summary**

Communication hosts COMM 1020 HU Principles of Public Speaking as one of three General Education courses offered by the department. On an annual basis, the department offers approximately 50 sections of this course, including courses on the Main Campus, the Davis Campus, the Station Park Campus, the West Campus, and in partnership with Concurrent Enrollment. COMM 1020 HU addresses all three of the General Education outcomes, requiring students to learn the fundamental concepts and themes of public speaking, to analyze cultural artifacts as they perform their personal relevance speech presentations, and to communicate through written media with their personal relevance speech outline. The Department of Communication assesses students on all three of these General Education outcomes, through the use of course terminology and knowledge questions in the first exam (GE Outcome 1), assessment of the personal relevance speech (GE Outcome 2), and assessment of the personal relevance speech outline (GE Outcome 3). This report presents the overall finding that our students, who represent diverse undergraduate degree paths and areas of study, are successfully meeting our standards for excellence, and those of General Education, as evidenced by their performance on these assessments. Data is included from approximately 50 sections of COMM 1020 taught during the review period.

## **Introduction**

This report contains assessment information for COMM 1020 HU Principles of Public Speaking. The report utilizes data collected from three semesters, with over 3,000 data points for the three assignments evaluated. The assessment items for Outcomes 1-3 area assessed by test questions. The assessment items for Outcomes 2 and 3 are the personal relevance speech presentation and the personal relevance speech outline, respectively. This assignment, therefore, meets General Education Outcome 2, by virtue of the artifact (i.e., speech topic) on which the presentation is based. The outline assignment requires students to demonstrate knowledge of creating a cogent speech outline, effectively communicating in written form about the topic presented in the oral speech, in successful completion of the assignment. Both of these assignments are graded on a 100-point scale.



## **Assessment**

### **General Education Outcome 1**

Our assessment strategy begins with the first exam. Data from Spring 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020 semesters indicated that students are exceeding departmental expectations for the demonstration of knowledge of key terms and concepts (GE Outcome 1). Data indicated, across the three semesters, that students scored, on average, 47.93 points, out of a possible 50 points. This average score exceeds the benchmark of 70% achievement for students in the COMM 1020 HU course. Furthermore, of the 864 data points, only 166 indicated performance under the 70% benchmark. Thus, COMM 1020 HU students also are exceeding the benchmark of 70% of students performing at, or above, the 70% level, with 80.8% of datapoints indicating a 70% or greater performance on the assessment. Overall, our students performed at a level exceeding the expected rate, demonstrating that students are effectively meeting the requirements of GE Outcome 1.

### **General Education Outcome 2**

To assess GE Outcome 2, students' personal relevance speech presentations were assessed, based on a standardized numeric score of 100 points. Consistent with departmental requirements, we chose 70% as the critical value for students to demonstrate competency and fulfillment of the learning outcome. During the three semesters sampled, data indicated that students, on average, scored 77.84% on the assignment. This number indicates that students are exceeding the minimum benchmark. Furthermore, of the 1,026 datapoints, only 240 indicated a score below 70%. Thus, consistent with the expectation that 70% of students will perform at the 70% level or higher, the data indicated that 76.6% of students are performing at, or above, the 70% level, further exceeding expectations.

### **General Education Outcome 3**

To assess GE Outcome 3, students' full-sentence outline for the personal relevance speech assignment was assessed, based on a standardized numeric score of 100 points. Consistent with departmental requirements, we chose 70% as the critical value for students to demonstrate competency

and fulfillment of the learning outcome. During the three semesters sampled, data indicated that students, on average, scored 80.02% on the assignment. This number indicates that students are exceeding the minimum benchmark. Furthermore, of the 846 data points, only 155 indicated a score below 70%. Thus, consistent with the expectation that 70% of students will perform at the 70% level or higher, the data indicated that 81.7% of students are performing at, or above, the 70% level, further exceeding expectations.

