

WSU Five-Year Graduate Program Review  
Self-Study

Cover Page

Department/Program: Master of Professional Communication

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## A. Brief Introductory Statement

The Master of Professional Communication program emphasizes the knowledge and advanced communication skills working professionals need to succeed in today's rapidly evolving and technologically complex world. Students hone their skills in writing, speaking, new media and research methods. They take cognate courses in team building and facilitation, organizational leadership, visual and mediated communication and strategic communication. Our overarching strategic goal is to provide a professionally-focused master's program that emphasizes advanced communication knowledge and skills necessary to produce effective leaders, managers and team members in for-profit, government or non-profit organizations. The program is designed to prepare effective leaders, team members, and employees in corporate, government and nonprofit organizations.

Graduates work in fields such as public relations, education, health care promotion and organizational training and development. Many students use the MPC degree to advance to strategic communication leadership roles within their chosen career field. Others use the degree to make a career change to a field that is more closely aligned with their interests, knowledge and skills in communication. A few students seek opportunities to work in higher education and may enter a doctoral program in communication or other post-secondary program after graduation.

## B. Mission Statement

### a. Description of Program Mission

The Faculty in the MPC program took the opportunity to review and update the MPC mission in fall of 2019. This statement retains many of the priorities of our previous mission statement (e.g. focus on theoretically-grounded and applied practice; integration of key communication research, writing, and presentation skills). This updated statement, however, also adds language on the growing visual and new media communication emphasis in our program (through words like design and creative) to emphasize how our program is also embracing these important trends in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communication.

### **Our Mission Statement is:**

The Master of Professional Communication program prepares working professionals with the advanced communication knowledge and skills needed to excel in a range of communication-related careers. The program trains students to utilize theoretically-grounded and creative applications of research, writing, presentation and design to lead in academic and professional organizational contexts.

- b. Brief discussion of the alignment of the program mission with the mission, core themes, and strategic plans of Weber State University  
(see [http://weber.edu/universityplanning/Mission\\_and\\_core\\_themes.html](http://weber.edu/universityplanning/Mission_and_core_themes.html))

Our overarching strategic goal is to provide a professionally-focused master's program that emphasizes advanced communication knowledge and skills necessary to produce effective leaders, managers and team members in for-profit, government or non-profit organizations. This strategic goal serves not only the interests of our students, who graduate prepared to enact their professional communication skills in a variety of leadership capacities, but also serves the interests of our community by producing students with advanced communication skills in demand in a variety of industries. Many professional organizations--Burning Glass, NACE and CERI, for example--all list communication as a (or the) top career skill students need.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, we as a faculty take seriously the need for students to gain advanced communication skills to function as full citizens in a modern democracy. We pair traditional rhetorical skills like public speaking and writing with contemporary mediated communication skills in visual communication and digital media to create well-rounded students who can engage in social discourse and make their voices heard. We simultaneously train students in communication and collaboration skills like leadership, conflict resolution, and small group facilitation so that they can engage in difficult conversations in meaningful ways across an increasingly polarized discourse climate.

As a result, our program goals align well with the overall access, growth and workplace development goals of Academic Affairs and it also supports the key priorities of the College of Arts & Humanities. For a more in-depth discussion of our current program priorities and how these fit the Academic Affairs and College of Arts & Humanities Goals at Weber State, please see our 2019 Strategic Planning Report in Appendix H on page 90.

### C. Program and Curriculum

#### a. Program Description

- i. Include all admission, retention, and degree requirements. Include GPA, standardized test scores, English language proficiency requirements, etc.  
(Alternatively, include a link to the online catalog or website that provides this information)

Admissions requirements (including admission requirements, language proficiency requirements, etc.) can be found at our website here: [weber.edu/mpc/admission.html](http://weber.edu/mpc/admission.html)

#### **Admission Requirements**

1. Minimum GPA of 3.0

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/employers-verbal-communication-most-important-candidate-skill/>; or <https://www.burning-glass.com/research-project/baseline-skills/>

2. Transcripts from every institution of higher education attended
3. Writing sample in essay form
4. Current resume
5. Three letters of recommendation (academic and/or professional).
6. Completed application with \$60 application fee (\$95 for international applicants)

#### Acceptance into Program

Each applicant is evaluated on an individual basis. Ideal applicants will present a strong overall previous academic record, positive letters of recommendation as well as professional accomplishment. An ideal class will consist of working professionals with a wide variety of backgrounds in for-profit, government or non-profit organizations. Ethnic diversity is a plus. The MPC program has limited enrollment.

#### International Students

International applicants will need to complete additional materials to comply with university and United States INS regulations. For more information, please contact the International Student and Scholar Center at 801-626-6853, or go to <https://www.weber.edu/sis/>

You also need to have your credits evaluated by a foreign credential evaluation company that evaluates the credits course-by-course. For a list of approved companies, go to: <https://www.naces.org/members.htm>

International applicants must be able to comprehend and speak English fluently, as well as read and write English competently. Candidates from non-English-speaking countries are required to establish proof of English language competency unless they received their bachelor's degree from a university in which the language of instruction was English. This may consist of one of the following:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - applicants may have an official score report which is not more than two years old sent to the MPC Office. Students must score a minimum of 550 (paper-based); 223 (computer-based), or 85 (internet-based) on the exam.
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) - applicants may have an official score report sent to the MPC Office which is not more than two years old. Students need a minimum score of 6.5.
- Completion of a program for learning English as a second language at a regionally-accredited, U.S. institution of higher learning, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), or the Learning English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) program at Weber State University.

Students who do not have these scores may be admitted to the program provisionally upon review. If they are able to perform satisfactorily in their first semester, their provisional status may be amended.

Retention and degree requirements can be found at our website here:

<https://www.weber.edu/mpc/Requirements.html>

### **Program Requirements**

1. 33 credit hours (at least 30 at the 6000-level).
2. Grade of B- or better in all courses counting toward the degree.
3. Overall GPA of at least 3.0.
4. Successful completion of a thesis, project and/or appropriate course work.

### **Course Requirements for MPC**

#### *Foundational Courses (12 credit hours)*

MPC 6010	Introduction to Graduate Study & Communication Theory (3)
MPC 6150	Writing for Professional Communicators (3)
MPC 6210	Presentational Speaking in the Workplace (3)
MPC 6700	Research Methods for Professional Communication (3)

#### Core Courses (12 credit hours) - Choose four of the six courses listed below:

MPC 6100	Team Building and Facilitation (3)
MPC 6300	New Media in Professional Communication (3)
MPC 6350	Visual Communication in the Workplace (3)
MPC 6400	Leadership Communication (3)
MPC 6450	Advanced Organizational Communication (3)
MPC 6600	Strategic Communication (3)

#### Students may choose to complete the final 9 credit hours in one of the following tracks:

Project Track (9 credit hours) Take both 6900 & 6950 + 1 elective OR 6900 + 2 electives)

- MPC 6900 Thesis/Project I (3)
- Elective 1 (3) Chosen in consultation with the MPC program director.
- Elective 2 (3) Chosen in consultation with the MPC program director Or MPC 6950 (Thesis/Project II)

Thesis Track (9 credit hours)

- MPC 6900 Thesis/Project I (3)
- MPC 6950 Thesis/Project II (3)
- Elective 1 (3) Chosen in consultation with the MPC program director.

Coursework Track (9 credit hours, chosen in consultation with the MPC program director)

- Elective 1 (3)
- Elective 2 (3) (all chosen in consultation with the MPC program director)
- Elective 3 (3)  
(no more than 3 credit hours at the 5000 level)

ii. List the program level learning outcomes

At the end of their study at WSU, students in this program will:

1. ... Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.
2. ... Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.
3. ... Demonstrate critical thinking and cultural competence in applied communication contexts.
4. ... Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.
5. ... Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – strategic communication, organizational communication and media.

*\*\*Updated/edited Fall 2019 to better reflect program goals.*

Include a list of course titles and numbers (see map below)

**Curriculum Map** *\*\*Updated/edited Fall 2019 to better reflect program goals.*

Courses in Department/Program	Department/Program Learning Outcomes				
	Writing/editing	Present (oral/visual) skills	Critical thinking / Cultural Competence	Research	Knowledge in cognate areas
MPC 6010 Into to Graduate Studies/Theory	I		I	I	I
MPC 6100 Team Building and Facilitation		I	I	I	E



MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communicators	E		I	E	I
MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking in the Workplace		E	I		
MPC 6250 Interviewing				E	E
MPC 6300 New Media in Professional Communication		I	I		E
MPC 6350 Visual Communication in the		E	I		E
MPC 6400 Leadership Communication			E	E	E
MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Communication	I		E	E	E
MPC 6500 Topics in Professional Communication*	V	V	V	V	E
MPC 6600 Strategic Communication			E	E	E
MPC 6620 Conflict Resolution & Mediation			E		E
MPC 6700 Research Methods for Professional Communication	I		E	E	
MPC 6900/6950 Thesis/Project I and II	A	A	A	A	E

*Note:* I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill).

I – 90% of students will complete the course demonstrating a 77% proficiency at the skill.

E – 90% of the students will complete the course demonstrating an 85% proficiency at the skill.

A – 90% of the students will complete the course demonstrating an 87% proficiency at the skill.

V – Varies based on the content of the topics course.

iii. Web address for WSU catalog page AND any program webpages which provide a description of the program’s curriculum, degree requirements, and course descriptions.

- Weber State Catalog Page for MPC (2019-2020 School Year):  
[https://catalog.weber.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&pooid=8202&hl=%22mpc%22&returnto=search](https://catalog.weber.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&pooid=8202&hl=%22mpc%22&returnto=search)

Program Webpages

- Program Curriculum, retention and degree requirements can be found at our website here:  
<https://www.weber.edu/mpc/Requirements.html>
- Program Course Descriptions can be found at our website here:  
<https://www.weber.edu/mpc/courses.html>

b. Evidence of ongoing demand for the program

Please provide data on the last five academic years on admissions, enrollments, and degrees awarded:

*In order to provide consistent data that conforms to the format for reporting to the Utah Board of Regents, some data will be provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Contact that office at extension 8586 for assistance.*

**NOTE:** the IR data above is collected in a manner that may not match departmental data on enrollment.

i. Admissions Chart

Academic Year	New applications	Admitted Applicants	Selectivity (%)	Applicants Enrolled	Yield (%)	Matriculated Students [IR]	Matriculated International Students [IR]	Number of Graduates (Sum, Fall, Spr) [IR]
2018-19	54	32	59%	30	93.75%	24	0	24
2017-18	58	34	59%	31	91.1%	22	0	22
2016-17	54	36	66%	32	88.88%	32	0	18
2015-16	29	29	100%	22	75.9%	21	1	19

2014-15	27	24	89%	24	100%	22	1	23
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ii. Enrollment History:

Academic Year	Number of Majors
2018-19	53
2017-18	56
2016-17	43
2015-16	36
2014-15	43

Academic Year	Faculty/Student ratios across program curr.	Average class size
2018-19	N/A*	15.20
2017-18	18.07	14.05
2016-17	17.60	11.71
2015-16	19.17	14.69
2014-15	18.86	15.24

iii. Average time to degree completion (months):

1.97 years (24 months)

The number reported above is our 10 year median time to graduation according to the office of Institutional Effectiveness. We tell prospective/current students that a typical student graduates in two calendar years (24 months), so this is exactly where we would hope the number would be.

iv. Enrollment projections – briefly describe enrollment patterns and factors influencing demand for the degree. (Note: programs are not expected to project an exact number of expected students, but rather a qualitative assessment of potential opportunities and/or threats to enrollment as well as any strategies for maximizing opportunities and managing threats.).

The MPC program first started enrolling students in 2011-2012. After enrolling 22 majors in the 2011-2012 school year, we increased to 43 majors (spread over the two “years” of the program) by 2012-2013.

Enrollment remained relatively steady for the first few years. 2012-2013 saw 43 majors; 2013-2014 saw 49; 2014-2015 had 43.

We experienced a small dip in enrollment in the 2015-2016 school year. This was due to a wide variety of factors (an improving economy meant that fewer students were looking for graduate school; pent-up demand for the program that pre-existed the program had likely been exhausted, etc.).

In 2016, the MPC program worked with Weber State Marketing and Communication to rework our marketing/advertising to spread beyond the initial pent-up demand for

our program with great success. Since that time, major counts have increased to at or over 50 students a year, which is the highest number of students we feel we can accommodate as a program without additional resources. [2016-2017 – 43 majors; 2017-2018 – 56 majors; 2018-2019 – 53 majors]. Additionally, our application numbers, incoming student GPAs and rejection rates (see Chart on p. 7 titled “Evidence of ongoing demand for the program/ Admissions Chart”) indicate over the last three years (once we responded to the dip in applicant rates in 2015-2016), that we have healthy enrollment and that we are able to maintain selective admission (with acceptance rates of around 60-70% of applicants). Moreover, as the student profile chart on p. 9 demonstrates, our students admitted are of high quality – with generally strong average GPAs and many years of relevant work experience.

We have continued these and other marketing efforts to ensure our applicant pool remains of high quality. We have paid for and run ads in the WSU Student newspaper; we help sponsor the annual Utah Public Relations Society of America conference/awards every year; we attend graduate school fairs throughout the state of Utah, etc. We regularly feature student and alumni success stories on our MPC Social Media pages. We encourage current and former students to recommend the program to colleagues and friends. We will continue to watch admissions numbers and engage in these efforts going forward.

c. Student profile

i. Please provide information on the entering class for each of the past 5 years:

Entering Class	Ave. GRE	Ave. GMAT	Ave. GPA (undergrad)	Ave. Age (years)	Ave. Relevant Work Experience (months) (optional)
2018-19	n/a**	n/a	3.5	34	80 months
2017-18	n/a**	n/a	3.5	35	69 months
2016-17	n/a**	n/a	3.5	37	65 months
2015-16	Verbal 150 Quant 144 Analy. Writing 4.0	480	3.5	36	101 months
2014-15	Verbal: 151 Quant 145 Analy. Writing 4.0	490	3.3	34	75 months

\*\*After carefully following the national research conversation about the validity and reliability of GRE scores as a measure of graduate student success, we decided to remove the GRE as an admissions requirement.

As one peer-reviewed article explains, “A new study discovered that traditional admissions metrics for physics Ph.D. programs such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) do not predict completion and hurt the growth of diversity...” For a quick overview of some of this academic research, please see the summary here:

<https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/1/eaat7550>

Though we are not a physics graduate program, similar research in other fields generally & Communication specifically (see links below) draws into question standardized testing as a valid/reliable measure for graduate student success. We argue that the combination of GPA, Work Experience, Writing Samples & Recommendation letters our students submit are a more effective overall predictor of likely graduate student success.

Selected Other academic, peer-reviewed relevant research: (there are many more studies available)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01463370500090209> (Communication Specific)

<https://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v510/n7504/full/nj7504-303a.html>

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0206570>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0013164492052004026>

*ii. Success rate of your students’ post-graduation regarding employment and/or further graduate education. Add narrative if desired.*

<b>Graduating Class</b>	<b># of Graduates (A)</b>	<b># of Graduates Employed in Field (B)</b>	<b># of Graduates in Add'l Graduate Program (C)</b>	<b># of Graduates with unknown status</b>	<b>Placement Rate (B+C)/A</b>
2018-19	24	n/a			
2017-18	22	17	3	2	87%
2016-17	15	11	1	3	80%
2015-16	19	17	2	0	100%
2014-15	23	17	2	4	82.6%

The office of Institutional Research provided these numbers. On their report, 2018/2019 was not yet available. 2017/2018 is listed as preliminary.

In addition, they only have access to people working whose wages are reported in the Utah Department of Workforce Services Database, so they may undercount graduates who are employed.

This is a complicated statistic for us to report in part because the vast majority of our students are working in the field (and/or are using communication skills as part of their job) when they enter the program. As such, something like a “placement rate” isn’t always obvious for our program, as many of our students are looking to stay in their current role and execute it more fully and/or perhaps take on new opportunities in their current organization (which may or may not involve a formal promotion).

That being said, we do have data from our MPC Exit Survey and from Department of Workforce Services 5-year Salary Data that support that we are adding significant professional/career value to our students.

