

Master of Mass Communication Assessment Plan

School's Vision and Mission

Vision

The Manship School will foster leadership in media and public affairs education and research by advancing the exploration of our industries' opportunities and challenges with the support of our alumni, friends, and the university.

Mission

The mission of the Manship School's Master of Mass Communication (MMC) program is guided by a strong foundation of innovative research and professional experience. We aim to prepare individuals for success in both the academic and professional world through a curriculum focused on mass communication with an emphasis on public affairs and emerging media. We highly value diversity and inclusivity and strive to create a safe learning environment that fosters a unique and global perspective for our students.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

SLO 1: Mastery of Professional Skills

The MMC graduate will demonstrate understanding of the application of professional skills important to media industries (strategic communication, journalism and political communication).

SLO 2: Mastery of Theory

The MMC graduate will demonstrate sufficient familiarity with mass communication literature and understanding of mass communication theories, their origins and their applications.

SLO 3: Mastery of Research & Writing

The MMC graduate will demonstrate research and writing skills at a professional level in a variety of formats.

SLO 4: Mastery of Core Values & Competencies

The MMC graduate will recognize the 11 core values as articulated by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC).

Assessment Plan

The Manship School graduate program follows an assessment plan that covers discipline specific accreditation standards set by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The plan includes student

learning outcomes (SLOs) tied to the curriculum. These outcomes include: mastery of professional skills, mastery of theory, mastery of research and writing, and mastery of core values and competencies. These SLOs will be assessed in several ways in the graduate program, including the following:

- 1) Completion of the graduate student assessment instrument (Graduate Student Assessment Instrument, GSAI) by each graduate student's advisory committee (direct measure)
- 2) Review of students' core coursework (direct measure)
- 3) Review of sample theses and professional projects by the graduate committee (direct measure)
- 4) Review of syllabi by the graduate committee (indirect measure)

These varying measures will be used in combination to provide yearly assessments. Not every measure above will be used every year. Some measures, such as the occur in a three-year cycle.

Direct Measure 1 – *Graduate Student Assessment Instrument (GSAI)*

The GSAI is the annual assessment measure for the MMC program. For each student who completes the MMC program in a given semester, that student's advisory committee evaluates the project or thesis using ten criteria. The GSAI consists of these evaluations. The GSAI does not supplant the traditional evaluation and reporting of the thesis or project. Rather, it is intended to serve as an additional evaluation that provides specific feedback to the faculty about how well students achieve the four key outcomes.

Using the GSAI, theses and projects will be evaluated on each criterion using a five-point scale.

The ten criteria used in the GSAI are:

1. Knowledge and application of mass communication theories
2. Ability to conceptualize and conduct research
3. Understanding and application of research methods
4. Understanding and application of statistical/analytical procedures
5. Understanding of course content of degree program
6. Understanding area of specialization
7. Understanding of ACEJMC core values and competencies
8. Overall quality of thesis or professional project
9. Oral communication skills
10. Written communication skills

Direct Measure 2 – *Review of Students' Core Coursework*

The Manship Graduate Committee will evaluate three randomly selected samples of student papers (or final coursework) from each of the following core course: MC 7001, MC 7002, MC 7005 and MC 7021. Students' identifying information will be removed from the work before evaluation. Each paper will be evaluated on the four student learning outcomes (Mastery of Professional Skills, Mastery of Theory, Mastery of Research and Writing, Mastery of Core Values and Competencies). For each outcome, the faculty members will evaluate the paper using a series of seven-point scale measures.

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The school will use this direct measure to shape curricula, particularly in the development of future MMC core courses. Reviews of student coursework for two core courses will be conducted every year, but alternate between MC 7001 (Research Methods in Mass Communication)/MC 7021 (Mass Communication Theory) and MC 7002 (Mass Communication Philosophy, Principles, and Ethics)/7005 (Public Opinion and Public Affairs). The next assessment will be conducted during 2021-2022 AY for core courses, MC 7001 and MC 7021.