### **Conclusion**

The data from Spring 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020 semesters indicated that students in COMM 1020 HU are meeting the requirements determined by the General Education outcomes. Overall, and on average, students in the reviewed academic years performed at or above the established threshold of 70% on the assessed assignments for all three General Education outcomes. These data indicate that students in the course are fulfilling all requirements set forth by General Education at Weber State University.

## COMM 2010 HU Mass Media and Society

Gen Ed Learning Goal Students will:	Measurable Learning Outcome Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	Method of Measurement Direct and Indirect Measures*	Target Performance	Actual Performance	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	Closing the Loop
Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse philosophical, communicative, linguistic, or literary traditions, as well as of key themes, concepts, issues, terminology, and ethical standards in humanities disciplines.	Measure 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding by writing at least one paragraph summarizing the key assumptions of reception theory and media studies terms in the signature assignment.	Measure 1: The department created a signature assignment from which to measure knowledge of terms.	Measure 1: Students will achieve an average score of 70% on the 1-5 rating scale.	Measure 1: Students on average successfully met and exceeded the threshold for clear summary and definition of key terms and assumptions.	Measure 1: Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with the COMM 2010 HU course.	Measure 1: We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 2010 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 1: Double coding combined with training has aided in refining the assignment description for the signature assignment in COMM 2010 HU and improved assessment strategies.
		Measure 2: N/A	N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>

<b>GE Learning Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Method of Measure.</b>	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will analyze cultural artifacts within a given discipline, and, when appropriate, across disciplines, time periods, and cultures.	Measure 1:  Students will demonstrate their understanding by selecting a media artifact and analyzing the cultural artifact within the context of media studies	Measure 1:  The department created a signature assignment from which to measure analysis of cultural artifacts.	Measure 1:  Students will achieve an average of 70% on the 1-5 rating scale.	Measure 1:  Students on average successfully met and exceeded the threshold for analyzing a media artifact.	Measure 1:  Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 2.	Measure 1:  The Department of Communication will continue to refine the assignment to ensure students meet or exceed the threshold.	Measure 1:  Double coding combined with training has aided in refining the assignment description for the signature assignment in COMM 2010 HU and improved

	for common themes.						assessment strategies.
		Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A

<b>GE Learning Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Method of Measure.</b>	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate their understanding of humanities materials in written, oral, or graphic forms.	Measure 1:  Students will demonstrate their understanding by clearly writing the signature assignment paper to communicate a clear thesis, editing, and use of evidence.	Measure 1:  We created a signature assignment from which to measure written communication.	Measure 1:  Students will achieve an average 70% on the 1-5 rating scale.	Measure 1:  Students on average met or exceeded the threshold.	Measure 1:  Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 3.	Measure 1:  We will continue to refine the assignment to ensure students meet or exceed the threshold.	Measure 1:  Double coding combined with training has aided in refining the assignment description for the signature assignment in COMM 2010 HU and improved assessment strategies.

		Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A	Measure 2: N/A
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\*At least one measure per objective must be a direct measure

### **Executive Summary**

The Department of Communication provides COMM 2010 HU Mass Media and Society as one of three General Education courses offered. The department schedules roughly four to five sections each Fall and Spring with at least one or two of those sections online. Also, one Summer online section is often offered. Overall, enrollment has been strong in each section with five sections for Fall 2020 containing 168 total students. The Department of Communication assesses students on all three of the HU General Education outcomes through the use of a common assignment (Reception Theory Paper). This is different from the signature assignment that incorporates the big question for COMM 2010 HU. Assessment is generally conducted in one online section and one face-to-face section each semester. This report presents the overall finding that our students, who represent diverse undergraduate degree paths and areas of study, are successfully meeting our standards for excellence, and those of General Education, as evidenced by their performance on these assessments.

### **Introduction**

The report utilizes data collected from four semesters (Fall 2018 and Spring 2019; Fall 2019 and Spring 2020) over two academic years. The assignment is a Reception Theory paper in which all three HU General Education criteria are evaluated on a rating scale (1-Does not Meet

Expectations, 2- Developing, 3-Approaching Mastery, 4-Meets Expectations, 5- Exceeds Expectations). This rating scale is separate from the grade for the assignment. Overall, an average score of 70% was the value used to measure competency and fulfillment of each learning outcome.