**Salary Data:** In addition, we have gathered 5-year salary data from the Department of Workforce services for MPC graduates who are five years past graduation. For the students who graduated in 2012-2013, our students had a median wage of \$57,234 at the time of graduation. At the five year point, however, their media wage had increased to \$79,594. Similarly, for the students who graduated in 2013-2014, our students had a median wage of \$47,998 at the time of graduation. At the five year point, however, their media wage had increased to \$72,617. At the same time, Utah’s median earnings for all people with a Graduate/Professional Degree is \$70,156. At the five year point, both cohorts on whom we have data exceed that mark. *Note: These numbers reflect relatively small “N” sizes, so it should be considered as only part of a larger picture of graduate success.*

**On our exit survey**, we start by asking students to think about their mindset upon entry to the program. This is useful in that it tells us something about what students were hoping to do with their degree. While most of our students are working part/full time upon entry to the program, not all of our students intend to get the degree to look for a new job or a promotion (which is why the “placement rate” kinds of charts are complicated for our program. This first question, however, gives us some room to interpret the following question.

**Exit Survey Q8** - If you think of your mindset when you first started the MPC program: Which of the following applied to your career goals in seeking / pursuing an MPC degree? -- check all that apply.

#	Field	Choice Count
1	I planned to use my MPC degree to receive a promotion or to assume more responsibility in my current job	28.21% 22
2	I planned to use my MPC degree to look for a different job during or after the program.	35.90% 28
3	I planned to use my MPC degree to teach part time at a college or university	16.67% 13
4	I planned to use my MPC degree to go on for a doctorate in communication or a related field	3.85% 3
5	I planned to use my MPC Degree to go on to other graduate or professional schooling (e.g law school, another Master's program, etc.).	0.00% 0
6	I planned to use my MPC degree for personal enrichment, unrelated to job/career	12.82% 10
7	Other	2.56% 2
		78

We had 51 students select 78 answers (they were allowed to check more than one answer) as you can see in the table above.

The following question on our exit survey asked now that they are at least one semester following graduation, how has their degree been used.

**Exit Survey Q9** - Now that you have graduated from the MPC program: Which of the following applies to or describes how your MPC degree has related to your career goals? -- check all that apply.

#	Field	Choice Count
1	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree to receive a promotion or to assume more responsibility in my current job.	25.88% 22
2	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree to find a different job during or after the program	29.41% 25
3	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree to teach part time at a college or university	16.47% 14
4	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree to go on for a doctorate in communication or related field	1.18% 1
5	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree to go on to other graduate or professional schooling (e.g law school, another Master's program, etc.).	1.18% 1
6	I have used my MPC Coursework or MPC Degree for personal enrichment, unrelated to job/career.	18.82% 16
7	Other	7.06% 6
		85

We had 51 students select 85 answers (they were allowed to check more than one answer) as you can see in the table above.

The important take-aways for us are in the comparison of relative answers across the two tables.

For instance, in Q8, 22 people indicated they intended to use the MPC degree to receive a promotion or assume more responsibility in their current job (answer choice 1). In Q9, 22 students indicated that had in fact happened for them post-graduation.

Similarly, in Q8, 28 people indicated that they intended to use their MPC Degree to find a different job during or after the program (answer choice 2). At this point, 25 people indicated in Q9 that they had done so. Though that is slightly lower, job search processes are not instantaneous and this exit survey can be received as early as the semester following graduation. As a result, we will continue to watch that number, but feel it is fairly comparable to what students are reporting they desire in Q8.

Other categories are similarly comparable. On Q8 13 students report wanting to use the MPC degree to teach part time and in Q9 14 students report they are using the degree in that way, etc.

As a result, the combination of the workforce data we are able to gather, the exit survey data (including these questions and others) and the qualitative reports of student career success we receive (see some examples on p. 15 in the section titled "New Jobs, Job Promotions, Career Success") make us confident that our students are receiving real professional value from their degree.

*iii. List the most common career fields represented among your students (optional):*

Students in our program seem to cluster in five major career "types," broadly understood, upon graduation.

First, our graduates work in **direct creative communication** fields in which their primary roles are designing, implementing/executing, and evaluating the success of communication messaging. These roles include marketing, visual communication, graphic design, digital media communication, social media marketing, and similar fields.

Second, our graduates work in **strategic communication fields** in which their primary roles are planning, coordinating and executing public messaging strategies on behalf of organization(s). Though these roles can and do overlap with the direct communication roles articulated in #1 above, these roles are more likely to include titles like public relations, strategic communication, public information officers, etc.

Third, our graduates work in coordinating and developing **internal organizational communication** practices in roles like Human Resources/Human Relations, training and development, workplace learning, employee wellness, etc.

Fourth, our graduates work in various **print and broadcast media**, including broadcast television and print journalism.



Finally, a significant subset of our graduates work in a variety of organizational contexts (including governmental, nongovernmental nonprofit, for-profit, etc.) in which they are or are seeking promotion to **management**. Our students then use their communication skills extensively in their managerial roles—both internally with employees and organizational audiences and externally with clients/customers/constituents, etc.

*iv. Does your program provide career placement services: Describe:*

We do not provide systematic career placement services internal to the department.

Graduate students in our program are able to access the Career Services office at Weber State (<https://weber.edu/careerservices>). That office does provide a variety of career placement support services, including resume reviews, practice interviews, internship and employment fairs, jobs databases, etc. We have had students work with Career Services in the past.

Since many of our classroom projects are focused on theoretically-informed applied projects, our students regularly develop marketable skills through our coursework. Additionally, some classes (e.g. MPC 6600 and MPC 6100) connect students to organizational clients outside the classroom. We have had several students find new work or promotions through this kind of applied networking.

In addition, students have used the project class to create a professional web-based portfolio and develop their professional communication brand in social media and online. In Fall 2014, based on requests from students, the program director created a special subset of the project class for students wanting to build and market their professional brand. This class includes feedback on networking, blogging, and professional uses of social media. The program director uses the 6900 class to provide additional guidance on the job search process for students who are seeking that information.

In addition, all of our faculty in the graduate program engage in informal career advising with our students.

*v. List any recent awards, honors or recognition received by your students (optional).*

Papers presented at academic and/or professional conferences or published:

Four students presented research at the annual conference of the National Communication Association in Salt Lake City. (November 2018).

- Ashley Hilton, Jackie Larsen and Melissa Smith will participate on a discussion panel titled “Playing One's Part: Following Scripts and Crafting Roles in LDS Religious Practice” with Dr. Sarah Steimel, the director of the MPC.
- Jackie Larsen also presented a paper titled “Why I Stay: Perspectives of Mormon Feminism,” in a session sponsored by the Religious Communication Section. This work was advised by Dr. Hailey Gillen Hoke and Dr. Sarah Steimel.
- Cami Sabin presented a paper titled “Exit Rituals of Missionary Service: A Sign of Organizational Approval” at a session sponsored by the Religious Communication Section.

Melina Myers co-authored the paper “Mobile Augmented Reality through the Lens of Eye Tracking” with Dr. Sheree Josephson, which was accepted and presented by Dr. Josephson at Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in Washington, D.C. (August, 2018)

Cami Sabin, presented her paper titled "Centering temporary workers: the assimilation process of volunteers in temporary organizations." It won the Top Graduate Student Debut Paper award for the division of Organizational and Professional Communication at the Central States Communication Association Annual Convention (April, 2018. It will be presented on the Organizational and Professional Communication Top Paper Panel at CSCA. Sabin is also an adjunct instructor of Communication.

Jessica Schreifels Miller and Dr. Sheree Josephson published an article titled “Just state the facts on Twitter: eye tracking shows that readers may ignore questions posted by news organizations on Twitter but not on Facebook” in Visual Communication Quarterly, Volume 22 Issue 2. (September, 2015)

Jennifer Toomer-Cook and Dr. Sheree Josephson co-presented a paper titled “How reader comments on news websites influence user behavior” at the 29th annual Visual Communication Conference in Cannon Beach, Oregon (June, 2015).

#### New Jobs, Job Promotions, Career Success

As a professionally-focused program, we are also very interested in our students’ career successes. We highlight those regularly on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/MasterOfProfessionalCommunication/](http://www.facebook.com/MasterOfProfessionalCommunication/)) and in other venues, and we will not include a comprehensive list here. Here are just a few examples from the last year (2019):

- MPC Alumnus Steven Bench - new role as General Manager at Laird Plastics Boston. In this role, Steven manages the distribution and sales for his company in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine (2019).
- MPC Alumnus Matt Gerrish - new position as the Assistant Director of Social Media/Public Relations at Utah State University after nearly seven years as Weber State's Social Media Editor (2019).

- MPC student Eva Oseguera - new position as the Director of Learning & Development at Homie (2019).
- MPC Alumna Caitlin Anderson - new job as the Internal Communication Project Manager at Mountain America Credit Union (2019).
- MPC Alumnus Skyler Ridley - named Assistant Coach for Weber State Football (2019).
- MPC Alumna Amy Crosbie – new position as Senior Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Support Services / Senior Woman Administrator at Utah State University (2019).
- MPC Alumnus Paul McHardy - several new positions, most recently Director of Brand Marketing at Carrus e-Learning (2019)
- MPC Alumnus Usman Javed – promotion to Partner Manager at Pinterest Partner Solutions Canada (2019)
- MPC Alumnus Jordan Smith- new job as an assistant professor in the Department of Technical Communication at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas (2019).
- MPC Alumna Crystalee Beck - published her first book, a biography of Alan Hall, the founder and chair of MarketStar and the former chair of the WSU Board of Trustees. The book is titled “Joyce’s Boy: The Life and Times of Alan E. Hall” and is available on Amazon (2019).

Etcetera. This list (above) is not comprehensive and is only from 2019.

## D. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

### a. Measureable Learning Outcomes

At the end of their study at WSU, students in this program will:

1. ... Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.
2. ... Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.
3. ... Demonstrate critical thinking and cultural competence in applied communication contexts.
4. ... Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.
5. ... Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – strategic communication, organizational communication and media.

*\*\*Updated Fall 2019 to better reflect program goals.*

### b. Assessment of Graduating Students

Please provide a brief narrative describing the assessment processes for graduating students.

We assess our graduating students in three ways – two of which are direct and one of which is indirect.

- (1) Two of our three program “paths” to graduation are culminating final projects.
  - a. Students can select an academic Master’s Thesis path to graduation. If they do, they take MPC 6900 & MPC 6950 and finish with a written thesis. We assess those thesis projects as a form of culminating assessment.
  - b. Students can select an applied Professional Project path to graduation. If they do, they take MPC 6900 and finish an applied professional project. We assess those applied projects as a form of culminating assessment.

- (2) Our third program “path” to graduation is a combination of coursework from an approved program of study.

This is the hardest area to assess in culminating form as students do not have to take any specific class in their last semester on campus. However, we do structure the program such that students overwhelmingly take their foundations courses (e.g. MPC 6010 Intro to Grad Studies/Theory; MPC 6700 Research Methods and MPC 6150 Professional Writing) in their first two semesters. We assess the core courses and electives on rotation and can compare those scores to the scores in the initial foundations courses. Thus, we do have a way of comparing classes where many/most of the students are in their second year in the program to classes in which most students are in their first two semesters in the program.

(3) Finally, we use indirect measures like graduation/exit surveys, student reports of new jobs and promotions, and student reports of entry into additional graduate programs to demonstrate the value that our program is adding for our students' lives.

c. Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Program (replicate as needed or place in appendix)

In an effort to make this (long) document as readable as possible, we have placed this chart in the Appendix (As Appendix G, please see p. 57).

We summarize the chart briefly here, but encourage full consideration of Appendix G (p. 57).

Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong (meeting our previously-established threshold of at least 75% being rated as strong) across all five of our program learning outcomes in those culminating projects.

In addition, in many courses earlier in the program, students do meet the “strong” assessment standard on our five program learning outcomes. However, students in some of the classes taken earlier in the program (like MPC 6150 – Professional Writing) have not always been meeting our previously established threshold of 75% students being “strong” writers at the end of the course (though typically we have seen progress towards meeting those goals, and in fact have improved to meeting those goals in some courses, across the five years as tweaks have been made to curriculum and pedagogy based on this data).

We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:

(1) Until 2018, students were generally allowed to take MPC 6150 (Professional Writing) their first, second, or third semester in the program and MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) similarly any time in the first year. We have altered that such that our students are expected to take MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) in their first full semester and are expected to take MPC 6150 in their second semester. In addition, we have linked the 6010 and 6700 courses – asking that they be taken in the same semester—so students can focus on a more intensive project across multiple classes. This gives students more practice with writing, research & theory at the graduate level early in the program.

(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, to continuing to assess all of the core courses (which students typically take in their third through sixth semesters in the program), we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.).

For those students who responded (N=48), at least 75% agree or strongly agree that the MPC program has helped them strengthen each of the five MPC program learning outcomes (see results for each individual outcome in Appendix G – p. 57). Though that is an indirect measure of learning, we see that supported by the evidence that our students are regularly accepting new jobs, new promotions, and/or new responsibilities as a result of their MPC degrees. See data on salary (p. 11) from graduate surveys (p. 11-13) as well as qualitative examples of career success (p. 15-16).

(3) However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, as we reflected on assessment in 2017 and 2018 in particular, our assessment committee felt it seemed unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6010 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify our standards (rather than allowing faculty to self-determine what “strong” means) and to provide scaffolding such that classes in which skills are introduced will have lower proficiency (e.g. 77% proficiency) than classes which comprehensively assess our students (e.g. 87% proficiency). This resulted in new assessment standards which we are starting to use in 2019-2020 that include I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the updated Program Learning Outcomes (p. 5) and the updated Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7 of this report.

In addition, based on this assessment data, we are going to update our research methods curriculum starting in 2020.

(4) We believe that a one-block mixed-methods class is not giving students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. We are updating our curriculum to start in 2020 to split this 6700 (Research Methods) into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.

In sum, we strongly believe, based on our current direct and indirect measures, our students are doing well and are learning and growing throughout our program. However, we also recognize that our assessment practices could be clarified/quantified/and scaffolded to provide both clearer and more useful assessment data going forward. We also recognize that altering the research methods course could give new students a stronger understanding of research and analysis. We are excited to make these changes.

High Impact or Service Learning (if applicable)

All of our students engage in high impact learning practices while students in the MPC program. For instance, if we use Kuh (2008)'s definitions<sup>2</sup>, all of our students are required to engage in at least one writing intensive course (MPC 6150 Professional Writing) and to produce at least one original research experience (in MPC 6700 Research Methods). Beyond those individual classes, we feel strongly that as a professional communication program, our students are "encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences" and our classes are structured to encourage "early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research" (Kuh, 2008).

In addition, our program is very applied and students are regularly asked to complete projects with and for real-world community partners. For instance, in MPC 6150 (Professional Writing) not only do students have to produce professional writing projects for real community clients, students are required to find a professional reviewer who writes in their chosen communication genre to provide them professional feedback on their client product. Similarly, in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation), students are regularly required to conduct focus groups in partnership with community partners: they design the focus groups in collaboration with those partners and deliver a feedback report to the partner upon the project's completion. As a result, we strongly believe our students are given "direct experience [application] with issues they are studying in the curriculum" and that they "have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences" (Kuh, 2008).

Finally, though not all students complete a final project/thesis, we do make that option available to students. These experiences "require students nearing the end of their [graduate program] years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned" (Kuh, 2008). Our students have produced a wide array of professional final projects including training & development programs, technical writing manuals, branding packages, PR campaigns, and other products. In all cases, students are combining skills in professional writing, research and analysis, visual communication, strategy, etc. to create these culminating works.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://apps.weber.edu/wsuiimages/oie/Support%20Documents/Kuh\\_HighImpactActivities.pdf](https://apps.weber.edu/wsuiimages/oie/Support%20Documents/Kuh_HighImpactActivities.pdf)

## E. Academic Advising

### a. Advising Strategy and Process

The graduate program director serves as the academic advisor for prospective and current MPC students. The program director advises prospective students on prerequisites based on an evaluation of their undergraduate transcripts. Because MPC students are taking primarily required courses in their first three semesters, the advising load for first year students is not overly heavy.

The program director sends an email with information about course offerings and required courses for first year students a few weeks before registration opens each semester. Students regularly request more advising appointments (both in advance of registration and during the course of the normal semester) and the program director regularly meets with students

The graduate program director also always attends the first evening of the first required MPC course – the MPC 6010 Introduction to Graduate Studies & Theory – where she presents students with a paper copy of the degree requirements and discusses them with all students.

Additionally, the program director makes recommendations to accommodate the unique enrollment needs of individual students.

Second year students are still sent advising emails before registration opens each semester with course descriptions and general advising information. Second year students also typically meet with the program director between their first and second years or early in their second year to plan their electives and a path to graduation. Students usually consult with the program director for advising once a semester during their second year to make sure they stay on track for graduation.

In addition, there are numerous materials to help students understand their degrees. There are both degree maps, which chart out an ideal two-year plan, summary lists of all classes required for the degrees, and an automated program Cattracks that allows students to track their progress through their degrees.

