Subject Area Committee Name: Journalism (part of Communication Studies SAC)
Contact Person: Robert Pryor
Core Outcomes assessed: Self-Reflection, Cultural Awareness

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1.   Describe <u>changes that have been implemented</u> towards improving students'
       attainment of outcomes that <u>resulted from recent outcome assessments</u>. These may
       include but are not limited to changes to content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc.
       Please describe the connection between the assessment results and the changes made.

       We did not complete an assessment of outcomes for Journalism classes for the 2011-2012
       academic year. We weren't aware that we had to do so because the Journalism SAC had
       been dissolved and subsumed under the Communication Studies SAC.

2.   Describe the assessment design (tool and processes) used. Include relevant
       information about:
       • The nature of the assessment (e.g., written work, project, portfolio, exam, survey,
         performance etc.) and if it is direct (assesses evidence of mastery of outcomes) or
         indirect (student's perception of mastery). Please give rationale for indirect
         assessments (direct assessments are preferable).
       • The student sample assessed (including sample size relative to the targeted student
         population for assessment activity) process and rationale for selection of the
         student sample. Why was this group of students and/or courses chosen?
       • Any rubrics, checklists, surveys or other tools that were used to evaluate the
         student work. (Please include with your report—OK to include in appendix).
       • How you analyzed results, including steps taken to ensure that results are reliable.

This year the Communication Studies SAC assessed <u>Journalism 201, Mass Media and Society</u>,
for *Self-Reflection* and *Cultural Awareness*. We assessed two sections on two different campuses
(Rock Creek & Sylvania) during winter term. These were the only two sections offered; this
reflects the general trend of two sections of this course being offered per term. <u>A pre-and-post-
assessment Likert scale survey was created.</u> Our rationale for using a survey as a starting point is
that we needed to establish baseline information for the questions in which we were interested.
Once we have the baseline we can follow up with a direct assessment of students' mastery. The
sample size was 31 respondents for the pre-assessment and 25 respondents for the post-
assessment. This was the number of students enrolled in the two sections of Journalism 201 at
the beginning of the term and the number enrolled at the completion of the term. We chose
Journalism 201 because it was the only Journalism class with more than one section offered. The
design instrument that we created consisted of 25 questions covering *Self-Reflection* and *Cultural
Awareness*. (See below) Questions 1-10 dealt with students' self-reflection on the media.
Questions 11-16 dealt with issues of cultural awareness. Questions 17-21 dealt with consumption
and access to the media. Questions 22 and 23 dealt with students' perceptions of the "digital
divide." (For more information on the "digital divide" see http://www.digitaldivide.org/digital-
divide/digitaldividedefined/digitaldivide.html) Questions 24 and 25 dealt with media
consumption and cultural awareness. We analyzed the results by tallying scores for each question

on the survey followed by comparing the results in order to determine whether the post-assessment showed any change over the pre-assessment.

Journalism Core Outcomes

J Pre-Assessment
Please circle the response noting to what degree you *disagree or agree* with these statements.

	Strongly Disagree				**Strongly Agree**
1. I use traditional print media (news-papers, magazines) for my information.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I use broadcast media (TV, radio, film) for my information.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I use digital media for my information.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I use social networks (Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, etc.) for my information.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Different media sources have different levels of credibility.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Different media sources have different biases.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The media I consume has no specific bias.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My perception of a news story is influenced by what type of media source (print, broadcast, digital, social networks) I use.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My personal identity is influenced by what type of media source (print, broadcast, digital, social networks) I use.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The type of media source (print, broadcast, digital, social networks) I use reflects who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My personal worldview is influenced by what type of media source (print, broadcast, digital, social networks) I use.	1	2	3	4	5

Journalism Core Outcomes

|	**Strongly Disagree**				**Strongly Agree**
12. My perceptions of cultural groups that are different from my own are influenced by what type of media source (print, broadcast, digital, social networks) I use.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I see accurate reflections of my culture in the media.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Media influences the cultural perspectives, values and assumptions of a society.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My media choices affect my understanding of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Different types of media have different effects on culture and society.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I use media sources for local news.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I use media sources for national news.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I use media sources for international news.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I use a computer or tablet device to consume media.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I use a smartphone to consume media.	1	2	3	4	5
22. People who do not have access to digital media are less informed.	1	2	3	4	5
23. People who choose not to use digital media are less informed.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I use a variety of media sources to get different perspectives on issues.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I use a variety of media sources to determine what I believe.	1	2	3	4	5

