

About

The Newhouse School is the nation's leading school of communication, preparing students to become leaders in a rapidly changing media landscape. From print and broadcast journalism, to social media and online communication, to advertising and public relations, to photography and film, Newhouse offers degrees spanning every area of the communications industry.

Commitment to Excellence

Newhouse is one of 100+ communications schools accredited through the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Our voluntary participation in self-assessment and external review helps to ensure that Newhouse students consistently receive excellent preparation for their future careers in the communications industries. Newhouse was last reviewed in 2015.

Visiting Site Team Critique

- Data collected and reported in different ways
- Assessment focused primarily within individual courses rather than across academic programs

Recommended Direction

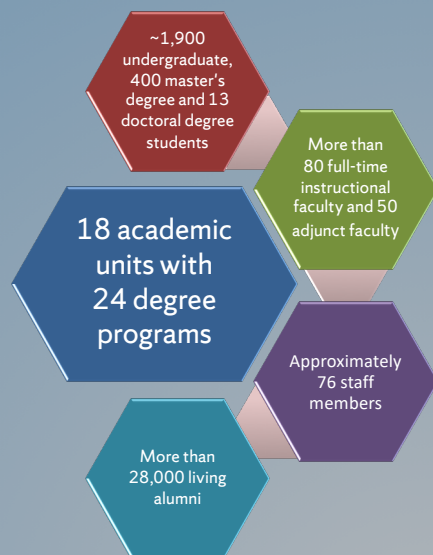
Create and implement clear and consistent plan to assess programs on a regular schedule

Ensure students achieve 13 undergraduate and 14 graduate student-learning competencies

Assess each competency twice in a 6-year cycle

Use 4 measures to assess each competency:

- 2 direct (e.g., student work) and
- 2 indirect (e.g., student surveys)



Changing the Assessment Course

- After two years, faculty continued to struggle with this order, collecting a lot of information without time to make meaning from it.
- New position established for a faculty member to take the lead as director of assessment with reduced course time to allow greater focus on the effort.
- First priority: **streamline the process.**

BUT HOW?

The new director reviewed three self-studies provided by accreditor, along with corresponding site-team reports.

What did these schools have in common?

They interpreted the competencies within the context of current industry standards and implemented school-wide assessment tools on a regular schedule.

In comparison, our approach was labor intensive and a bit redundant. We were drowning in data collection.

Assessment committee members, representing each academic area, agreed this approach was easier and would help faculty and staff learn from the process and not feel overwhelmed.



Viewing Program-Level Assessment Through a Professional Lens

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Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

Gold Standard for Measuring Learning: Direct Measures

Capstone
Portfolio
Internship



Faculty are developing rubrics for these end-of-program measures to determine if graduating students are job ready in their chosen industry.

Unprepared → Job Ready → Excellent

School-Wide Pre/Post Test

- Faculty-developed instruments delivered to first-year students in the fall and to seniors in the spring
- Graduate students test in boot camp (Summer II) and capstone (Summer I)

Supporting Evidence of Competency Achievement: Indirect Measures

Student Surveys

- Bundle assessment survey questions with course evaluation in the undergraduate capstone courses
- Assessment committee creates graduate student exit survey in cooperation with programs

Alumni Survey

- Every three years for both undergraduate and graduate alums
- Assessment committee and programs will develop questions

Student Awards Internship/Job Placements

Successful Strategies

- Convening a **school-wide assessment committee** to ensure wide representation
- Including faculty with research experience on the committee so **valid and reliable instruments** are created
- Meeting with the dean, chairs, program directors, and faculty to **gather input and be transparent** about plans for assessment. Initial feedback:
 - Positive response
 - Reduced data collection workload
 - Collecting info that will be helpful
- Engaging faculty in instrument development to create assessment **tools tailored to key aspects of their particular industry**
- Creating a flexible timeline that works for all → **manageable with current workload**
- Empowering a director to **focus on implementation** of the School's plan, **provide consistent communication and feedback**, and **work with faculty to facilitate a process** that is effective for their programs