### Effectiveness of Advising

At the current time, there are no major issues with advising. Students are able to meet with a faculty member who understands the requirements for the degree, consult materials that reinforce these requirements, and note their progress through Cattracks. Our time-to-graduation rates (see chart p. 8) seem to indicate that students are, on average, making adequate and timely progress.

### Past Changes and Future Recommendations

We have no current recommendations for advising, as the system works well for the number of students we serve in the program. The graduate program director has teaching release time of two classes/semester for administration of the program, and at this time, that time is sufficient for the advising and administration demands.



F. Faculty and Teaching

- a. Describe the minimum qualifications required of graduate faculty (e.g., degree, professional experience):

Faculty who teach in the MPC program are required to have either a Ph.D. in Communication, or a master’s degree in Communication, plus at least five years’ work experience as a communication professional.

Although there are few professional certificates in our discipline, there is a graduate certificate program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation (for instance, at the University of Utah). We have given preference to instructors who have completed this graduate certificate when determining which faculty member will teach MPC 6620 Conflict Resolution and Mediation.

- b. Faculty Demographic Information – list all faculty who teach in the program:

Below is a list of all of the faculty who teach in the Department of Communication. Faculty who have, at this point, taught in the Master of Professional Communication program specifically are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

We asked each faculty member to self-identify their gender & their ethnicity. Thus, all gender & ethnicity labels below are faculty self-identifications.

Name	Home Dept	Title/Qual	Type (tenure, tenure track, contract or adjunct)	Gender	Ethnicity
Ault, Michael *	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. University of Oklahoma	Tenure Track	Male	Caucasian non-Hispanic
Baltazar, Andrea*	Communication	Assistant Professor, M.F.A. Pepperdine University	Tenure Track	Female	Filipino
Bialowas, Anne*	Communication	Associate Professor, PhD University of Utah	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic

Cheek, Ryan	Communication	Instructor, M.A. University of Wyoming	Contract	Male	Caucasian, not hispanic
Corbin, Nicola*	Communication	Associate Professor, Ph.D. University of Georgia	Tenured	Female	Black
Galaviz, Mark G	Communication	Director of Forensics, MA- Commun. Boise State University	Contract	Male	Hispanic
Gillen Hoke, Hailey*	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. West Virginia University	Tenure Track	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Gillette, Aimee	Communication	Assistant Professor, M.F.A. New York University	Tenure Track	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Hafen, Susan *	Communication	Full Professor, PhD - Ohio University	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Haislett, Robin*	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. Texas Tech University 2019	Contract /Tenure Track 2020	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Howerton, Leslie*	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. University of Oregon 2019; M.S. Colorado State University	Contract /Tenure Track 2020	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Johns, Becky*	Communication	Professor, Ph.D. University of	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic*

		Utah			
Josephson, Sheree *	Communication	Prof, Ph.D. University of Utah	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, non-Hispanic
Lancaster, Alexander L.*	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D., West Virginia University	Tenure Track	Male	Caucasian, of Hispanic origin (Cuban)
Norman, Jean	Communication	Assistant professor, Ph.D. University of Nevada, Las Vegas	Tenure track	Female	Caucasian non-Hispanic
Packer, Colleen *	Communication	Professor, Ph.D. University of Utah	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Rodriguez, Nathan *	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. University of Kansas	Tenure- Track	Male	Hispanic
Soltani Stone, Ash	Communication	Assistant Professor, MFA, U of Utah	Tenure Track	Male	Caucasian (Persian)
Steimel, Sarah *	Communication	Associate Professor, PhD-University of Nebraska- Lincoln	Tenured	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Van Gilder, Bobbi*	Communication	Assistant Professor, Ph.D. University of Oklahoma	Tenure Track	Female	Caucasian, non-Hispanic
Warnock, Brent	Communication	Instructor	Contract	Male	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic

Wash, Ryan	Communication	Director of Debate, MPC, Weber State University	Contract	Male	Black
Canfield, Clair*	N/A	Lecturer at Utah State. Ph.D. student & Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution (U of Utah)	Adjunct	Male	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Dahl, Laura*	N/A	Associate Instructor at U of Utah, PhD U of Utah	Adjunct	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Edwards, Kathy*	N/A	Retired Tenured Associate Professor, PhD U of Utah	Adjunct	Female	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Mortensen, Casey*	N/A	Digital Marketing Analytics Manager – The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, MPC Degree from Weber State U	Adjunct	Male	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic
Scott, Randy*	N/A	Retired Tenured Full Professor, Ph.D U of Oregon	Adjunct	Male	Caucasian, Non-Hispanic

\* Faculty who have, at this point, taught in the Master of Professional

Communication program specifically are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

i. Percentage of graduate courses and/or credits taught:

	# of courses or credits taught in-load	# of courses or credits taught in overload	Percentage of courses or credits taught in overload
2018-19	8	21	73%
2017-18	14	17	55%
2016-17	8	10	56%
2015-16	8	13	62%
2014-15	5	13	72%

**See Note at end of next section (ii) on page 27.**

- ii. *Describe the faculty compensation model for thesis advising, directed study, supervision of student consulting projects / internships, etc.*

The compensation for MPC classes is designed to recognize the additional time, effort and intensity required to prepare graduate-level teaching activities, grade graduate-level work and otherwise mentor graduate students.

As a result, for any classes with more than 10 Masters students, the rate of compensation for a three credit hour MPC class is either \$5000 if the faculty member is teaching overload (summer) or as an adjunct, or \$2500 for faculty who teach an MPC course as part of their load during the fall or spring semesters (so, they count the class as in-load and also receive the \$2500 stipend).

If the class has an enrollment between five and nine students, the faculty member is compensated at the rate of pay for a three credit hour undergraduate course, either by receiving load credit during fall and spring semesters, or overload pay at the undergraduate rate during the summer.

Classes with fewer than five students are typically cancelled for low enrollment, with the exception of independent study or thesis/project classes. These independent study/projects classes are paid using an alternative model (detailed below)

Faculty members are compensated \$200 per student for graduate students enrolled in 5000-level classes. The corresponding undergraduate course that is cross-listed at the 5000-level is considered part of their load. Faculty members also receive \$200 per student for directing a three-credit hour independent project or independent study.

The current model for compensating faculty who serve on master's theses and project committees was adopted in 2013 when we streamlined the process.

The faculty member who serves as primary advisor for the Master's thesis across the multi-semester thesis project is compensated \$600 for directing the multi-semester project. The second faculty member who serves on the committee for the project is compensated at the \$200 level similar to faculty directing an independent study.

Departmental cost per course (if any) associated with in-load teaching

Courses taught by adjuncts or full-time faculty teaching on overload (which typically only occurs during the summer term) cost the MPC program \$5000 plus benefits.

Courses with 10 or more students taught by full time faculty teaching in load cost the program \$5200 plus benefits. As mentioned above, faculty members who teach a graduate course in-load receive \$2500 plus benefits in supplemental pay if the course enrolls ten or more students.

The graduate program shares faculty with the undergraduate program in the Communication Department. In the five year window covered by this program review, the MPC program has funded two tenure-track faculty hires in the Communication department. These two faculty teach sixteen courses a year in-load (they are each on a 4/4 load fall/spring). This offsets the need to fund replacement costs for the program director's reassigned time, plus the MPC courses taught by full-time faculty in-load.

Note: In addition, when faculty opt to teach a 5<sup>th</sup> class (one beyond load), they often opt (choose) for the MPC class to be the overload class. The undergraduate program has supported this because it means that overload pay comes out of the MPC budget rather than the undergraduate budget (even though the "5<sup>th</sup>" class could just as easily be considered one of the undergraduate classes). Similarly, there is high demand for teaching in the MPC program in the summer, in part because MPC overload pays better than teaching an undergraduate course on overload.

c. Programmatic/Departmental Teaching Standards

MPC courses are taught in eight-week blocks using a blended learning format that includes three hours per week of face-to-face instruction supplemented with online learning. Faculty use Canvas, the campus learning management system, to provide the online course components. Most courses include a variety of teaching methods, including lecture/discussion, case studies, guest speakers, group activities, presentations, and activities in computer labs.

Faculty Qualifications - Faculty who teach in the MPC program are required to have either a Ph.D. in Communication, or a master's degree in Communication, plus at least five years' work experience as a communication professional.

Although there are few professional certificates in our discipline, there is a graduate certificate program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation (for instance, at the University of Utah). We have given preference to instructors who have completed this graduate certificate when determining which faculty member will teach MPC 6620 Conflict Resolution and Mediation.

An exemplary list of faculty publications in the last 5 years has been included in Appendix F (see page 53). We are proud of our faculty's continued contributions to knowledge in the field as we know that this familiarity with contemporary research benefits students in the classroom.

#### Evidence of Effective Instruction

i. Regular Faculty  
Student Evaluation

At the end of each semester, the department administers the Instructor and Course Evaluation Form to provide data on teaching effectiveness from the student perspective. While tenured faculty are only required by the university to have two classes evaluated each year, it is departmental practice to have every MPC class evaluated because it is a new program. The program director, department chair and dean read the evaluations for each MPC class.

The dean also requires a yearly report where faculty list their accomplishments in teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service. In the last two years, Dr. Sheree Josephson, the new department chair, has written a short evaluation on each faculty member's performance in all three areas with an emphasis on teaching excellence.

Peer Evaluation

Peer committees also evaluate faculty teaching, and it is further evaluated during the promotion and tenure process.

The Evaluation of Peer Instruction committees (EPIC) and promotion and tenure committees are organized at the beginning of each academic year. Candidates are formally alerted to the process, and dates are established early so there is ample time to prepare for these levels of review.

Tenure-track candidates receive EPIC teaching reviews in the third and sixth years of appointment. The overall performance (including not only teaching but also scholarship/creative activities and service) of tenure-track candidates is reviewed in their second (administrative), third and sixth years (administrative plus review committees).

Once tenured, faculty members are evaluated as they seek promotion or every five years after tenure, whichever comes first. Full professors also undergo a post-tenure review process with peer evaluation of instruction every five years.

Contract faculty undergo chair-level review at the end of their first year, and peer-evaluation with chair-level review every three years in addition to student teaching evaluations.

Colleagues are supportive and congenial, but offer constructive suggestions for improvement of teaching during the peer evaluation process. The tenure and promotion evaluation is criteria-based in the areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service at the department and college levels.

The department has used the evaluation process to make personnel adjustments as necessary, replacing faculty as teachers in certain courses as a result. The department also strongly encourages improvements in specific areas in faculty teaching practice based on recommendations from the various reviews.

ii. Adjunct Faculty

As adjuncts develop their courses, the program director participates with the adjunct to ensure that syllabi are clear and appropriate for the course and program learning goals, that textbooks (if used) are appropriate and adopted on time, and that the instructor has the tools necessary to teach well.

At the end of each semester, the department administers the MPC Instructor and Course Evaluation Form for ALL classes taught by adjuncts. The evaluations are read each term by the program director, department chair and dean. The department chair returns a printed evaluation and a note to each adjunct faculty member about their performance. The program director uses the course evaluations to help make retention decisions about adjunct faculty.

iii. Mentoring Activities

Full-time faculty in the Department of Communication are assigned a faculty mentor during their first two years. Senior faculty serve as advisors, advocates and friends to help new faculty adjust to a new university and “learn the ropes.” Full-time faculty



members are also encouraged to attend the New Faculty Retreat, an overnight and off-campus activity.

The graduate program director works with new faculty to determine which MPC courses are a good fit for their background and interests. When faculty are assigned to teach in the MPC program, the program director mentors them on creating syllabi and assignments reflective of graduate level coursework in an eight week hybrid or blended learning format. Most new faculty are tech-savvy and learn to use Canvas and other learning management tools quickly.

The graduate program director hires and mentors adjuncts. In the last five years, the program has only hired two adjunct from off campus. In one case, the adjunct teaches a similar course at another university. In the other case, the adjunct has significant professional experience.

iv. Diversity of Faculty

Of the 15 full-time Communication department faculty who teach in the MPC program, only 3 identify as male (20%). This is an issue of significant concern to the faculty in the department of communication. We have been focused on this imbalance in the last five years. In fact, all three faculty who identify as male who teach in the MPC program have been hired in the last five years.

The longer list of faculty for the department of Communication includes another male-identifying faculty member (Ash Soltani-Stone) who has not yet taught in the MPC program due to this being his first semester on campus, but he certainly will.

Of the five adjuncts who have taught in the MPC program in the last five years, three are male (60%). We will continue to value gender diversity in hiring for both faculty and adjuncts.

In terms of ethnic diversity, 11/15 (or 73.3%) of the full-time Communication department Faculty who teach in the MPC program identify as Caucasian/non-Hispanic, two identify as Hispanic, one as black and one as Filipino. Of our adjuncts, all five (100%) identify as Caucasian/non-Hispanic. Three of those four faculty members who identify as Hispanic and/or Filipino have been hired in the last five years, and as such, our diversity in faculty has improved since our last program review. Again, increasing this diversity has been and will remain a strategic priority in the department of Communication.

v. Ongoing Review and Professional Development

Faculty members in the Department of Communication are undergoing more review than ever with the goal of improving teaching, encouraging more scholarship, and continuing a tradition of strong service. Every year, the dean of the College of Arts & Humanities

requires all full-time faculty to submit a Faculty Annual Report (FAR) to document accomplishments in the previous calendar year. Since becoming department chair, Dr. Sheree Josephson writes a one-page, single-spaced review of each faculty member, awarding three points each for performance on teaching, scholarship and service, with the 10<sup>th</sup> point for upholding faculty duties such as holding office hours and returning student email. The dean and department chair then meet to discuss the evaluation. On years when merit raises are awarded, these are based on the results of this yearly evaluation.

Tenure-track candidates undergo a third-year review, which includes a peer teaching review. Tenure reviews assess teaching (including peer, student and administrative evaluations), scholarship/creative performance, and service. These reviews involve extensive evaluation by the department rank and tenure committee, the department chair, the college rank and tenure committee, and finally the dean. Candidates are prepared in the second year by a chair-level review. Tenure-track faculty are considered for tenure in their sixth year. They again undergo the peer teaching review, followed by the full committee and administrative reviews mentioned above. The program director has served as chair of several peer teaching review committees for faculty who teach in the master's program.

Once tenured, faculty members are evaluated as they seek promotion or every five years, whichever occurs first. Faculty members may seek promotion to full professor in their 10<sup>th</sup> year unless they petition for early promotion. Promotion reviews assess teaching (including both peer evaluations and student evaluations), scholarship/creative activities, and service with the multiple levels of review. Tenured faculty who do not seek promotion to full professor are reviewed every five years in a post-tenure review process. Tenured faculty who have earned the rank of full professor are also reviewed every five years. The post-tenure review process also includes the peer, student and administrative teaching evaluation, and evaluates scholarly and creative performance, and service.

The department as a whole generally supports scholarly and professional development with a yearly allotment of \$400 for each full-time faculty member. The dean has typically contributed \$1,000-\$1200 in travel funds yearly to tenure-track faculty members actively pursuing scholarship. In addition, the department typically supports five to seven faculty members with an additional \$1,000 out of the money received from concurrent enrollment tuition. Many faculty attend at least one conference annually. Meanwhile, some faculty have competed for and received monies from special accounts on campus such as the Research, Scholarship and Professional Growth fund. The department also supports faculty who attend conferences by covering classes and other assignments.

#### G. Support Staff, Administration, Facilities, Equipment, and Library

##### Adequacy of Staff

The MPC Administrative Assistant position was created in Fall 2012 to provide continuity and permanent staff support. This three quarter time, 12-month employee works 30-40 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and 15-20 hours per week during the summer. The hours per week increase during fall recruitment and spring admissions periods. The employee in this position helps with recruiting and maintaining the MPC program website. She also provides back up coverage for the administrative assistant in the Communication Department.

With the addition of a permanent administrative assistant, the MPC program has adequate staffing. When hiring for this position, we look for employees with strong writing and computer/web skills so the assistant can help with web writing on both the MPC and Communication Department websites.

i. Ongoing Staff Development

The MPC Administrative Assistant regularly attends on-campus classes and workshops. In accordance with university procedures, classified staff are reviewed via WSU's Performance Review and Enrichment Program (PREP).