## **Assessment**

### **General Education Outcome 1**

To assess the demonstration of knowledge, students must write a section in the paper in which they discuss and define reception theory and some general knowledge about media studies. Across Fall 18 (one face-to-face, N=27, and one online, N=29) and Spring 19 (one face-to-face, N=25, and one online, N=23) the average for Outcome 1 was 3.55/5, 71% (N=104). Across Fall 19 (one online, N=31 and one face-to-face, N=24) and Spring 20 (one face-to-face, N=25) the average for Outcome 1 was 3.45/5, 69% (N=80). Overall, our students performed at the expected rate of 70% or slightly below, demonstrating that students are effectively meeting the requirements of GE Outcome 1.

### **General Education Outcome 2**

To assess GE Outcome 2, students were required to analyze a media artifact in a written assessment organized around common themes with clear evidence and examples. Across Fall 18 (one face-to-face, N=27 and one online, N=29) and Spring 19 (one face-to-face, N=25 and one online, N=23) the average for Outcome 2 was 3.43/5, 68.6% (N=104). Across Fall 19 (one online, N=31 and one face-to-face, N=24) and Spring 20 (one face-to-face, N=25) the average for Outcome 2 was 3.45/5, 69% (N=80). Overall, our students performed slightly below the expected rate of 70%, but still very close.

### **General Education Outcome 3**

To assess GE Outcome 3, the overall paper was evaluated for effective communication. Across Fall 18 (one face-to-face, N=27 and one online, N=29) and Spring 19 (one face-to-face, N=25 and one online, N=23) the average for Outcome 3 was 3.63, 72.6% (N=104). Across Fall 19 (one online, N=31 and one face-to-face, N=24) and Spring 20 (one face-to-face, N=25) the average for Outcome 3 was 3.78/5, 75.5% (N=80).

Overall, our students performed above the expected rate of 70%, demonstrating that students are effectively meeting the requirements of GE Outcome 3.

### **Conclusion**

The data from the Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020 semesters indicate that students in COMM 2010 HU are generally meeting the requirements determined by the General Education outcomes. Overall, students in the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 academic years performed above or slightly below the established threshold of 70% on the assessed assignment for all three HU General Education outcomes. These data indicate that students in the course are fulfilling all requirements set forth by General Education at Weber State University.



# COMM 2110 HU Interpersonal and Small Group Communication

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse philosophical, communicative, linguistic, or literary traditions, as well as of key themes, concepts, issues, terminology, and ethical standards in humanities disciplines.	Measure 1:  Students will demonstrate understanding by answering correctly 7 of 10 assessment questions embedded in exams.	Measure 1:  The department created 10 standardized test questions that are included on all exams.	Measure 1:  Students will achieve 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions	Measure 1:  Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 1:  Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with COMM 2110 HU.	Measure 1:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 2110 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 1:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.
		Measure 2:  N/A	N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A	Measure 2:  N/A

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
<b>GE Learning Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Method of Measure.</b>	<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will analyze cultural artifacts within a given discipline, and, when appropriate, across disciplines, time periods, and cultures.	Measure 1:  Students will demonstrate their understanding by preparing and presenting a final presentation on their service projects. Students also will respond correctly to assessment questions at a rate of 70% or higher.	Measure 1:  Final presentation	Measure 1:  Students will earn 70 points out of 100 points (70%).	Measure 1:  Students met or exceeded the threshold.	Measure 1:  Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 2.	Measure 1:  We continue to refine the assignment to ensure students meet or exceed the threshold.	Measure 1:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment is discussed. We standardized the signature assignment of the service project class presentation to ensure all students are assessed the same.

<b>Gen Ed Learning Goal</b> Students will:	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding by:	<b>Method of Measurement</b> Direct and Indirect Measures*	<b>Target Performance</b>	<b>Actual Performance</b>	<b>Interpretation of Findings</b>	<b>Action Plan/Use of Results</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
		Measure 2:  Assessment questions	Measure 2:  Students will achieve 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2:  Students are able to use key terms and themes associated with the COMM 2110 HU course to analyze a cultural artifact.	Measure 2:  We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 2110 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 2:  We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.