Journalism Pre-Post Assessment Summary Sheet

Questions	Pre	Post	Gain
	31 respondents	25 respondents	-6
1. Use traditional print	2.94	2.6	-0.34
2. Use broadcast	3.48	3.46	-0.02
3. Use digital media	4.45	4.52	0.07
4. Use social networks	3.39	3.24	-0.15
5. Dif. credibility of sources	4.52	4.44	-0.08
6. Dif. biases of sources	4.63	4.42	-0.08
7. No bias in my sources	2.16	1.81	-0.35
8. Percept. influenced/source	3.39	3.38	-0.01
9. Pers. ID influenced/source	2.29	3.04	0.75
10. Source reflects pers. ID	2.44	3.04	0.6
11. Worldview influenced/source	3.19	3.24	0.05
12. Perception of cult. grps.	2.94	3.04	0.1
13. Reflection of my cult. grp	2.71	2.68	-0.03
14. Media influences cult.	4	4.2	0.2
15. Choices affect views	3.68	3.92	0.24
16. Dif. media/dif. effects	4.23	4.24	0.01
17. Consume local news	3.91	3.64	-0.27
18. Consume national news	4.3	4.08	-0.22
19. Consume int'l news	4.42	4.08	-0.34
20. Access by computer/tab.	4.81	4.72	-0.09
21. Access by smartphone	4	4.16	0.16
22. No digital=less informed	3.13	3.38	0.25
23. No dig. by choice=less inf.	2.78	2.64	-0.14
24. Variety of perspectives	4.29	4.04	-0.25
25. Variety to form beliefs	3.34	3.88	0.54

3.   **Provide information about the results (i.e., what did you learn about how well students are meeting the outcomes)?**
   - **If scored (e.g., if a rubric or other scaled tool is used) please report the data, and related to any appropriate benchmarks.**
   - **Results should be broken down in a way that is meaningful and useful for making improvements to teaching/learning. Please show those specific results.**

We were not at all surprised by the results of the survey. We were interested in how students accessed, consumed and evaluated the credibility of the information they received from the media. We found that students came into class with a fairly high degree of media literacy and left class with their positions largely reinforced. (See Summary Sheet above)

Reflecting on their media use, students indicated they prefer to use digital media for their information sources over print. This did not change from the pre-to-post assessment. Their strongest preference is for digital media followed by broadcast media and social media sources. In terms of their perception of the credibility of their media sources, we found they came into the course with a high understanding that different media sources have differences in credibility. They strongly agreed that different media sources have different levels of credibility (Q5) and biases (Q6), and they strongly disagreed with the question that "The media I consumed has no specific bias" (Q7). Students' response to Q9, "My personal identity is influenced by what type of media source (print, broadcast digital, social networks) I use" showed the highest degree of change between the pre-and-post-assessment. Students understand that their identity is shaped by the media they use.
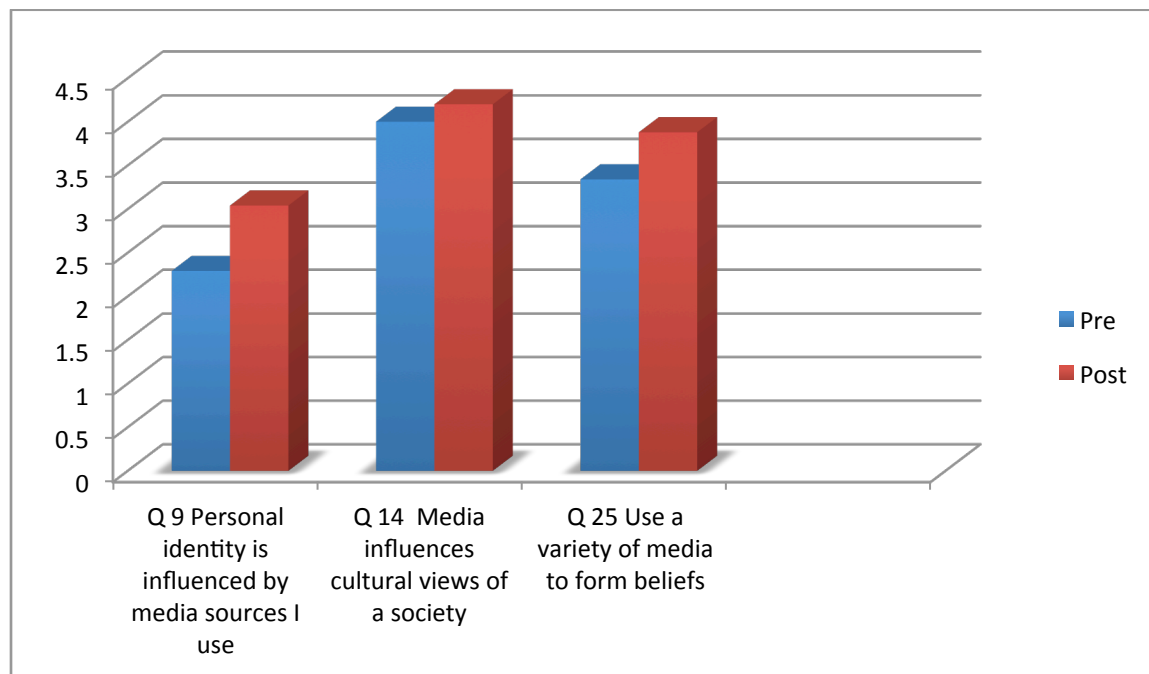
Questions 11-16 concern *Cultural Awareness*. There was slightly greater agreement that personal worldview was shaped by media sources (Q11), and that perceptions of different cultural groups are influenced by the type of media consumed (Q12). Students' initial response to the question "I