Adequacy of Administrative Support

Over this five year window, Deans Madonne Miner, Catherine Zublin and Scott Sprenger have provided strong support for the program. Dean Miner allowed us to capture our tuition revenue in the program's base budget in the first five years of the program operation. In turn, we have used the budget to hire additional faculty lines to support the instructional needs of the MPC and Department of Communication programs. As we were building the base in preparation for new faculty lines, we have been able to use one-time carry forward money at the end of the fiscal year to establish a scholarship endowment and student travel funds. Dean Sprenger has supported us hiring two additional full time tenure-track faculty members for the Department of Communication from the MPC budget. Dean Sprenger has also been very supportive as he's worked to integrate both Arts & Humanities graduate programs more systemically into the College's Strategic Plans.

All three Deans have been generous in giving time to speak at the hooding ceremonies associated with graduation in fall and spring semesters and otherwise provide support to our students.

Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment

In general, Elizabeth Hall is an excellent classroom facility for students and faculty. All classrooms are "smart" classrooms with the necessary equipment to support teaching and learning. Classrooms have comfortable seating for students.

The Communication Department instituted nominal course fees on classes that meet in our computer lab, including MPC 6150 Professional Writing; MPC 6700 Research Methods; MPC

6300 New Media and MPC 6350 Visual Communication in the Workplace. This funding allows us to update computer labs every four years or so and support the technology in the classrooms such as the teaching station computers and projectors.

A small space in Elizabeth Hall has been turned into an eye-tracking laboratory to house equipment where students and faculty can conduct research. Two students used the lab to conduct research for their master's theses.

We do share concerns with the undergraduate communication department that more computer labs will be necessary in the future as additional communication classes may need that technology to adequately teach our students. As more and more communication is digitally mediated, producing expert communicators may require digital resources. We currently do not have the infrastructure (physical space) to build another computer lab.

### Adequacy of Library Resources

The Stewart Library is managed by the Wendy Holliday, Dean. Library instruction, reference, and collection management have team leaders who work with subject librarians, like Nicole Beatty (see below). Information Literacy, General Instruction, and Subject-Specific Instruction is overseen by Shaun Adamson. Adamson also is the head of reference. Collection Management is overseen by Ed Hahn. Team discussions take place regarding whether or not the library can fund large purchases such as databases or journal subscriptions.

The Communication Collection is maintained and updated by Nicole Beatty, Arts and Humanities Librarian and Associate Professor. There are no additional staff members. However, Beatty works in collaboration with faculty in the department to help develop the collection. While the librarian admits that being liaison to Communication as well as Dance, Theater, English, Art, and Women and Gender Studies is a large task, there are currently no funding lines to get an additional Arts and Humanities librarian, nor is there money in the budget for individual subject librarians for each discipline. It is Beatty's goal to provide the best possible service to the departments in which she is liaison. While this is challenging, it is not impossible as long as the relationship with the faculty remains cooperative.

The Communication Collection (detailed below) is currently sufficient to support MPC students' education and research. The Library partners widely with other institutional libraries via InterLibrary Loan and students and faculty generally report being able to quickly access materials not available immediately via the Stuart library through the ILL services. Beatty is supportive of student and faculty research and works to provide needed additional resources upon request.

The Communication collection includes:  
64, 902 Print and e-books

Journal Subscriptions:

291 Communication & Mass Media  
2 Freedom of the Press & Censorship  
219 Journalism  
106 Radio & TV Broadcasting

239 dvds

Subject-specific databases including:

- *Communication and Mass Media Complete*
- *Communications and Mass Media Collection*
- *ComAbstracts/ComIndex/CIOS*
- *CQ Researcher*
- *Nexis Uni* (formerly *Lexis Nexis*)
- *New York Times Digital Microfilm*
- *Newspaper Archive*
- *Newspapers Source Plus*
- *Newspapers.com*
- *Newswire*
- *Points of View Reference Center*
- *Pro & Con Online*
- *Proquest Newsstand*

General databases/search engine including:

- *Academic Search Ultimate*
- *JSTOR*
- *Google Scholar* (can link it to library databases too)

Other databases and video platforms that can be of use:

- *America History & Life*
- *American Factfinder*
- *ABI/Inform Global*
- *Business Source Premier*
- *Academic Video Online (AVON)* which has 12,649 videos on various aspects of communication.
- *Kanopy Streaming Videos* which includes 501 videos on media and communication

H. Relationships with External Communities

Description of Role in External Communities

The Master of Professional Communication program maintains relationships with the external community in several ways:

1. We invite communication professionals to be guest speakers in our classes.

These professionals work in a wide variety of professional contexts. Examples include Dalan Hilton, Continuous Improvement Business Partner at Intermountain Hospital, Layton; Ben Cromwell and Raven Cromwell from Playworks, Spencer Barker, Corporate Recruiter at Get Air Management, Dave Smith, president of Penna Powers (PR firm in SLC) and Crystalee Beck, formerly of MarketStar and author of new book “Joyce’s Boy: The Life and Times of Alan E. Hall.”

We also regularly invite professionals working in higher education in advanced leadership roles to speak about topics related to leadership and communication in large organizations in general and higher education in particular, both of which interest many of our students. For example, these have included James Hedges, Director of Professional and Continuing Education from Westminster College, Adrienne Andrews, Asst. VP for Diversity at WSU, Sheldon Cheshire, Leadership Advisor in Student Involvement & Leadership at WSU and Barry Gomberg, Executive Director of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity at WSU.

2. Students who complete a project as a capstone experience may work with clients, especially nonprofit or governmental organizations or small/emerging businesses in the community.

Examples of community clients in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation) in 2017 include Legacy Dental, Day Treatment School, Davis Technical College, Chris & Dick's Cabinets & Counter Tops and Ogden City.

Examples of community clients in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation) in 2018 include City Gro, Layton Hospital, Utah Valley University, Community Outreach & Economic Development and Morgan High School Counseling Center.

Examples of client projects in MPC 6150 (Professional Writing) include Intermountain Healthcare intranet, Davis School Foundation blog, Timbermine restaurant social media campaign, a social media campaign for Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a Grant for Davis Recreation District, a Grant for Bonneville Shoreline Trail and a monthly eight-page newsletter for Northrup Grumman, among many other projects.

3. Faculty members maintain professional contacts and serve on community boards.

Faculty members have done professional consulting, training, and other professional communication work for community organizations. For instance, Dr. Sarah Steimel has done training on internal/employee communication for Wasatch Peaks Credit Union (2018). Dr. Hailey Gillen-Hoke provided Interpersonal Communication training for the Davis County Health Department (2015) and Interpersonal and Conflict Communication consulting for Wasatch Integrated Waste Management (2017-2018).

Faculty members also serve on a number of national and local boards. For example, Dr. Colleen Packer is on the board of the Utah Council on Conflict Resolution and has served as the Mediator Co-Coordinator for the Utah Alternative Dispute Resolution, Ogden Justice Court. Dr. Sheree Josephson is on the board of Visual Communication Quarterly. Dr. Jean Norman serves as the secretary for the Utah Headliners chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and a founding organizer of the Utah College Media Alliance. Dr. Norman has also been a member of the College Town Marketing Committee since 2014, and she serve on the Ogden Civic Action Network's housing subcommittee. Dr. Kathy Edwards is serving on the national advisory committee for Phoenix SOAR, which has been recognized as the standard of care for hospital peer support by the American Burn Association. These are just a few examples from the past three years.

I. Results of Previous Program Reviews

There were four challenges articulated in our last 5 year program review. Those are detailed below (with recommendations from the program review committee when appropriate)

Problem Identified	Action Taken	Progress
<p>Challenge 1 - A graduate program with a professional emphasis may face pressure towards conformity with more traditional Masters programs</p> <p>Recommendation 1 - Give priority to professionally oriented measures of assessment, rather than theses and academic presentations by students at conferences.</p>	<p>Actions Taken:</p>	<p>We have worked to keep the focus on professionally focused masters programs in several ways</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) After reviewing scholarship on GRE's dubious success predicting graduate school success, we dropped the GRE entrance requirement and have given more weight to combined GPA/Work Experience/Reference letters.</li> <li>(2) While we continue to support and encourage thesis papers for students interested in that kind of research/writing, we have many more students completing applied professional projects as their culminating experience than thesis papers.</li> <li>(3) We promote our students' career accomplishments (new jobs, promotions, etc.) both in this program review and in public forums (department newsletter, Facebook page, LinkedIn, etc.).</li> <li>(4) We work with professional guest-speakers in the classroom and professional / community clients beyond the classroom to ensure our students are getting professionally relevant and up-to-date skills from the program.</li> </ol>



<p>Challenge 1 (same as 1 above, but with a second recommendation)</p> <p>Recommendation 2 - Develop measures to assess the newly implemented coursework option in lieu of a thesis or project.</p>	<p>Actions Taken:</p>	<p>This has proved more challenging.</p> <p>(1) We have done more to create a consistent pattern of classwork in the first year in the program. We now require virtually all students to take the MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research methods) in their first full semester and MPC 6150 (Professional Writing) in the subsequent semester. We also strongly encourage students to take MPC 6210 (Professional Speaking) in their first year, so all foundations courses should be taken in the first year. This allows us to use those courses as a comparison to growth in other courses.</p> <p>(2) We do assess all of the core courses on a regular rotation. Since students are required to take at least 4/6 core courses and many students take a 5<sup>th</sup> and/or 6<sup>th</sup> of the 6 as their electives in the coursework track, this allows us to assess those students.</p> <p>(3) We do use indirect measures for all students, including exit surveys completed at least a semester after graduation and reports of career success (new jobs, promotions, etc.).</p> <p>(4) We have not yet, however, found a single way to directly assess (as opposed to indirectly measure) all students taking a wide variety of courses in their final semester. There are no nationally normed measures or standardized assessments of learning like might be present in other disciplines. We continue to explore and are open to additional ideas.</p>
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<p>Challenges 2 &amp; 3 – Challenge 2. The need to add a recruiting coordinator to work with employers in professional fields Challenge 3. The need for career placement and advising at the university level</p> <p>Recommendation 3 - Recruit a larger applicant pool. When resources become available for additional staff positions, hire a professional staff member to help with recruiting.</p>	<p>Actions Taken:</p>	<p>The MPC program first started enrolling students in 2011-2012. After enrolling 22 majors in 2011-2012, we increased to 43 majors (spread over the two “years” of the program) by 2012-2013.</p> <p>Enrollment remained relatively steady for the first few years. We experienced a small dip in enrollment in the 2015-2016 school year.</p> <p>(1) In 2016, the MPC program worked with Weber State Marketing and Communication to rework our marketing/advertising to spread beyond the initial pent-up demand for our program with great success. Since that time, major counts have increased to at or over 50 students a year, which is the highest number of students we feel we can accommodate as a program without additional resources. Additionally, our application numbers, incoming student GPAs and rejection rates (see Chart on p. 7 titled “Evidence of ongoing demand for the program/ Admissions Chart”) indicate that we have healthy enrollment and that we are able to maintain selective admission</p> <p>(2) We have continued these and other marketing efforts to ensure our applicant pool remains of high quality. We have paid for and run ads in the WSU Student newspaper; we help sponsor the annual Utah Public Relations Society of America conference/awards every year; we attend graduate school fairs throughout the state of Utah, etc.</p>
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		<p>(3) We regularly feature student and alumni success stories on our MPC Social Media pages. We encourage current and former students to recommend the program to colleagues and friends.</p> <p>We will continue to watch admissions numbers and engage in these efforts going forward.</p> <p>(4) However, despite asking for funding for additional staff/ a recruiter at the college level, we have been told that resource is not available. Recruitment, admissions and advising is still entirely handled by the Program Director and the Administrative Specialist (unlike in many other graduate programs on campus).</p> <p>(5) At the University level: The Career Services Division on campus hired a new Career Services coordinator for Arts &amp; Humanities in August 2016. Amelia Williams, the new Arts &amp; Humanities person, is cognizant of graduate students and has expressed willingness to work with graduate students as part of the university's overall career services resources.</p>
<p>Challenge 4 - The need to work with faculty in other/emerging WSU Masters' programs to ensure that there is not too much overlap between the programs</p>	<p>Actions Taken:</p>	<p>(1) We continue to foster strong relationships with Masters programs on campus.</p> <p>(2) Our students regularly take electives from the MBA, MEd and MENG programs. We allow students from other programs to take our classes as electives as well. We updated our electives in 2019 in partnership with directors of</p>

		<p>other Masters programs to continue to support our program and encourage interdisciplinary study when it would benefit our students.</p> <p>(3) We actively participate in conversation at graduate council with new/emerging Masters programs to try and encourage all programs to have a unique identity. We are not feeling overly threatened by any new/emerging Masters programs on campus.</p>
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J. Action Plan for Ongoing Assessment Based on Current Self Study Findings

Action Plan for Evidence of Learning Related Findings

Problem Identified	Action to Be Taken
<p>Issue 1 – Despite conversation over the last five years refining our definition of “strong” and “adequate”, we still have considerable variation in what folks qualitatively describe as “strong.”</p> <p>Historically there had been some disagreement about the utility of putting quantifiable measures on this term (‘strong’) as there was some sense that strength might look different to different faculty. Though that is true, it also creates measurement problems in that the term is operationalized differently, leading to inconsistencies that affect assessment.</p>	<p>Current 5 Year Program Review: As a result, we have worked to quantify these standards going forward. See new curriculum map with quantified definitions and levels of learning on p. 6-7.</p>
	<p>Year 1 Action to Be Taken: We will implement the new standards and work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as part of regular annual assessment processes to ensure new standards are working.</p>
	<p>Year 2 Action to Be Taken: We will implement the new standards and work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as part of regular annual assessment processes to ensure new standards are working.</p>
	<p>Year 3 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through those annual review processes.</p>
	<p>Year 4 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through those annual review processes.</p>
<p>Issue 2 – The current assessment</p>	<p>Current 5 Year Program Review: As a result, we</p>

<p>framework also did not fully allow us to capture student growth in that the standards for assessment were the same in first semester classes (75% will be strong) and last semester classes (75% will be strong).</p>	<p>have re-defined our assessment standards and updated our curriculum map to expect different levels of learning at the introductory, emphasized, and assessed comprehensively levels. See new curriculum map with quantified definitions and levels of learning on p. 6-7.</p>
	<p>Year 1 Action to Be Taken: We will implement the new standards and work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as part of regular annual assessment processes to ensure new standards are working.</p>
	<p>Year 2 Action to Be Taken: We will implement the new standards and work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as part of regular annual assessment processes to ensure new standards are working.</p>
	<p>Year 3 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through those annual review processes.</p>
	<p>Year 4 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through those annual review processes.</p>
<p>Issue 3: Our first learning outcome (Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.) has shown significant improvement in the MPC 6150 course but needs continued support to help students achieve the best writing outcomes.</p> <p>Students who choose to complete a thesis or project are finishing the program with strong ratings in these skills.</p> <p>Additionally, on exit-surveys at least a semester after graduation, students do generally report that they agree or strongly agree the MPC program strengthened their skills in this area.</p>	<p>Current 5 Year Program Review: Until 2018, students were generally allowed to take MPC 6150 their first, second, or third semester in the program. We have altered that such that our students are expected to take MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) in their first full semester and are expected to take MPC 6150 in their second semester. This gives them more practice writing at a graduate level in other courses before 6150. We, additionally, have refined the major assignments in the writing course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6150 writing course. We are excited to continue that path.</p> <p>Year 1 Action to Be Taken: Continue to refine writing assignments in the MPC 6150 course. Add additional feedback on writing in the MPC 6010 course (which is a pre-req for 6150).</p> <p>Year 2 Action to Be Taken: Continue to refine</p>

	writing assignments in the MPC 6150 course. Add additional feedback on writing in the MPC 6010 course (which is a pre-req for 6150).
	Year 3 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes. In addition, we can explore linking more courses (the way we have linked 6010 and 6700 in sequence) if outcomes demonstrate that value.
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes.
<p>Issue 4: Our second learning outcome (Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.) has consistently had students performing just below the desired benchmark in MPC 6210 Professional Speaking (e.g. students might be assessed as 71% strong rather than 75% strong).</p> <p>Students who choose to complete a thesis or project are finishing the program with strong ratings in these skills.</p> <p>Additionally, on exit-surveys at least a semester after graduation, students do generally report that they agree or strongly agree the MPC program strengthened their skills in this area.</p>	<p>Current 5 Year Program Review: We continue to refine the major assignments in the presentational speaking course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6210 course. We are excited to continue that path. We have also begun a conversation about adding more speaking opportunities into the 6010 and 6700 classes most students take in their first semester to give students more practice speaking in advance of 6210. We also hope that clarifying assessment standards (what constitutes “strong”) per Issue 1 above will help us better use this assessment data.</p> <p>Year 1 Action to Be Taken: Continue to refine speaking assignments in the MPC 6210 course. Add additional speaking practice in the MPC 6010 /6700 courses (which are often taken before 6210).</p> <p>Year 2 Action to Be Taken: Same. Assess progress towards goal in 6210 course, especially given new quantified and scaffolded assessment standards.</p> <p>Year 3 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes. In addition, we can explore linking more courses (the way we have linked 6010 and 6700 in sequence) if outcomes demonstrate that value.</p> <p>Year 4 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes.</p>
Issue 5: Our fourth learning outcome	Current 5 Year Program Review: Aligning the MPC

<p>(Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data) is not being met at the 75% strong threshold.</p> <p>Students who choose to complete a thesis or project are finishing the program with strong ratings in these skills.</p> <p>Additionally, on exit-surveys at least a semester after graduation, students do generally report that they agree or strongly agree the MPC program strengthened their skills in this area.</p>	<p>6010 (Intro to Grad Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) course such that students must take both; take them sequentially; and generally take them in their first semester in the program has led to much improved critical thinking outcomes (Program Outcome 3) and some improvement research outcomes (Program Outcome 4) since our last program review.</p> <p>However, though many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, the result was not as many as we had hoped (typically about 60-70% of students were rated “strong” rather than 75%). 6700 is taken in the students’ first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become “strong” in this difficult skill. This supports our decision to both clarify (quantify) and scaffold standards (see Issues #1 &amp; 2 above) such that we would expect higher proficiency from students at the end of the program than at the beginning.</p> <p>We also believe that a one-block mixed-methods class may not give students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. We are updating our curriculum to split this 6700 into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.</p> <p>Year 1 Action to Be Taken: Update curriculum – get both new Research Methods classes approved through University Curriculum processes; update MPC curriculum to include those courses. Assess research learning in those courses.</p> <p>Year 2 Action to Be Taken: Same. Assess progress towards goal in 6700 course, especially given new quantified and scaffolded assessment standards.</p>
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	Year 3 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes.
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken: same, we will also make any adjustments to these standards identified through annual review processes.