<b>GE Learning Goal</b>	<b>Measurable Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Method of Measure.</b>	<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Closing the Loop</b>
Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate their understanding of humanities materials in written, oral, or graphic forms.	Measure 1: Students will demonstrate their understanding by preparing and presenting an individual paper on the topic of relationship development. Students also will respond correctly to assessment questions at a rate of 70% or higher	Measure 1: Individual paper	Measure 1: Students will achieve 70% or higher on the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 1: Students met or exceeded the threshold.	Measure 1: Students are successfully meeting General Education Outcome 3.	Measure 1: We will continue to refine the assignment to ensure students meet or exceed the threshold.	Measure 1: We hold an annual retreat at which assessment is discussed. We standardized the paper rubric to ensure all students are assessed the same.
		Measure 2: Assessment questions	Measure 2: Students will earn 70 points out of 100 points (70%).	Measure 2: Students successfully met and exceeded the threshold for correct responses to the 10 embedded test questions.	Measure 2: Students are learning and retaining the key terms and themes associated with COMM 2110 HU.	Measure 2: We will continue to improve student performance to ensure all COMM 2110 HU students continually perform at or above the threshold.	Measure 2: We hold an annual retreat at which assessment results are discussed. Over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment.

\*At least one measure per objective must be a direct measure.

## **Executive Summary**

Communication hosts COMM 2110 HU Interpersonal and Small Group Communication as one of three General Education courses offered by the department. On an annual basis, the department offers approximately 50 sections of this course, including courses on the Main Campus, the Davis Campus, the Station Park Campus, the West Campus, and in partnership with Concurrent Enrollment. COMM 2110 addresses all three of the General Education outcomes, requiring students to learn the fundamental concepts and themes of interpersonal communication and small group development and interaction, to analyze cultural artifacts as they perform their service projects and prepare their final presentations, and to communicate through written media with their individual paper. The Department of Communication assesses students on all three of these General Education outcomes, through the use of course terminology and knowledge questions in the third exam (GE Outcome 1), assessment of the final group presentation (GE Outcome 2), and assessment of the individual paper (GE Outcome 3). This report presents the overall finding that our students, who represent diverse undergraduate degree paths and areas of study, are successfully meeting our standards for excellence, and those of General Education, as evidenced by their performance on these assessments. We include data collected from approximately 50 sections of COMM 2110 taught during the review period.

## **Introduction**

This report contains assessment information for COMM 2110 HU Interpersonal and Small Group Communication. The report utilizes data collected from three semesters, with over 3,000 data points for the three assignments evaluated. The assessment items for Outcomes 2 and 3 are the final presentation and the individual paper, respectively. The final presentation involves students reporting on the service-learning project performed throughout the semester, an artifact of cultural value. This assignment, therefore, meets General Education Outcome 2, by virtue of the artifact (i.e., project) on which the presentation is based. The individual paper assignment requires students to demonstrate knowledge of a model of relationship

development, effectively communicating in written form about three previous or present relationships, in successful completion of the assignment.

Both assignments are graded on a 100-point scale.

## **Assessment**

### **General Education Outcome 1**

Our assessment strategy begins with the third exam. Data from the Spring 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020 semesters indicated that students are exceeding departmental expectations for the demonstration of knowledge of key terms and concepts (GE Outcome 1). Data indicated, across the three semesters, that students scored, on average 83.07 points, out of a possible 100 points. This average score exceeds the benchmark of 70% achievement for students in the COMM 2110 HU course. Furthermore, of the 1,076 data points, only 119 indicated performance under the 70% benchmark. Thus, COMM 2110 HU students are exceeding the benchmark of 70% of students performing at, or above, the 70% level, with 88.9% of data points indicating a 70% or greater performance on the assessment. Overall, our students performed at a level exceeding the expected rate, demonstrating that students are effectively meeting the requirements of GE Outcome 1.