Direct Measure 3 – Review of Sample of Theses and Professional Projects

The Manship school believes it is important to have additional evaluations of final theses and professional projects by other parties. For this reason, the faculty members of peer institutions’ and mass communication professionals will conduct their own review of randomly selected theses and projects every other year. Theses and professional projects will be evaluated based on the GSAI criteria and the professional values and competencies standards of the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), respectively. This review does not replace the advisory committee’s own review or evaluation for the GSAI, but rather will serve as additional check to ensure students are producing quality and relevant research. The next assessment will be conducted during the 2022-2023 AY.

Indirect Measure 1 – Review of Syllabi by the Graduate Committee

To ensure Manship class curricula remains current, the school accompanies its three direct measures of performance with an indirect measure designed to evaluate the content of coursework. While this does not measure learning outcomes, it does allow the school to assess the scholarly and professional content of courses, among other attributes of our classes. Based on the results, the faculty can restructure and refine the graduate course offerings and curriculum. Reviewers focus on making the core more flexible and better defining and creating professional courses. This assessment will be conducted every three years. The next syllabi review will be conducted during the 2021-2022 AY.

Summary of Assessment

Program Learning Outcomes	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Measure type and method
The Graduate Student Assessment Instrument (GSAI)	X	X	X	Direct measure of GSAI instrument
Review of students’ core coursework	X	X	X	Direct measure of three student work from MC 7001 and MC 7021 or MC 7002 and MC 7005. The two core courses will alternate every year (e.g., MC 7001 and MC 7021 will be evaluated in 2021-2022 and 2023-2024)

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Review of sample of theses and professional projects		X		Direct measure of sample of MMC theses and professional projects by peer institutions' mass communication scholars and mass communication professionals
Review of syllabi by the graduate committee	X			Indirect measure of all core course syllabi

Every year the results of the annual assessment will be shared with the full faculty at the first faculty meeting. The associate dean will work with the Graduate Committee to implement the action plan.

MMC Curriculum Map

	SLO 1 – Mastery of Professional Skills	SLO 2 – Mastery of Theory	SLO 3 – Mastery of Research & Writing	SLO 4 – Mastery of Core Values & Competencies
*MC 7000: Proseminar in Mass Communication	I	I	R	R
*MC 7001: Research Methods in Mass Communication	I	I	R	R
*MC 7002: Mass Communication Philosophy, Principles, and Ethics	I	R	M	M
*MC 7005: Public Opinion and Public Affairs	R	R	R	R
*MC 7021: Mass Communication Theory	I	M	R	I
Track Courses	R	R	R	R
Electives	R	R	R	R

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Thesis, Professional Project or Comprehensive Exam	M (A)	M (A)	M (A)	M (A)
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*I= Introduce, R= Reinforce, M= Master, (A)= Assessed, * = MMC Core Courses*

Assessment Cycle

1. **Direct Measure 1 – Graduate Student Assessment Instrument (GSAI)**
2. **Direct Measure 2 – Review of Students’ Core Coursework**
3. **Direct Measure 3 – Review of Sample of Theses and Professional Projects**

Program Learning Outcomes	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
SLO 1 – Mastery of Professional Skills	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2) 3 (direct measure 3)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)
SLO 2 – Mastery of Theory	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2) 3 (direct measure 3)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)
SLO 3 – Mastery of Research & Writing	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2) 3 (direct measure 3)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)
SLO 4 – Mastery of Core Values & Competencies	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2) 3 (direct measure 3)	1 (direct measure 1) 2 (direct measure 2)

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Appendix A. Graduate Student Assessment Instrument (GSAI)

Manship School of Mass Communication
Confidential Graduate Student Assessment Instrument

Committee Chair: Please return completed graduate student assessment to the Graduate Counselor.

The Manship School uses this brief survey to assess learning outcomes adopted by the Graduate Committee. The student’s committee should complete this assessment, using the scale definitions on the reverse side.