K. Action Plan for Staff, Administration, or Budgetary Findings

Problem Identified	Action to Be Taken
Issue 1: As we grow (and as our field grows in technological focus), we need access to more technology/computer labs and space.	Current 5 Year Program Review: We have raised these issues with our Dean and share these concerns with our undergraduate Communication department. We do collect course fees to help fund technology/computer labs in the courses that use those resources. If additional courses begin to use those resources, we may have to update fees further. However, we cannot provide more space for additional labs alone.
	Year 1 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan
	Year 2 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan
	Year 3 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan
Issue 2: Our program has reached a point where we cannot really grow (add more majors consistently) without additional resources in terms of faculty as well as labs/space.	Current 5 Year Program Review: We discussed this issue in our 2019 strategic report to administration (See Appendix H, p. 90). We were told that at this point they agree that we should hold steady in size. As a result, our focus will continue to be on recruiting a diverse and qualified applicant pool. However, we have to balance that with reasonable admissions rates, etc.
	Year 1 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan. Continue to demonstrate need for more resources in annual strategic plans, etc.
	Year 2 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan. Continue to demonstrate need for more resources in annual strategic plans, etc.
	Year 3 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan. Continue to demonstrate need for more resources in annual strategic plans, etc.
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken: continue above plan. Continue to demonstrate need for more resources in annual strategic plans, etc.



L. Summary of Artifact Collection Procedure

Artifact	Learning Outcome Measured	When/How Collected?	Where Stored?
MPC Theses/Projects (MPC 6900/6950)	Writing/editing, research, critical thinking, speaking	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6900	Canvas  Thesis projects are also stored in the WSU Library's digital thesis repository.
Writing samples and Writing tests in MPC 6150 Writing for Professional Communication	Writing/editing	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6150	Canvas
Recordings of presentations in MPC 6210 Presentational Speaking	Speaking/presentations	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6210	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6700 Research Methods	Research, Critical Thinking	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6700	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6010 Intro to Grad Theory	Critical Thinking	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6010	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6600 Strategic Communication	Knowledge in cognate area, Critical Thinking	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6600	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6400 Leadership Communication	Knowledge in cognate area	Once a year in MPC 6400	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6350 Visual Communication	Knowledge in cognate area	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6350	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6300 New Media	Knowledge in cognate area	Once a year across all sections of MPC 6300	Canvas

Final projects in MPC 6100 Team Build. & Facilitation	Knowledge in cognate area	Once a year in MPC 6100	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6450 Advanced Organizational Comm	Knowledge in cognate area	Once a year in MPC 6450	Canvas
Final projects in MPC 6500 Special Topics	Knowledge in cognate area, Writing, Speaking, Critical Thinking (as appropriate to topic)	Occasionally (intend once every three years)	Canvas
Exit Surveys	Writing, Speaking, Critical Thinking, Research, Cognate Areas	Once a year	Qualtrics (available through eWeber)

All assessment artifacts are anonymous. The intent is to evaluate the quality of education in the program, not to evaluate the individual student. Artifacts have been rated on the learning objective(s) assessed that year using the categories below (this is the old assessment system, being replaced by the more specific system described on p. 7-8 of this report):

“Strong” – demonstrates a high level of competence. Work that is “publishable” or “presentable” in a corporate setting, with minor revisions. Examples include brochure or web copy that could be used with only minor editing changes (if any). Research papers will be rated “strong” if they are/could be accepted for presentation at an academic or professional conference.

“Adequate” – demonstrates an acceptable level of competence on the variable assessed. Could be published or presented in a corporate setting with some substantive editing. An adequate academic research paper is one that could be revised for submission to a conference, based on feedback.

“Inadequate” – demonstrates work that would be rejected or returned for major revisions in a corporate or academic context. Examples include brochure or web copy that violates the principles of best practices for brochure or web writing, or a research paper that would likely be rejected by an academic or professional conference.

APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Student and Faculty Statistical Summary**

Master of Prof Communication	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*
<b>Student Credit Hours Total <sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>Undergraduate SCH</b>	<b>18,046</b>	<b>17,953</b>	<b>17,521</b>	<b>18,433</b>	<b>19,519</b>
<b>Graduate SCH</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>951</b>
<b>Student FTE Total <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>637.78</b>	<b>627.83</b>	<b>621.38</b>	<b>660.48</b>	<b>698.18</b>
<b>Undergraduate FTE</b>	601.53	598.43	584.03	614.43	650.63
<b>Graduate FTE</b>	36.25	29.40	37.35	46.05	47.55
<b>Student Majors <sup>3</sup></b>					
	<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Program Graduates <sup>4</sup></b>					
	23	19	15	22	24
<b>Student Demographic Profile <sup>5</sup></b>					
Female	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>
Male	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Faculty FTE Total <sup>6</sup></b>	<b>33.82</b>	<b>32.75</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>36.56</b>	n/a
Adjunct FTE	11.9	11.46	13.13	14.95	n/a
Contract FTE	21.92	21.29	22.17	21.61	n/a
<b>Student/Faculty Ratio <sup>7</sup></b>	<b>18.86</b>	<b>19.17</b>	<b>17.60</b>	<b>18.07</b>	n/a
*Data for 2018-19 are preliminary findings and subject to change.					

Program Name: Master of Prof Communication		2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Expectation of time to graduation?	# of years	2	2	2	2	2
Number and percent of majors meeting expectation for graduating	Department	81%	59%	75%	N/A*	N/A*
Number and percent of majors graduating w/in 1 year of expectation	Department	81%	69%	84%	N/A*	N/A*
Number and percent of majors graduating w/in 2 years of expectation	Department	85%	69% *	84%*	N/A*	N/A*
Number and percent of majors who don't complete by 6 years	Department					
Average overall hours of graduates	University	39.8	36.5	40	40	39
	Department	37	34	33	33	33
Average 'years to degree' for master's degree recipients	University	1.99	1.95	1.66	1.93	1.93
	Department	1.99	1.68	1.6	1.66	1.8

*Note:* Most recent years sometimes say N/A because data hasn't been collected – e.g. we are not yet two years past 2018-2019.  
Data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**Appendix B: Contract/Adjunct Faculty Profile**

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Rank	Tenure Status	Highest Degree	Years of Teaching	Areas of Expertise
Clair Canfield	M	Caucasian	Adjunct at WSU	Lecturer at Utah State U	Ph.D. student  Graduate Certificate in Conflict Resolution (U of U)	18	Interpersonal Comm, Conflict Resolution - graduate certificate earned, University of Utah
Laura Dahl	F	Caucasian	Adjunct at WSU	Associate Instructor at U of Utah	Ph.D.	6	Web Usability, Organizational Communication
Kathy Edwards	F	Caucasian	Adjunct (formerly Associate Professor)	Retired Tenured Associate Professor	PhD	20	Strategic Communication, Public Relations, Writing, Social Media
Casey Mortensen	M	Caucasian	Adjunct	Digital Marketing Analytics Manager – The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	MPC	2	Marketing & Communication, Analytics & Research, Pragmatic Marketing Certified
Randy Scott	M	Caucasian	Adjunct (formerly Full Professor)	Retired Tenured Full Professor	PhD	40	Persuasion, Rhetoric, Communication Theory

**Appendix C: Staff Profile**

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Job Title	Years of Employment	Areas of Expertise
Shari Love	F	White	Masters of Professional Communication Admin Assistant III	18 years total; 5 years in WSU MPC Department	Customer service, advisement, recruitment, Word, Excel, social media, web site maintenance.
Sareah Gardner	F	White, Not Hispanic	Department of Communication Administrative Assistant	22 years total; 2 years in WSU Comm Department	Customer service, advisement, Budgeting and Scheduling

Summary Information (as needed)

**Appendix D: Financial Analysis Summary**

<b>Master of Professional Communication</b>					
<b>Funding</b>	<b>14-15</b>	<b>15-16</b>	<b>16-17</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>18-19</b>
Appropriated Fund	202,602	301,200	301,405	373,179	364,242
Other:					
Special Legislative Appropriation					
Grants or Contracts					
Special Fees/Differential Tuition	0	0	0	0	1,473
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$202,602</b>	<b>\$301,200</b>	<b>\$301,405</b>	<b>\$373,179</b>	<b>\$365,715</b>

Total FTE	36.25	29.4	37.35	46.05	47.55
Cost per FTE	\$5,589.02	\$10,245	\$8,070	\$8,104	\$7,691

*Note:* Data provided by Provost's Office

Summary Information (as needed)

**Appendix E: External Community Involvement Names and Organizations**

Name	Organization
Dalan Hilton	Intermountain Hospital, Layton
Ben Cromwell	Playworks
Ben Cromwell	Playworks
Spencer Barker	Get Air Management
Dave Smith	Penna Powers
Crystalee Beck	MarketStar / Entrepreneur
James Hedges	Westminster College
Colin Searle	Intermountain Medical (Corporate)
Brooks Stephenson	Intermountain Primary Children's Hospital



## Appendix F: Recent Faculty Research/ Publications – examples from the last five years.

- **Ault, M. K.** (2018). “Being refined into a better form:” The structuration process of missionary identification. *Journal of Communication and Religion*, 41(2).
- Ness, A. M., Johnson, G., **Ault, M. K.**, Taylor, W. D., Griffith, J. A., Connelly, S., . . . Jensen, M. L. (2017). Reactions to ideological websites: The impact of emotional appeals, credibility, and pre-existing attitudes. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 72, 496- 511.  
doi:10.1016/j.chb.2017.02.061
- **Ault, M. K.**, Ness, A. M., Taylor, W. D., Johnson, G., Connelly, M. S., Jensen, M. L., & Dunbar, N. E. (2017). Ideological lens matters: Credibility heuristics, pre-existing attitudes, and reactions to messages on ideological websites. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 68(3), 315-325
- **Ault, M. K., Van Gilder, B.** (2016). Polygamous family structure: How communication affects the division of household labor. *Western Journal of Communication*, 80(5), 559- 580.
- **Ault, M. K., Van Gilder, B.** (2015). Polygamy in the United States: How marginalized religious communities cope with stigmatizing discourses surrounding plural marriage. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 44.
- Taylor, W. D., Johnson, G., **Ault, M. K.**, Connelly, S., Jensen, M. L., Dunbar, N. E. (2015). Ideological group persuasion: A within-person study of how violence, interactivity, and credibility features influence online persuasion. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 51, 448-460.
- **Bialowas, A., & Cheek, R.** (n.d. accepted). Funneling fatherhood, masculinity and the super-dad through a critique of Mr. Incredible and Ant-Man. In J. Lesson-Schatz (Ed.), *Parenting Through Pop Culture*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- **Bialowas, A., & Steimel, S.** (2019). Less is more: Use of video to address the problem of teacher immediacy and presence in online courses. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 31(2), 354-364.
- **Bialowas, A., & Corbin, N.** (2019). A failure to defend against cyberbullying: Examining the organization’s competency in standing up for its members. In T. L. Rentner & D. P. Burns (Eds.), *Case Studies in Sport Communication: You Make the Call*. London: Routledge.
- **Cheek, R., & Bialowas, A.** (n.d. accepted). Deconstructing the hero-sidekick bromance: Foggy, Kato, and the masculine performance of friendship. In J. Lesson-Schatz & S. Parson (Eds.), *Superheroes and Masculinity*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- **Corbin, Nicola. A., and Bialowas, A.** (forthcoming). What did Ryan Lochte do? Bouncing back from an international crisis. In Terry Rentner and David Burns (Eds.) *You Make the Call: Case Studies in Sport Communication*. Routledge.
- Myers, S. A., Goodboy, A. K., Johnson, J. D., Vallade, J. I., Vela, L. E., LaBelle, S., Bryand, M.C., Sollitto, M., Thoma, J. R., Berkebile, T., **Gillen, H. G.**, & Odenweller, K. (in press). Developing a profile of the effective instructor: An initial investigation. *Southern Communication Journal*.
- **Gillette, A.** Primary Editor, “Chef Darren: The challenge of profound deafness” – airing on PBS channels nationwide late 2019 – directed by Academy Award-nominated director Dorothy Fadiman. Official selection, Oregon Documentary Film Festival; Winner, Spotlight Documentary Film Awards; Official selection, Dumbo Film Festival

- Plec, E., & Hafen, S. (2018.). Learning to howl: An exercise in internatural abduction. In A. Parish & K. Bjørkdahl ( Eds.) *Rhetorical Animals: Boundaries of the Human in the Study of Persuasion* (pp. 171-196). Lexington Books: Lanham MD.
- Josephson, S. (2020 in press). *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media* (Eds.) S. Josephson, J. D. Kelly, & K. Smith. Routledge.
- Kelly, J. D., Josephson, S., & Smith, K. (2020 in press). Introduction. In S. Josephson, J. D. Kelly, & K. Smith (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*. Routledge.
- Tyler, S., & Josephson, S. (2020 in press). Using eye tracking to see how children read interactive storybooks with supplemental or incidental digital features. In S. Josephson, J. D. Kelly, & K. Smith (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*. Routledge.
- Josephson, S., & Myers, M. (2019 in press). Mobile Augmented Reality through the lens of eye tracking. *Visual Communication Quarterly*.
- Josephson, S. (2016). "On not looking: the paradox of contemporary visual culture" edited by Frances Guerin, *Visual Communication Quarterly*, 23(2), 129-130.
- Josephson, S. & Miller, J. (2015). "Just state the facts on Twitter: Eye tracking shows that readers may ignore questions posted by news organizations on Twitter but not on Facebook," *Visual Communication Quarterly*, 22 (2), 94-105.
- Call, C., Lancaster, A. L., Sowerby, A., Stevenson, K., Asensio, I., & Gesteland, B. J. (in press). Are we engaged? A college-level inventory of community engagement. *EJournal of Public Affairs*.
- Lancaster, A. L. (2018). Student learning with permissive and restrictive cell phone policies: A classroom experiment. *International Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 12 (1), 1-5. doi:10.20429/ijstol.2018.120105
- Lancaster, A. L., & Rittenour, C. E. (2017). Parishioners' and non-parishioners' perceptions of priests: Homilies informed by an intergroup perspective are linked to more positive perceptions. *Journal of Communication and Religion*.
- Goldman, Z. W., Cranmer, G. A., Sollitto, M., Labelle, S., & Lancaster, A. L. (2016). What do students want? A prioritization of instructional behaviors and characteristics. *Communication Education*. doi:10.1080/03634523.2016.1265135
- Lancaster, A. L., Bowman, N. D., & Harvell, L. A. (2016). "Death is coming, but I'm too scared to think about it": Defining and distinguishing the roles of death and fear as motivators to cognitive, affective, and behavioral change. In L. A. Harvell, & G. Nisbett (Eds.), *Denying Death: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Terror Management Theory*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Lancaster, A. L., Dillow, M. R., Ball, H., Borchert, K. A., & Tyler, W. J. C. (2016). Managing information about a romantic partner's relationship history: An application of the theory of motivated information management. *Southern Communication Journal*, 81, 63-78. doi:10.1080/1041794X.2015.1089926
- Cohen, E. L., & Lancaster, A. L. (2016). Something to look forward to: Understanding the appeal of ritualistic television co-viewing events. In, K. M. Ryan, D. Macey, & N. Springer,

(Eds.), *Friends, Lovers, Co-workers, and Community: Everything I Know About Relationships I Learned from Television*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press.

- Cohen, E. L., Bowman, N. D., & **Lancaster, A. L.** (2016). R u with some 1? Using text message experience sampling to examine television coviewing as a moderator of emotional contagion effects on enjoyment. *Mass Communication and Society*, 19, 149- 172. doi:10.1080/15205436.2015.1071400
- Cranmer, G. A., **Lancaster, A. L.**, & Harris, T. M. (2016). Shot in black and white: Visualized framing within ESPN's The Body Issue. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 9, 209-228. doi:10.1123.ijsc.2015-0126
- **Lancaster, A. L.**, & Goodboy, A. K. (2015). An experimental examination of students' attitudes toward classroom cell phone policies. *Communication Research Reports*, 32, 107-111. doi:10.1080/08824096.2014.989977
- Smith, E.R., Hettinga, K., **Norman, J.**, and Payne, L.L. (2019). Understanding communities in student newsrooms. *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication* (9):1, 1-11.
- **Norman, J.** (2019). Social capital of last resort: How people with low socio-economic status rely on God when social resources are scarce. *Journal of Communication and Religion* (42):2.
- **Norman, JR** (2017). "How Student Journalists Transition from Personal to Professional Uses of Mobile Devices and Social Media," College Media Review: College Media Association.
- **Rodriguez, N.J.** (in press). Threats to user privacy in online spaces: Trends, attitudes and remedies, in **Encyclopedia of Criminal Activities and the Deep Web**, M. Khosrow-Pour (Ed.), Information Science Reference.
- **Rodriguez, N.J.** (In Press). #FamilyTravelHacks: how a government Twitter feed gets hijacked by negative replies, political comments, and affiliative humor, in #TalkingPoints: Twitter, the public sphere, and the nature of online deliberation, G. Bouvier & J. Rosenbaum-Andre (eds.), Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Bobkowski, P.S., Jiang, L., Peterlin, L., & **Rodriguez, N.J.** (2018). Who gets vocal about hyperlocal: Neighborhood involvement and socioeconomics in the sharing of hyperlocal news. *Journalism Practice*, 1(5): 1-19.
- **Soltani-Stone, A.** *Rez Meta: Navajo Tradition and Innovation*. (forthcoming book 2020). University of Nebraska Press.
- **Steimel, S.** (2018). Core beliefs/content accommodation policies and teaching practice. *First Amendment Studies*, 1-11. doi: 10.1080/21689725.2018.1507833
- **Steimel, S.** (2018). Skills-based volunteering as both work and not work: A tension centered examination of constructions of "volunteer". *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*. 29, 133-143 doi: 10.1007/s11266-017-9859-8
- **Steimel, S.** (2017). Negotiating refugee empowerment(s) in resettlement organizations. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 15(1), 90-107. doi: 10.1080/15562948.2016.1180470
- **Steimel, S.** (2016). Negotiating knowledges and expertise in refugee resettlement organizations. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2(1), 1-15. doi: 10.1080/23311886.2016.1162990
- **Van Gilder, B., Ault, M. K.** (forthcoming). Disrupting dominant discourses of the idealized nuclear family: A study of plural families in Centennial Park, Arizona. *Journal of Communication and Religion*.

- **Van Gilder, B. J.** (In press). Sexual orientation stigmatization and identity work for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in the U.S. military. *Journal of Homosexuality*. (Advance online publication, 2018). doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1522812.
- Cionea, I. A., **Van Gilder, B. J.**, Hoelscher, C. S., & Anagondahalli, D. (2019). A crosscultural comparison of expectations in romantic relationships. *Journal of International & Intercultural Communication*, 12(4), 289-307. doi:10.1080/17513057.2018.1542019.
- **Van Gilder, B. J.** (2019). Femininity as perceived threat to military effectiveness: How military service members reinforce hegemonic masculinity in talk. *Western Journal of Communication*, 83(2), 151-171. doi:10.1080/10570314.2018.1502892.

**Appendix G: Evidence of Learning: Program Assessment**

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Learning Outcome 1:  Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.	Measure 1: Sample of MPC theses and projects from 2014-15	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 1: 78% of student theses and projects scored "strong" and 22% scored adequate	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong writing skills, although there are some students who could improve in this area	2014-15: Look at grading rubrics in classes to see how writing is evaluated. See if we are giving enough weight to things like organization of ideas, ability to write a persuasive argument, ability to demonstrate and apply conceptual knowledge.
	Measure 2: Papers in MPC 6500 Special Topics Gender and Comm in the Workplace 2014-15	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 2: 60% of students scored "strong" and 40% scored "adequate"	Measure 2: This year several first year students took the class, in addition to students who were nearing completion of the program. We believe the mix of students skewed the results to be lower	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				than expected.	
	Measure 1:  Final written paper and Final Exams in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional Communication) 2016-2017	Measure 1:  75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on both a final writing project and an exam in this course—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	Measure 1:  10/21 (48%) of students scored as strong. 11/21 (52%) scored as adequate. 0/21 (0%) scored as inadequate.	Measure 1:  Students are under the desired threshold (48% strong). Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this writing intensive class is taken typically in one of their first two semesters.	2016-2017:  Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this writing intensive class is taken typically in one of their first two semesters to prepare them for writing in other courses.  We are making changes to improve student writing performance in this course and scaffold additional writing learning opportunities into other courses. For example, writing is currently taken in a student's first two semesters in the program. But, starting Spring, 2018, we will require students take intro to graduate study/theory and
	Measure 2:  Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900) 2016-2017	Measure 2:  75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors'	Measure 2:  8/10 (80%) students scored strong 2/10 (20%) students scored adequate 2 additional	Measure 2:  Here students did meet the established threshold (80% scored "strong"). Most	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		assessment of final thesis/project—students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	students dropped out of the projects/thesis process mid-course (e.g. did not complete)	students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate “strong” writing by the end of the program.	<p>research methods in their first semester and not take writing until their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. This will allow the other classes to actually serve as scaffolding for writing instruction in a way that they hadn’t previously.</p> <p>In addition, we also need to have a conversation about the appropriate “threshold for learning”. AND more specific common definitions about what those measures “Strong” or “Adequate” for example are. Previous assessment plans were based on the assumption that everyone had the same definition of “strong” (which is the category on the assessment rubric), but this year I have</p>

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					<p>evidence that we do not all share the same definition. One faculty member told me that students only receive a “strong” on the rubric in that faculty member’s course if the students receive a 95% on the assignment. But, we would not reasonably expect 75% of students to score a 95%, so we need a better alignment between definitions of “strong” and our threshold.</p> <p>We do have buy-in from the Master’s program faculty to develop a more specific set of assessment thresholds for next year (mirroring the much more specific work the undergraduate program in Communication has done), as</p>



Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					<p>discussion among faculty indicates that perhaps part of our issue this year is that different faculty are defining “strong” and “adequate” differently.</p> <p>Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.</p>
	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Final written paper and Final Exams in MPC 6150 (Writing for Professional Communication) 2018-2019</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on both a final writing project and an exam in</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Across 2 sections 28/41 students (68.3%) were rated strong, 11/41 (26.8%) were rated adequate</p>	<p>Measure 1:</p> <p>Students are under the listed threshold (68.3% strong). Changes to the program have likely been helpful</p>	<p>Measure 1: 2018-2019</p> <p>We used the data this year in two ways. (1) We take it as confirmation that changes to writing (e.g. better aligning assignments with rubrics; having</p>

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		this course—students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	and 2/41 (4.8%) were rated inadequate.	(this is significant improvement over the 48% strong last time students were assessed in 6150). Writing is the area our students are often weakest in coming into the program and this writing intensive class is now taken typically in their second semester.  See action plan for more details	most students take the writing course in their second semester rather than letting them choose between 1 & 2 semester, enforcing the MPC 6010 pre-req for the writing course) has helped improve student’s writing performance. We are encouraged to see the larger percentage of students achieving a “strong” rating and we will continue refining curriculum to build on these outcomes.  However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). See more details in summary below.
	Measure 2:  Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900) <b>2018-2019</b>	Measure 2:  75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis/project—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or	Measure 2:  10/12 (83.3%) students scored strong 1/12 (8.3%) students scored adequate 1/12 (8.3%) students completed the projects/thesis class with inadequate work.	Measure 2:  Here students did meet the established threshold (83% scored "strong"). Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" writing by the end of	Measure 2: <b>2018-2019</b> Those students who choose to write a Master's Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		“inadequate”)		the program.	
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 3: 75% of students will “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 3: On Q13 – “My MPC Courses enhanced my ability to communicate clearly in writing,” 36/48 (75%) Strongly Agreed; 7/48 (14.5%) Agreed; 4/48 (8.3%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 1/48 (2 %) Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 89.5% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program enhanced their ability to communicate clearly in writing.	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their writing skills have strengthened as a result of the program
<p><b>Summary of Learning Outcome 1-</b> Learning Outcome 1 is: Write and edit at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in applied communication contexts.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong writers in those culminating projects.</p> <p>However, students in the classes taken earlier in the program (like MPC 6150 – Professional Writing) have often NOT been meeting our previously established threshold of 75% students being “strong” writers at the end of the course.</p>					

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) Until 2018, students were generally allowed to take MPC 6150 either their first or second semester in the program. We have altered that such that our students are expected to take MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies/Theory) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) in their first semester and are expected to take MPC 6150 in their second semester. This gives them more practice writing at a graduate level in other courses. We, additionally, have refined the major assignments in the writing course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6150 writing course. We are excited to continue that path.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 89.5% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					
Learning Outcome 2: Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a	Measure 1: Quality of presentation in MPC 6900 and 6950 Thesis/Project in 2014-2015	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area	Measure 1: 86% of students scored “strong” in this area. 14% scored adequate.	Measure 1: Most students graduate with strong presentation skills, appropriate to a professional	2014-2015: Continue to emphasize presentations in MPC classes. Lower the enrollment cap in MPC 6210 Presentation Speaking so

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.	Measure 2: Quality of presentation in MPC 6500 Special Topics Gender and Comm in the Workplace 2014-2015	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area	Measure 2: 70% scored "strong" and 30% scored "adequate"	Measure 2: Most students have developed strong speaking skills, although first year students who took the class as an elective may have skewed the data.	students have more opportunities to be graded on in-class presentations. (Note: we are pleased with the assessment results, but were already planning to make this change to the course cap.)
	Measure 1: Final speaking project in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce) 2016-2017	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate"	Measure 1: Combined across two classes: 23/34 (67.6%) scored as strong. 11/34 (32.3%) scored as adequate. 0/34 (0%) scored as inadequate.	Measure 1: Here students were near to (but did not meet) the threshold. The faculty members both said they felt the students performed well in speaking in general.	Measure 1: 2016-2017 The faculty members both said they felt the students performed very well in speaking in general. We may, however, want to introduce a major speaking component into an earlier course (like introduction to graduate studies) to help students more fully achieve in this area. We will

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		e")			<p>call a meeting of the instructors who teach both the intro class and the speaking class to determine what that might look like.</p> <p>As above, we also need to have a conversation about the appropriate "threshold for learning". AND more specific common definitions about what those measures "Strong" or "Adequate" for example are. Previous assessment plans were based on the assumption that everyone had the same definition of "strong" (which is the category on the assessment rubric), but this year I have evidence that we do not all share the same definition.</p> <p>We have buy-in</p>

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
					from the Masters program faculty to develop a more specific set of assessment thresholds for next year (mirroring the much more specific work the undergraduate program in Communication has done), as discussion among faculty indicates that perhaps part of our issue this year is that different faculty are defining “strong” and “adequate” differently.
	Measure 1:  Final speaking project in MPC 6210 (Presentational Speaking in the Workforce) <b>2018-2019</b>	Measure 1:  75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students	Measure 1:  Combined across two classes: 22/31 (71%) scored as strong. 9/31 (29%) scored as adequate. 0/31 (0%) scored as	Measure 1:  Here students were near to (but did not meet) the threshold. The students are, overall, slightly closer to the threshold in	2018-2019 Measure 1: We do have some evidence that we have made some improvements in speaking skills (e.g. more students are “strong” in 2018-2019 than they were in 6210 in 2016-2017. We also have



Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	inadequate.	206-2017. The faculty members both said they felt the students performed well in speaking in general.	recognized that our scale for assessment is inadequate (e.g. we currently have the same standards for the Speaking class, which they take in their first year, and the projects class, which they take in their last year. So, we have done significant development of our assessment thresholds which are now reflected in this program review (updated) document. See also some explanation under Learning Outcome 1 above. Using the new thresholds will better help us see how students are progressing through our program from first year to second, etc.
	Measure 2: Final oral presentation of project in	Measure 2: 75% of students will score	Measure 2: 10/12 (83.3%) students	Measure 2: Here students did exceed the	<b>Measure 2:</b> Those students who choose to write a Master's Thesis or Project do seem to

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Final Thesis & Masters' Projects (MPC 6900) <b>2018-2019</b>	"strong" in this area (based on final speaking project rubric—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	scored strong 1/12 (8.3%) students scored adequate 1/12 (8.3%) students completed the projects/thesis class with inadequate work.	threshold. Obviously we have a smaller subset of students here, but there is some evidence that students are becoming stronger in their speaking skills as they progress through the program.	be well prepared /strong in their writing overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project.
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey <b>2018-2019</b>	Measure 3: 75% of students will "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 3: On Q12 – "My MPC Courses Enhanced my ability to create and deliver an oral presentation," 31/48 (64.5%) Strongly Agreed; 15/48	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 95.8% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their oral communication skills have strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
			(31.25%) Agreed; 2/48 (4.2%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 0/48 Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	or strongly agree that the MPC program enhanced their ability to communicate clearly in writing.	
<p><b>Summary of Learning Outcome 2-</b> Learning Outcome 2 is: Present information orally at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong speakers in those culminating projects.</p> <p>However, students in the classes taken earlier in the program (like MPC 6210 – Presentational Speaking) have often been close to but not quite at our previously established threshold of 75% students rated as strong.</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) We continue to refine the major assignments in the presentational speaking course to support student learning. Though we do not yet have students at the previous threshold (75% as “strong), we have seen improvement in the 6210 course. We are excited to continue that path. We have also begun a conversation about adding more speaking opportunities into the 6010 and 6700 classes most students take in their first semester to give students more practice speaking in advance of 6210.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their speaking overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 95.8% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their professional oral communication ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p>					

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>(3) However, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate critical thinking in applied communication contexts	Measure 1: Final papers in MPC 6600 Strategic Communication 2014-2015	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area	Measure 1: 72% of students scored “strong” in this area; 28% scored “adequate”	Measure 1: Generally well done. Students may need a little more practice learning how to apply theoretical concepts in applied communication situations	2014-2015: Look at term projects in classes and see if students are getting adequate “building block” assignments along the way
	Measure 2: Final papers and rubric in MPC 6500 Gender and Comm in the Workplace in 2014-2015	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area	Measure 2: 60% scored “strong” and 40% scored “adequate”	Measure 2: Students may need a little more practice learning how to apply theoretical concepts in applied communication	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				situations	
	Measure 1: Final written paper in MPC 6010 2015-2016	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: 76% were strong (n = 16); 19% were adequate (n = 4) and 5% (n = 1) were inadequate.	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong applied critical thinking skills, though there are some students who could improve in this area.	2015-2016 Measures 1&2: Pairing 6010 and 6700 appears to be a helpful progression in our program because it allows students to continue refining applied critical thinking to an in-depth project across two courses. We may want to look at pairing other courses in the curriculum.
	Measure 2: Final written project in MPC 6700 2015-2016	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 2: 81.8% were strong; 18.2% were adequate	Measure 2: This is now the second course in a sequence (we have paired it with MPC 6010, so that students take 6010 first and 6700 second). It is nice to see that students have improved in their critical	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				thinking skills as they progress through the sequence of courses	
	Measure 3: Final Thesis & Masters' Projects 2015-2016	Measure 3: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 3: 80 % of students (n = 4) scored "strong" in this area. 20% (n = 1) scored adequate.	Measure 3: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in critical thinking by the end of the program.	2015-2016 Measure 3: Students who choose to complete a project/thesis do appear to have "strong" general skills in this area. Continue to emphasize applied/critical thinking skills throughout program.
	Measure 1: Final written paper in MPC 6010 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: Across three sections, 32/42 students were rated strong (76.19%), 9/42 (21.4%) were rated adequate and 1/42 (2.3%) was rated inadequate	Measure 1: The majority of students are graduating with strong applied critical thinking skills, though there are some students who could improve in this area.	Measure 1 & 2 (2017-2018) Pairing 6010 and 6700 appears to be a helpful progression in our program because it allows students to continue refining applied critical thinking to an in-depth project across two courses. We are encouraged to see the threshold met in 6010 and almost
	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	Measure 2:	6010 and almost