see accurate reflections of my culture in the media," was relatively low at 2.71. That number dropped in the post-assessment to 2.68, a slight change at the end of the term. Students agreed with Q14; "media influences the cultural perspectives, values and assumptions of a society," and that agreement was stronger at the end of the term. Students also agreed with Q15, "My media choices affect my understanding of the world," and left agreeing more strongly, a change of .24. Students recognize that different types of media have different effects on culture and society.

In terms of media consumption, there was a slight surprise. To Q17-19 we found that students use media sources to consume international and national news the most, then local. This suggests that students have a *Cultural Awareness* of what's going on internationally and nationally but are not as tuned in to local news. Perhaps this is because as Q20 and 21 indicate, students access their news primarily thorough computers, tablets and smart phones.

Questions 22 and 23 have to do with perception of the digital divide and consequences therein. Question 22, "People who do not have access to digital media are less informed," scored 3.38 on the post-assessment for a gain of .25. Question 23, "People who choose not to use digital media are less informed." scored 2.64 on the post-assessment for a loss of .14. Students appear to believe that access and choice are different issues. They slightly agree that people who don't have access to digital media are less informed. This points to an understanding that some people and cultures do not have digital access and thus are at a disadvantage in our information age. Whereas when people consciously choose not to use available digital media it is viewed as a personal choice, not a sign one is less informed.

On Q24 and 25 students agreed that they use a variety of media sources to get different perspectives on issues and that there is a strong link between using a variety of sources and their understanding of the social world.

To link these findings with the outcomes of *Self-Reflection* and *Cultural Awareness*, we can see that students do report that they examine their media consumption behaviors and understand the impact of media on their personal identity and their worldview. They also understand that depictions of cultural groups in the media are often biased and/or inaccurate. Lastly, they understand that it is important to seek information from a variety of sources to be an informed person.

4. **Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented to help improve students' attainment of outcomes. (These may include, but are not limited to, changes in curriculum, content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc.).**

We did not find any significant change between the pre-assessment and the post-assessment. Students came into this course with a fairly high degree of *Self-Reflection* and *Cultural Awareness*. Generally we agree that students come into the course at a Level 3 on both outcomes. Our post-assessment showed that student's initial positions were largely reinforced as a result of taking this class. Thus, any changes that should be made as a result of this specific assessment are minimal. This does not mean, however, that changes are not in the offing. Indeed, the rapid pace of change within the mass media industry itself demands constant revision and updating of

course curriculum, materials and instruction. Keeping up with the ongoing changes in media and technology is one of the principal challenges in this course.

5. **Reflect on the effectiveness of this assessment tool and assessment process. Please describe any changes to assessment methodology that would lead to more meaningful results if this assessment were to be repeated (or adapted to another outcome). Is there a different kind of assessment tool or process that the SAC would like to use for this outcome in the future? If the assessment tool and processes does not need to be revised, please indicate this.**

We found this assessment tool to be helpful in establishing a baseline for these outcomes. From an institutional basis it is clear that students are achieving the outcomes at least from their self-report. If we were to do this again, we may not need a pre-assessment, just do an assessment at the end of class. In the future we would follow up with a form of direct assessment, using an assignment in which students would demonstrate what they know to *confirm* what they *report* they know.