Student Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Degree Program	<input type="checkbox"/>	Master of Mass Communication (MMC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doctor of Philosophy in Mass Communication and Public Affairs
Examination Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thesis Defense	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dissertation Defense
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Project Defense		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive Exam Defense		

For each statement below, rank the student on the following scale:	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Student demonstrates knowledge of mass communication theories and the ability to apply these theories to the research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates the ability to conceptualize, plan and independently conduct research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates an understanding and the application of (quantitative and/or qualitative) research methods.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates an understanding and the application of statistical and/or other analytical procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates an understanding of the course content of the degree program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates an understanding of the student’s area of specialization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student appropriately engaged scholarly literature or professional writing related to topic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrates an understanding of the (ACEJMC) core values and competencies, listed on the reverse of this page.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please rate the overall quality and completeness of the thesis, professional project or dissertation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please rate the student’s oral communication skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please rate the student’s written communication skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please rate the student’s diligence and effort on this project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Initials of Committee Member completing this assessment (please print): _____

On the back of this page, please add any comments that would allow us to assess our program strengths and shortcomings objectively.

Comments relevant to the defense that will allow us to assess program strengths & shortcomings objectively:

Thank you!

Graduate Student Assessment Rating Scale

VERY GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student demonstrated the highest level of understanding or skill in the area evaluated. • The student excelled in answering basic and advanced questions in the area evaluated.
GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student demonstrated a strong understanding or skill in the area evaluated. • The student performed well in answering basic and advanced questions in the area evaluated.
FAIR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student demonstrated an acceptable understanding or skill in the area evaluated. • The student did not struggle in answering basic questions in the area evaluated, but his or her answers did not provide detail or advanced understanding.
POOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student demonstrated limited understanding or skill in the area evaluated. • The student struggled significantly to answer basic questions in the area evaluated.
VERY POOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has not demonstrated understanding or skill in the area evaluated. • The student did not have the ability to answer basic questions in the area evaluated. • The student’s ability to complete her or his degree is in question.

ACEJMC Core Values and Competencies. All graduates should be able to:

1. Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
3. Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;
4. Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
5. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
7. Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
8. Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
9. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness; and
10. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Appendix B. MMC Students’ Core Coursework Evaluation

Evaluator’s name: _____

Course title: MC_____

Under each statement, please circle the number that represents how you feel about the student work that you read, with 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree.

SLO 1: Mastery of Professional Skills

The MMC graduate will demonstrate understanding of the application of professional skills important to media industries (strategic communication, journalism and political communication).

- The paper shows evidence of critical thinking
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper shows evidence of the ability to think and evaluate independently
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper shows an appropriate level of quality and creativity
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree

SLO 2: Mastery of Theory

The MMC graduate will demonstrate sufficient familiarity with mass communication literature and understanding of mass communication theories, their origins and their applications.

- The paper demonstrates that the student understood the theoretical understanding of the topic
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper identifies the main point of topic
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper contains important concepts that the student clearly identified
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree

SLO 3: Mastery of Research & Writing

The MMC graduate will demonstrate research and writing skills at a professional level in a variety of formats.

- The paper demonstrates that the student writes with basic grammar competencies
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper demonstrates that the student writes with basic punctuation competencies
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree

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- The paper demonstrates that the student avoids lazy writing habits and use of passive voice
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree

SLO 4: Mastery of Core Values & Competencies

The MMC graduate will recognize the 11 core values as articulated by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC).

- The paper contains important concepts that the student clearly articulates
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper demonstrates that the student understands proper attribution
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper demonstrates that the student writes with logical structure and good transitions/flow
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper demonstrates that the student writes clearly about important concepts
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree
- The paper shows an appropriate level of creativity for the style of writing required
Strongly disagree-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----Strongly agree

Any comments about the student work and the ability to apply information concepts/theories; critical, independent and creative thinking; and/or evaluating information?

Any comments about the student work and the ability to write correctly and clearly and/or the ability to critically evaluate work according to accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness