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Final written project in MPC 6700 2017-2018	75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Across 3 sections, 30/42 (71.4%) were rated as strong, 12/42 (28.6%) were rated as adequate and 0/42 were rated inadequate	Though in this semester students were under the 75% threshold, the number was very close (71.4%). The difference may not be statistically significant. That being said, we are committed to studying how this might be improved.	met in 6700. We will continue to explore ways to improve critical thinking in 6700. However, we will also refine our measurement / assessment standards as highlighted throughout this document based on new quantifiable standards going forward.
	Measure 3: Final Thesis & Masters' Projects 2017-2018	Measure 3: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 3: 9/11 scored strong (82%), 1/11 (9%) scored adequate, 1/11 (9%) scored inadequate.	Measure 3: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in critical thinking by the end of the program.	2017-2018 Measure 3: Students who choose to complete a project/thesis do appear to have "strong" general skills in this area. Continue to emphasize applied/critical thinking skills throughout program.
	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:	Measure 1:

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	75% of students will “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	On Q11 – “My MPC Courses developed my critical, analytical thinking skills,” 30/48 (62.5%) Strongly Agreed; 18/48 (37.5%) Agreed; 0/48 Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 0/48 Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 100% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program developed their critical, analytical thinking skills	Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their critical/analytical thinking skills have strengthened as a result of the program
<p><b>Summary of Learning Outcome 3-</b> Learning Outcome 3 is: Demonstrate critical thinking in applied communication contexts.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong critical thinkers in those culminating projects.</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) Aligning the MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) course such that students must take both; take them sequentially; and generally take them in their first semester in the program has led to improved critical thinking outcomes since our last program review. We are encouraged at this development and we will continue to examine how refining these two courses in tandem might support student outcomes.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well</p>					



Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>prepared /strong in their critical thinking overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 100% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their critical thinking ability. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6150 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					
Learning Outcome 4: Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.	Measure 1: Final written project in MPC 6700 <b>2015-2016</b>	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 1: 69.2% scored strong; 31.8% scored adequate.	Measure 1: Many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, though not as many as we had hoped. 6700 is taken in the students’ first semester in the MPC program, and it may	<b>2015-2016:</b> Measure 1: Continue to emphasize applied research skills throughout program.  We will need to work to determine how to measure research skills further along in the program for students who select the “coursework” so that we can see progress in this area beyond the

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become "strong" in this difficult skill.	first semester.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis Projects 2015-2016	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 2: 80 % of students (n = 4) scored "strong" in this area. 20% (n = 1) scored adequate.	Measure 2: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in applied research method by the end of the program.	2015-2016: Measure 2: Continue to emphasize applied research skills throughout program.  We will need to work to determine how to measure research skills further along in the program for students who select the "coursework" track.
	Measure 1: Final written project in MPC 6700 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on final assignment	Measure 1: Across 3 sections, 26/42 (62%) scored strong, 19/42 (45%) scored adequate and 1/42	Measure 1: Many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700,	We also believe that a one-block mixed-methods class may not give students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. Starting

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
		rubric)	(2.3%) scored inadequate.	though not as many as we had hoped. 6700 is taken in the students' first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become "strong" in this difficult skill.	in 2020, We are updating our curriculum to split this 6700 into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.
	Measure 2: Final Thesis Projects 2017-2018	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area (based on faculty advisors' assessment of final thesis)	Measure 2: 9/11 scored strong (82%), 1/11 (9%) scored adequate, 1/11 (9%) scored inadequate.	Measure 2: Most students who choose to complete a thesis or project do demonstrate "strong" in applied research method by the end of the program.	

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	Measure 1: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 1: 75% of students will “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 1: On Q19 – “My MPC courses developed my ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry, 20/48 (41.7%) Strongly Agreed; 19/48 (39.6%) Agreed; 7/48(14.6%) Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 2/48 (4.2%) Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	Measure 1: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 81.25% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program developed their ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry.	Measure 1: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry has strengthened as a result of the program
<p><b>Summary of Learning Outcome 4-</b> Learning Outcome 4 is: Conduct academic or applied research in communication contexts, report findings clearly and accurately, and interpret the meaning of research data.</p> <p>Across the five years of this program review, students who opt to participate in a program culminating experience (e.g. professional project or thesis) are generally assessed as strong in research ability in those culminating projects.</p> <p>We have taken four important lessons from this that have translated into actions:  (1) Aligning the MPC 6010 (Intro to Grad Studies) and MPC 6700 (Research Methods) course</p>					

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
<p>such that students must take both; take them sequentially; and generally take them in their first semester in the program has led to improved research outcomes since our last program review. However, though many of our students have developed strong research skills by the end of 6700, the result was not as many as we had hoped (typically about 60-70% of students were rated “strong” rather than 75%). 6700 is taken in the students’ first semester in the MPC program, and it may simply be that it takes more time for at least 75% of students to become “strong” in this difficult skill. This supports our decision to both clarify (quantify) and scaffold standards (see item #3 below) such that we would expect higher proficiency from students at the end of the program than at the beginning.</p> <p>(2) Those students who choose to write a Master’s Thesis or Project do seem to be well prepared /strong in their research ability overall by the end of the MPC program, though not all students chose to complete a thesis/project. In addition, we did send graduation exit surveys to all students who have graduated since 2015 at least a semester following their graduation (to try and capture job changes/etc.). For those students who responded (N=48), 81.25% report that they agree or strongly agree that the MPC program improved their ability to problem solve through research and scientific inquiry. These surveys include students who completed the program under the coursework track.</p> <p>(3) However, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first semester in the program to be judged as strong as their last semester in the program (e.g. it doesn’t make sense to have the same “75% will achieve strong” in both the 6700 and 6900 courses. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p> <p>(4) We also believe that a one-block mixed-methods class may not give students the depth needed to become strong in any particular form of research. We are updating our curriculum to split this 6700 into two different research methods courses – Though both classes will overview research processes generally, one class will be qualitative in focus and one quantitative in focus. Students will choose one to take. We believe this will give students more depth and focus in their exposure to research in ways that will improve learning outcomes.</p>					
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrat	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6350	Measure 1: 75% of students	Measure 1: Strong - 66.66% (n=8)	Measure 1: Students may need	<b>2015-2016</b> Measure 1: Look at integrating more

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
e knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2015-2016: MPC 6350 visual communication & MPC 6300 new media. )	(Visual Communication) 2015-2016	will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Adequate - 25% (n=3) Inadequate - 8.33% (n=1)	more practice learning how to apply visual communication principles in organizational contexts.	visual communication content in other allied classes (e.g. New Media, below).
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6300 (New Media) 2015-2016	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 2: 93% were strong and 7% were adequate.	Measure 2: This is an interesting course because students come in with very different backgrounds . According to the instructor, “30% had some general background in New Media before starting the class, and another 30% had never touched the stuff.” So, overall	2015-2016 Measure 2: Look at integrating more visual communication content in this course to help students reach proficiency in that allied skill (see above comments on Measure 1).  Continue emphasizing both visual communication and new media throughout the curriculum.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				proficiency at the end of course may be higher because some students have a background in the skills, but given that many do not, this class appears to be doing a good job teaching new media skills.	
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2016-2017 : MPC 6100 Teambuilding/ Facilitation and MPC 6400	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6100 (Teambuilding & Facilitation) (2016-2017	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5% will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,”	Measure 1: 14/19 (73.6%) scored as strong. 4/19 (21%) scored as adequate. 1/19 (5%) scored as inadequate	Measure 1: Overall, students in the Teambuilding & facilitation course are essentially completing the course demonstrating key teambuilding & facilitation knowledges and skills in	(2016-2017 On Measure 1: Continue to explore ways to integrate additional teambuilding/facilitation practice earlier in the curriculum to provide a basis for the skills refined in 6100. On Measures 1 & 2: Continue emphasizing teams and leadership

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Leadership.)		“adequate,” or “inadequate”)		<p>their final project.</p> <p>The 73.6% is slightly below 75%, though, so we may want to think about how to integrate additional teamwork opportunities in earlier classes for practice purposes.</p>	<p>throughout the curriculum.</p> <p>Action plan here still involves the action plans on Writing &amp; Speaking above to develop &amp; refine more precise definitions for thresholds for learning.</p>
	<p><b>2016-2017</b></p> <p>Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6400 (Leadership) – this is actually a two part final project (1) a final paper and (2) a final oral presentation . Assessment was</p>	<p>Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5% will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as</p>	<p>Measure 2: 16/21 (76%) students were rated as strong 3/21 (14%) students were rated as adequate 2/21 (9.5%) students were rated as “inadequate” (for failing to complete the final</p>	<p>Measure 2: Overall, students in the Leadership course are completing the course demonstrating key leadership knowledge and skills both in writing and orally.</p>	



Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
	conducted on the entire project.	“strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	assignment)		
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2017-2018 : MPC 6600 Strategic Comm & MPC 6450 Organizational Comm)	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6600 (Strategic Communication) 2017-2018	Measure 1: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area. Less than 5% will score “inadequate” (based on final assignment rubric– students are rated as “strong,” “adequate,” or “inadequate”)	Measure 1: 8/12 students scored strong (66.6%), 1/12 scored adequate (8.3%), 3/12 (25%) failed to complete the course or otherwise scored inadequate.	Measure 1: Overall, students in the Strategic Communication course who finished the course are close to completing the course demonstrating key strategic comm. knowledges and skills in their final project. However, this particular class had a pretty high (3/12) rate of students choosing not to complete the class (withdraw;	2016-2017 On Measure 1: Continue to explore ways to integrate additional strategic communication practice throughout in the curriculum to provide a basis for the skills refined in 6600.  On Measures 1 & 2: Continue emphasizing teams and leadership throughout the curriculum.  Action plan here still involves the action plans on Writing & Speaking above to develop & refine more precise definitions for thresholds for learning.

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				UW; etc.). This may be an anomaly, but it is something we will certainly watch more closely.	
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6450 (Advanced Organizational Communication) <b>2017-2018</b>	Measure 2: 75% of students will score "strong" in this area. Less than 5% will score "inadequate" (based on final assignment rubric—students are rated as "strong," "adequate," or "inadequate")	Measure 2: 11/14 scored strong (78.5%), 2/14 scored adequate (14%) and 1/14 (7%) scored as inadequate.	Measure 2: Overall, students in the Organizational Communication course are completing the course demonstrating key leadership knowledge and skills both in writing and orally.	
Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate	Measure 1: Final project in MPC 6350 (Visual Communication)	Measure 1: 75% of students will score "strong" in	Measure 1: Across three sections – 19/41 (46%) scored	Measures 1 & 2: Across the three sections of MPC 6350	Measures 1 & 2: To recognize the key role visual communication plays in our

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
knowledge in one or more cognate areas – (2018-2019 : MPC 6350 Visual Comm & MPC 6300 New Media)	on) 2018-2019	this area (based on final assignment rubric)	strong, 20/41 scored adequate (49%) and 2/41 (5%) scored inadequate	(Visual Communication) and the two sections of MPC 6300 (New Media) in 2018-2019, we saw a significantly lower number of students rated as “strong” in visual communication skills than we expected. This may be in part because the instructors perceive that we have a much higher rate of people not previously trained in visual communication skills entering the program. Visual	program and industry, our updated program learning outcomes (written and approved in Fall 2019) now include visual communication with oral communication in our “presentation” learning outcome (Outcome 2). This will encourage our program to build visual communication skills more consistently across the curriculum.  We also continue to examine how these two courses, which are many students’ first exposures to visual communication principles & technologies, might be taught most effectively.  However, the action plan here also involves
	Measure 2: Final project in MPC 6300 (New Media) 2018-2019	Measure 2: 75% of students will score “strong” in this area (based on final assignment rubric)	Measure 2: Across two sections: 11/23 scored strong (48%) and 12/23 scored adequate (52%). None were inadequate.		

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
				principles (e.g. web design, design for social media) and software (e.g. Adobe Creative Suite) have a pretty high learning curve, and expecting 75% of students to be strong at the end of their first exposure to these skills would not be reasonable.	refining assessment standards to reflect what is reasonable learning for students newly exposed to visual communication principles in these courses.
	Measure 3: Indirect Measure – Graduates Survey 2018-2019	Measure 3: 75% of students will “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that the MPC program improved their professional writing ability.	Measure 3: Q17 – “My MPC courses developed my ability to use visual communication”, 14/48 (29.2%) Strongly Agreed; 26/48 (54.2%) Agreed; 5/48 (10.4%)	Measure 3: Though an indirect measure, we are encouraged to have 83.3% of our students who completed a graduate survey report that they agree	Measure 3: Students surveyed at least a semester after graduation do, on average, perceive their ability to use visual communication has strengthened as a result of the program

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement*	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
			Neither Agreed nor Disagreed; 3/48 (6.3%) Somewhat disagreed; 0/48 Strongly Disagreed.	or strongly agree that the MPC program developed their ability to use visual communication.	
<p><b>Summary of Learning Outcome 5-</b> Learning Outcome 5 is: Demonstrate knowledge in one or more cognate areas</p> <p>We have taken three important lessons from this that have translated into actions:</p> <p>(1) In general, students are often doing well at strengthening their knowledge in cognate areas in our field (e.g. teamwork; leadership; organizational communication; etc.). We can and will work to continue to strengthen those skills in those classes specifically and by weaving shared themes across the curriculum.</p> <p>(2) Given that visual communication appears to be the cognate skill that is most challenging for our students, we have updated our five core program learning outcomes (as of Fall 2019) to place visual communication more centrally in our program. Our new updated Learning Outcome #2 is “Present information orally and in visual form at a level commensurate with a communication leader or manager in an applied communication context.” We will work to ensure this learning outcome means that visual communication is woven more fully through the program.</p> <p>(3) And, as is true across all of our measures, we also recognized a continued inconsistency in how students were being rated (as our qualitative conversations had still left faculty with differing definitions of “strong”). In addition, it seems unreasonable to expect a student in their first exposure to visual communication in the program to be judged as strong. As a result, we used the results of 2018-2019 assessment to re-work our department assessment thresholds going forward to quantify what we mean by I = Introduced (end with 77% proficiency at skill), E = Emphasized (end with 85% proficiency at skill), A = Assessed Comprehensively (end with 87% proficiency at skill). Please see these updates along with the Curriculum Map chart on p. 6-7.</p>					

**Weber State University**  
**2019 Strategic Programming Report (SPR)—LEZ Form**  
**Cover Page**

- Department: Master of Professional Communication  
(as part of the Department of Communication)
- Degree Program(s) Addressed in the report: Master of Professional Communication
- Date Submitted: May 6, 2019
- Report Author: Sarah Steimel
  
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## **Masters of Professional Communication Program MPC**

Background: As we wrote this report for the MPC program, we considered the overarching goals from the office of Academic Affairs. We also considered the specific priorities of the College of Arts & Humanities.

### **Office of Academic Affairs**

Academic Affairs focuses on three goals:

1. Value/Quality
2. Affordability
3. Access/Growth

### **College of Arts & Humanities**

The College has established seven priorities:

1. Student access and recruitment with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion
2. Student retention
3. College-specific career resources, services and strategies
4. Continuous development and updating of curriculum (major, General Education and interdisciplinary)
5. Faculty/staff recruitment and retention
6. Public image of arts & humanities
7. Technology, space and infrastructure

- A. **MASTER of PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION - STRATEGIC GOALS:** Our overarching strategic goal is to provide a professionally-focused master's program that emphasizes advanced communication knowledge and skills necessary to produce effective leaders, managers and team members in for-profit, government or non-profit organizations. This strategic goal serves not only the interests of our students, who graduate prepared to enact their professional communication skills in a variety of leadership capacities, but also serves the interests of our community by producing students with advanced communication skills in demand in a variety of industries. Many professional organizations --Burning Glass, NACE and CERI, for example -- all list communication as a (or the) top career skill students need.