### **General Education Outcome 2**

To assess GE Outcome 2, students' final presentations were assessed, based on a standardized numeric score of 100 points. Consistent with departmental requirements, we chose 70% as the critical value for students to demonstrate competency and fulfillment of the learning outcome. During the three semesters sampled, data indicated that students, on average, scored 89.75% on the assignment. This number indicates that students are exceeding the minimum benchmark. Furthermore, of the 1,063 data points, only 126 indicated a score below 70%. Thus, consistent with the expectation that 70% of students will perform at the 70% level or higher, the data indicated that 88.2% of students are performing at, or above, the 70% level, further exceeding expectations.

### **General Education Outcome 3**

To assess GE Outcome 3, students' individual paper assignment was assessed, based on a standardized numeric score of 100 points.

Consistent with departmental requirements, we chose 70% as the critical value for students to demonstrate competency and fulfillment of the learning outcome. During the three semesters sampled, data indicated that students, on average, scored 83.08% on the assignment. This number indicates that students are exceeding the minimum benchmark. Furthermore, of the 1,193 datapoints, only 160 indicated a score below 70%. Thus, consistent with the expectation that 70% of students will perform at the 70% level or higher, the data indicated that 86.6% of students are performing at, or above, the 70% level, further exceeding expectations.

### **Conclusion**

The data from the Spring 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020 semesters indicated that students in COMM 2110 are meeting the requirements determined by the General Education outcomes. Overall, and on average, students in the reviewed academic years performed at or above the established threshold of 70% on the assessed assignments for all three General Education outcomes. These data indicate that students in the course are fulfilling all requirements set forth by General Education at Weber State University.

## Appendix A

Most departments or programs receive a number of recommendations from their Five/Seven-Year Program Review processes. This page provides a means of updating progress towards the recommendations the department/program is enacting.

Date of Program Review: Feb. 2020	Recommendation	Progress Description
Recommendation 1	The review team said that to improve on the delivery of a top-quality education, the department needs more faculty lines, especially to help teach General Education classes that are mostly taught by adjunct instructors.	We agree with the need of full-time faculty to teach General Education classes and a broadcast engineer. More than 50% of General Education classes, sometimes upwards of 75%, are taught by adjunct instructors so this is critical.
		#### +2 progress
		#### +3 progress
		#### +4 progress
Recommendation 2	Text of recommendation	#### +1 progress
		#### +2 progress
		#### +3 progress
		#### +4 progress
Recommendation 3	Text of recommendation	#### +1 progress
		#### +2 progress
		#### +3 progress
		#### +4 progress
(add as needed)		

Additional narrative:



## Appendix B

Please provide the following information about the full-time *and adjunct faculty* contracted by your department during the last academic year (summer through spring). Gathering this information each year will help with the headcount reporting that must be done for the final Five Year Program Review document that is shared with the State Board of Regents.

Faculty Headcount	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)			
Full-time Tenured		7	9
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	7	8	9
Part-time and adjunct	3	3	3
With Master's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured			
Full-time Non-Tenured	8	8	6
Part-time and adjunct	22	22	22
With Bachelor's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured	0	0	0
Full-time Non-tenured	0	0	0
Part-time and adjunct	0	0	0
Other			
Full-time Tenured			
Full-time Non-tenured			
Part-time			
<b>Total Headcount Faculty</b>			
Full-time Tenured	6	7	9
Full-time Non-tenured	16	16	15
Part-time	25	25	25

**Please respond to the following questions.**

- 1) First year student success is critical to WSU's retention and graduation efforts. We are interested in finding out how departments support their first-year students. Do you have mechanisms and processes in place to identify, meet with, and support first-year students? Please provide a brief narrative focusing on your program's support of new students:
  - a. **Any** first-year students taking courses in your program(s)

We have many first-year students in our three General Education classes: COMM 1020 HU Principles of Public Speaking, COMM 2010 HU Mass Media and Society, and COMM 2110 HU Interpersonal and Small Group Communication. Because of the nature of these classes, faculty members monitor participation and achievement on a weekly basis as students give speeches, respond to discussion questions about mass media issues, and participate in a small group service-learning project. Faculty also fill out Starfish reports, among other things.