Moreover, we as a faculty take seriously the need for students to gain advanced communication skills to function as full citizens in a modern democracy. We pair traditional rhetorical skills like public speaking and writing with contemporary mediated communication skills in visual communication and digital media to create well-rounded students who can engage in social discourse and make their voices heard. We simultaneously train students in communication and collaboration skills like leadership, conflict resolution, and small group facilitation so that they can engage in these difficult conversations in meaningful ways across an increasingly polarized discourse climate.

As a result, this goal aligns well with the overall access, growth and workplace development goals of Academic Affairs and it also supports the key priorities of the College of Arts & Humanities.

**a. Goal: Focus on recruitment of high quality graduate students, with increased attention specifically to diversity.**

While there has been some variation in our enrollments/FTE over the last eight years (see Program Review Dashboard), the overall trend in enrollment/FTE has been up. The last three years, we have averaged about 50 students in the program measured by fall third week headcounts.

In addition, in the last three semesters, we have seen very healthy applications to our competitive program. We have averaged between a 25% and 50% rejection rate depending on the semester (and our incoming class GPA persists at about a 3.49).

We are not, however, in a position to expand any further without significant increases in financial resources (e.g. we would need to nearly double our class offerings to expand student enrollment further; we could do this if the university desire it and provided the resources).

As a result, we want to focus on keeping this level of enrollment and maintaining a high-quality admissions class. However, we also want to increase our focus on diversifying our admissions class. We want to continue our attention to gender (our eight year average is 55% female and 45% male, which is actually very balanced given Communication's tendency to be slightly more female as a field). We want to continue that balance. We want to increase ethnic diversity of our students, however, to provide greater access to students representing the demographics of the surrounding communities – especially Latinx or other non-white identifying students. Currently, for instance, only 5% of our students identify as Latinx.

To support this goal, the Department of Communication and the Masters of Professional Communication have partnered to focus on recruiting and retaining diverse faculty (especially in terms of ethnic diversity). For instance, we have hired several Latinx-identifying faculty over the past three years, and we continue to encourage diversity in recruiting and retaining faculty.

**Initiatives**

- Continue public marketing efforts (sponsorships of local PR conferences, Signpost ads, other projects with University Marketing & Communication, etc.) to keep applicant numbers high.
- Continue featuring Alumni success stories on MPC social media.
- Continue participating in Utah Graduate School Fairs, Career Fairs, and WSU Campus Events like GradFest
- Reach out to Alumni to ask for network recruiting, especially of people lesser represented demographically in our program.



- Reach out to people and groups on campus who may help us spread the word to ethnically diverse students – e.g. the Center for Diversity & Unity, WSUSA leadership (especially those over Diversity/Cultural Areas), Student Senators, etc.
- Begin to explore marketing and recruitment opportunities unique to ethnic populations under-represented at WSU – e.g. could we partner with LUPEC? Are there Latinx in Business groups in Northern Utah? Etc.

### **Fit with Academic Affairs & College Goals**

- This goal fits the access/growth outcome specified by Academic Affairs by contributing to strong enrollment numbers in a high quality/selective program and by also focusing on providing access to a wider range of students (demographically) than is currently represented in the program.
- This goal also fits Arts & Humanities Priority 1 - Student access and recruitment with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion

### **Timeline**

- Ongoing. We would hope to see a 2-3% increase in diversity of ethnicity (e.g. non-white identifying) students being admitted to the program each year.

### **Metrics**

- Graduate Program Review Dashboard (to continue to maintain our enrollment/FTE numbers at or near current levels—e.g. fall third week numbers at or near 50).
- Application numbers, quality of applications, average incoming GPA
- Ten Year Trends Dashboard (especially numbers related to Gender, Ethnicity, etc.).

### **b. Goal: Use five-year program review to reevaluate learning outcomes for program and individual courses**

The Master of Professional Communication will undergo its five-year program review in 2019-2020. We will update and clarify learning outcomes for the program and for individual courses to ensure they connect to the theory and skills students need to succeed in today's workplace and world.

### **Initiatives**

- Revisit MPC program mission statement
- Update program curriculum map
- Review learning outcomes for MPC program
- Examine learning outcomes for individual classes and ensure learning outcomes are met through requirements such as assignments and tests
- Assess all MPC core classes
- Revise exit survey for graduating MPC Students
- Seek input from experts in the field, faculty, alumni, and current students
- Update course descriptions

- Change some course names to make them sound more interesting and relevant to students and reflect updates in the field
- Ensure classes build upon each other and that course content does not overlap
- Review syllabi (and course design)
- Review textbooks
- Get all courses on Canvas (We are at or close to 90%, but this is an ongoing priority)

#### **Fit with Academic Affairs & College Goals**

- This goal fits the value/quality outcome specified by Academic Affairs by contributing to the academic value/quality of WSU as an institution, providing an effective curriculum with clear learning outcomes, and producing high-quality graduates.
- This goal also fits Arts & Humanities Priority 4 - Continuous development and updating of curriculum

#### **Timeline**

- 2019-2021 academic years

#### **Metrics**

- Results from five-year program review
- Curriculum Revision in Curriculog

#### **c. Goal: Focus on developing interdisciplinary connections**

In working with other Masters' program directors on campus, the MPC program has begun to update, expand, and formalize a number of interdisciplinary connections available for our master's students. We are expanding the list of electives they may take out-of-department. Simultaneously, we have seen an increase in master's students from other departments taking electives in our program. We will continue those efforts and update our curriculum to formalize those connections. In addition, we have begun conversations about a possible joint-degree program with the MBA program. Whether or not that joint-degree comes to fruition, we promise to continue to search for interdisciplinary connections to strengthen our degree and our students' skill sets, as we know that Humanities+ (or a humanities Master's degree supplemented with electives from other programs) can add a great deal of value for our students. In addition, encouraging other Master's programs to take our Humanities classes as electives enriches those students in their professional paths.

#### **Initiatives**

- Update and expand interdisciplinary electives MPC students may take from other Master's Programs on campus. This will involve meetings with many of the individual master's directors across campus.
- Update curriculum via Curriculog to reflect those changes.
- Update MPC website to feature those interdisciplinary offerings.

- Continue conversations with other Master’s Program Directors to have their students take our MPC courses as electives for their programs.
- Meet with MBA program about possible joint MBA/MPC degree.
- Start conversation with MENG about possible interdisciplinary cross-over in the college of Arts & Humanities. E.g. could some type of graduate writing certificate be offered?

#### **Fit with Academic Affairs & College Goals**

- This goal fits the value/quality outcome specified by Academic Affairs by contributing to the academic value/quality of WSU as an institution, providing an effective curriculum with clear learning outcomes, and producing high-quality graduates.
- This goal also fits Arts & Humanities Priority 4 - Continuous development and updating of curriculum (especially interdisciplinary). These cross-disciplinary connections also support Arts & Humanities Priority 3 - College-specific career resources, services and strategies, as we know that Humanities+ (or a humanities Master’s degree supplemented with electives from other programs) can add a great deal of value for our students. In addition, encouraging other Master’s programs to take our Humanities classes as electives enriches those students in their professional paths.

#### **Timeline**

- 2019-2020 Update and expand interdisciplinary electives for MPC and send through Curriculog. Also, encourage other Master’s programs to include MPC courses as their electives.
- 2020-2021 Serious conversation with MBA about possible joint degree. Begin conversation with MENG about possible interdisciplinary connections.
- 2021-2022 Enact Plans from conversations in 2020.

#### **Metrics**

- Curriculum Revision in Curriculog
- Number of other Masters students taking MPC electives

#### **d. Goal: Focus on Strong Culminating Assessment**

We currently have three approved paths to graduation (Master’s Thesis, Applied Professional Project, and Coursework Tracks) that we strongly feel provide our students with program outcomes that are rigorous, but adaptable to their professional goals. This flexibility has helped us maintain a strong time-to-graduation of about 1.68 years for the last three years (below the University mean of 1.93 years for Master’s Programs - see Graduate Program Review Dashboard).

We have strong assessment plans for the Master’s Thesis and Applied Professional Project Tracks, but have had more difficulty assessing the Coursework Track because while we can assess the courses individually (and we do), there is no single coursework course that is taken “last” in the coursework option, making a culminating assessment more difficult. So, our major

curricular focus in the next five years is developing a strong culminating assessment for the Coursework Track.

### Initiatives

- Maintain strong retention and time-to-graduation numbers.
- Develop strong assessment plan for the Coursework Track of MPC graduates.
- Begin to enact assessment plan and adjust as needed.

### Fit with Academic Affairs & College Goals

- This goal fits the access/growth outcome specified by Academic Affairs by contributing to high student retention/low time to graduation. This also fits the affordability outcome specified by Academic Affairs by ensuring efficient degree pathways and continuing to review data to ensure we are moving students efficiently toward graduation. This goal also fits the value/quality outcome specified by Academic Affairs by supporting the academic value/quality of WSU as an institution, providing an effective curriculum with clear learning outcomes, and producing high-quality graduates.
- This goal also fits Arts & Humanities Priority 2 - Student retention and Priority 4 - Continuous development and updating of curriculum

### Timeline

- 2019-2020 – work with Institutional Effectiveness Office to learn how other Master’s Programs are assessing their equivalent of the coursework track and develop a plan for the MPC program
- 2020-2021 – enact that plan as a pilot test to assess graduates in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 cohorts
- 2021-2022 – continue to modify/strengthen assessment plan with feedback from the IE office.

### Metrics

- Annual Assessment Reports & Feedback from the Institutional Effectiveness Office
- Results from five-year program review

#### **e. Goal: Focus on Quantifying/Highlighting Graduate Student Success**

We have a very large body of anecdotal evidence that our graduates are using their MPC degree to successfully apply for new jobs, promotions, and other career advancements after graduation. We collect stories that our graduates send in, and we feature them regularly on Social Media. We also have tried to “scrape” promotion and job transition data on alumni off of LinkedIn with mixed success. While we have used exit surveys in the past, those surveys do not capture the students in the years after graduation in which we would more fully expect the impact of their degree to be visible in their careers. We intend to continue to use and expand the LinkedIn tools available to track our graduates, and we are beginning to explore how we

might leverage DWS data to measure graduate student success (which is slightly more complicated than using the DWS data to measure undergraduate student success).

### Initiatives

- Track Masters of Professional Communication graduates
- Research Masters of Professional Communication salaries (Both using the DWS system and the LinkedIn System, as well as any other productive tools we can find).
- Work with Institutional Research to build a meaningful dashboard for DWS data for graduate/MPC program
- Continue to feature Alumni success stories on MPC social media.
- Add more alumni success stories on MPC Website.

### Fit with Academic Affairs & College Goals

- This goal fits the value/quality outcome specified by Academic Affairs by supporting the academic value/quality of WSU as an institution, providing an effective curriculum with clear learning outcomes, and producing high-quality graduates.
- This goal also fits Arts & Humanities Priority 6 - Improve the public image of arts and humanities)

### Timeline

- Ongoing tracking of MPC graduates/salaries (especially using LinkedIn or other available tools)
- 2019-2020 – Work with IR to develop a DWS Dashboard for MPC / Graduate Programs
- 2019-2020 – Add section on MPC Website for Alumni Success stories.
- Ongoing featuring of MPC Alumni Success stories on Social Media & Website

### Metrics

- Number of alumni located
- Work with Institutional Research to build a meaningful dashboard for DWS data for graduate/MPC program – we will then use this dashboard as a metric

## B. ALIGNMENT OF UNIT GOALS TO AA OBJECTIVES:

This was integrated throughout above, but we will summarize briefly here.

- a. **Value/Quality:** We will continue to ensure students will graduate with skills sought by local employers. Our program goals to review learning objectives for department and individual courses, to focus on developing interdisciplinary connections, and to focus on strong culminating assessment will all add to the value/quality MPC students gain from our program.
- b. **Affordability:** At this time, our MPC program has lower tuition than almost any comparable Master's Program (especially in this state, but also regionally). We will add

that kind of message to our advertising. In addition, we have a lower-than-university average time to graduation for Master's students, and we intend to use goals like the focus on strong culminating assessment to ensure that we can clearly articulate, with data, that the flexible paths to graduation we provide support not only affordability but quality as well.

- c. **Access/Growth:** While we cannot expand the number of students in our selective program without significantly more resources (mostly in terms of faculty lines / classes taught), we will continue to recruit and retain about 50 students in our program in any given year (measured by Fall 3<sup>rd</sup> week headcount). Simultaneously, we will also increase our focus on creating access for a more diverse student body. We will continue to focus on gender as an important diversity variable, but we will engage in new efforts to focus on ethnic diversity as well. We will use our program goal of focusing on recruitment of high quality graduate students, with renewed attention specifically to diversity to support access and growth of under-represented students at WSU.

- C. **RESOURCES REQUIRED:** As noted above, if either Academic Affairs or the College of Arts & Humanities wanted us to expand the MPC program, we would need additional faculty lines & classes taught (which would be a significant expense). As a result, we predict maintaining our current levels of enrollment.

We also substantially share resources with the undergraduate Department of Communication (in terms of faculty, space, classrooms, etc.). So, while their strategic report focused more specifically on some of these issues, we echo their needs for a new computer lab classroom as we currently struggle to schedule all of our MPC courses that need technology in lab classrooms as we are sharing those classrooms with the Undergraduate program.

- Shared with the Communication Department - Another computer lab: location and \$50,000 (We may have lab computer fees, but a location is required. We do not have space to convert.)
- Space for classrooms/faculty offices down the hall from Communication Department when new engineering/computer science building is complete

In addition, to support the goals currently articulated, we will need the following:

- a. Money for recruitment, advertising & promotional materials. Though this is an ongoing cost, if we are going to increase marketing efforts especially to people underrepresented at WSU in master's programs, we will need to expand these efforts.
- b. Course release funding for faculty working on extensive curriculum and assessment initiatives: \$3,000 yearly

#### **D. METRICS TO MEASURE SUCCESS:**

We placed metrics aligned to each goal above. We are also open to new metrics as the University continues to build additional resources into the Report Gallery.

Here is a summary of a timeline for the *major* initiatives in the next three years:

### **2019-2020**

- Undergo five-year program review
- Retain competitive application pool of candidates for the MPC Program (metric: application numbers, quality of applications, average incoming GPA)
- Maintain our enrollment/FTE numbers at or near current levels—e.g. fall third week numbers at or near 50 (metric: Graduate Program Review Dashboard)
- A 2-3% increase in diversity of ethnicity (e.g. non-white) students being admitted to the MPC Program (metric: Ten Year Trends Dashboard)
- Review learning objectives for department and courses, course names, course descriptions
- Update and expand interdisciplinary electives for MPC and send through Curriculog. Also, encourage other Master's programs to include MPC courses as their electives.
- Work with Institutional Effectiveness Office to learn how other Master's Programs are assessing their equivalent of the coursework track and develop a plan for the MPC program (metric: IE assessment report & feedback)
- Ongoing tracking of MPC graduates/salaries (especially using LinkedIn or other available tools)
- Work with IR to develop a DWS Dashboard for MPC / Graduate Programs
- Add section on MPC Website for Alumni Success stories.

### **2020-2021**

- Retain competitive application pool of candidates for the MPC Program (metric: application numbers, quality of applications, average incoming GPA)
- Maintain our enrollment/FTE numbers at or near current levels—e.g. fall third week numbers at or near 50 (metric: Graduate Program Review Dashboard)
- A 2-3% increase in diversity of ethnicity (e.g. non-white) students being admitted to the MPC Program (metric: Ten Year Trends Dashboard)
- Serious conversation with MBA about possible joint degree. Begin conversation with MENG about possible interdisciplinary connections.
- Enact new assessment plan for Coursework Track as a pilot test to assess graduates in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 cohorts (metric: IE assessment report & feedback)
- Ongoing tracking of MPC graduates/salaries (especially using LinkedIn or other available tools)
- Ongoing featuring of MPC Alumni Success stories on Social Media & Website

### **2021-2022**

- Retain competitive application pool of candidates for the MPC Program (metric: application numbers, quality of applications, average incoming GPA)
- Maintain our enrollment/FTE numbers at or near current levels—e.g. fall third week numbers at or near 50 (metric: Graduate Program Review Dashboard)
- A 2-3% increase in diversity of ethnicity (e.g. non-white) students being admitted to the MPC Program (metric: Ten Year Trends Dashboard)
- Continue to enact appropriate interdisciplinary programs / partnerships with other Masters programs on campus.
- Continue to modify/strengthen assessment plan (especially of Coursework Track Graduates) with feedback from the IE office. (metric: IE assessment report & feedback)
- Ongoing tracking of MPC graduates/salaries (especially using LinkedIn or other available tools)
- Ongoing featuring of MPC Alumni Success stories on Social Media & Website