- b. Students declared in your program(s), whether or not they are taking courses in your program(s)

See above. In addition, declared majors and minors also receive a monthly email with deadlines and other important information. During the pandemic, additional communication was sent to students about how classes would be offered, registration deadlines, advising assistance, etc.

- 2) A key component of sound assessment practice is the process of 'closing the loop' – that is, following up on changes implemented as a response to your assessment findings, to determine the impact of those changes/innovations. It is also an aspect of assessment on which we need to improve, as suggested in our NWCCU mid-cycle report. Please describe the processes your program has in place to 'close the loop'.

In COMM 1020 HU and COMM 2110 HU courses, the Department of Communication holds an annual retreat, at which assessment results are discussed among instructors of these two courses. For COMM 1020 HU, over the past two years, we have rewritten test questions as a means of improving assessment of our students, and have continued to utilize a common rubric to ensure students are graded on the same criteria across all sections of the courses. For COMM 2110 HU, we have standardized the signature assignment of the service project class presentation to ensure all students are assessed on the same assignment across all sections of the course. These actions have aided the Department of Communication in its venture to "close the loop" with our assessment findings. Furthermore, a faculty member has attended the training workshop and completed the coding for the signature assignment twice. This workshop, conducted by the Director of General Education, covers the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and signature assignments. This training has aided in refining the

assignment description for the signature assignment in COMM 2010 and improved assessment strategies as well. This additional training has helped to “close the loop.”

## Glossary

### Student Learning Outcomes/Measurable Learning Outcomes

The terms ‘learning outcome’, ‘learning objective’, ‘learning competency’, and ‘learning goal’ are often used interchangeably. Broadly, these terms reference what we want students to be able to do AFTER they pass a course or graduate from a program. For this document, we will use the word ‘outcomes’. Good learning outcomes are specific (but not too specific), are observable, and are clear. Good learning outcomes focus on skills: knowledge and understanding; transferrable skills; habits of mind; career skills; attitudes and values.

- Should be developed using action words (if you can see it, you can assess it).
- Use compound statements judiciously.
- Use complex statements judiciously.

### Curriculum Grid

A chart identifying the key learning outcomes addressed in each of the curriculum’s key elements or learning experiences (Suskie, 2019). A good curriculum:

- Gives students ample, diverse opportunities to achieve core learning outcomes.
- Has appropriate, progressive rigor.
- Concludes with an integrative, synthesizing capstone experience.
- Is focused and simple.
- Uses research-informed strategies to help students learn and succeed.
- Is consistent across venues and modalities.
- Is greater than the sum of its parts.

### Target Performance (previously referred to as ‘Threshold’)

The level of performance at which students are doing well enough to succeed in later studies (e.g., next course in sequence or next level of course) or career.

### Actual Performance

How students performed on the specific assessment. An average score is less meaningful than a distribution of scores (for example, 72% of students met or exceeded the target performance, 5% of students failed the assessment).

### Closing the Loop

The process of following up on changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, materials, etc., to determine if the changes had the desired impact.

### Continuous Improvement

An idea with roots in manufacturing, that promotes the ongoing effort to improve. Continuous improvement uses data and evidence to improve student learning and drive student success.

### Direct evidence

Evidence based upon actual student work; performance on a test, a presentation, or a research paper, for example. Direct evidence is tangible, visible, and measurable.

### Indirect evidence

Evidence that serves as a proxy for student learning. May include student opinion/perception of learning, course grades, measures of satisfaction, participation. Works well as a complement to direct evidence.

### HIEE – High Impact Educational Experiences

Promote student learning through curricular and co-curricular activities that are intentionally designed to foster active and integrative student engagement by utilizing multiple impact strategies. Please see <https://weber.edu/weberthrives/HIEE.html>