



Closing the Loop on Assessment

A.Q. MILLER SCHOOL OF *journalism*
& *mass communications*
AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

- The Miller School is one of only 112 accredited programs in the country.
- **ACEJMC Philosophy:** “Accreditation must encourage discovery, imagination, freedom of expression, diversity and high standards without undue standardization.”
- **ACEJMC Philosophy:** “A college no longer is to be reviewed as a place to provide **instruction**, but as one that exists to produce **learning**.”

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

- ACEJMC adopted its assessment guidelines for member schools in 2001.
- Members schools were required to develop plans in 2003.
- Initial assessment procedures were to begin in 2003-2004 academic year.
- Programs seeking accreditation or re-accreditation were required to show evidence during their accreditation site visit.





Developing the plan: Based on the Miller School mission.

- Pursue knowledge through creative works, scholarly research and innovative teaching.
- Encourage professional competencies, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and social responsibility.
- Serve our constituents as defenders of free expression in a dynamic, multicultural society.



Miller School Adopts Learning Objectives in 2003.

Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice.

Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.

Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

Think critically, creatively and independently.

Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.

Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

A.Q. MILLER SCHOOL OF *journalism*
& *mass communications*
AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Miller School Assessment Plan: Direct Measures.

- Only a portion of learning objectives are evaluated each year.
- Each year, we review a sample of writing from one of five degree tracks: print journalism, broadcast journalism, public relations, advertising and electronic media production.
- Independent reviewers quantitatively evaluate student work and provide qualitative comments.





Miller School Assessment Plan: Indirect Measures.

- Spring senior exit survey.
- Professional feedback from the JMC Alumni Advisory Council.
- Feedback from internship on-site evaluators relating to learning objectives.
- Alumni Satisfaction Survey administered every four years to recent graduates (within the past five years).
- Enrollment and retention figures.
- State and national student awards.

“Closing the Loop”: Annual Review of Assessment Findings.

- Associate Director and Curriculum Committee review qualitative and quantitative data.
- Overall recommendations made to fix curriculum deficiencies.
- Recommendations made about content in specific classes assessed.
- Procedural deficiencies are also assessed.



An Example: “Closing the Loop.”

Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice.

Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and

✓ **Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.**

Images and information.

Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

Think critically, creatively and independently.

Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.

Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

A.Q. MILLER SCHOOL OF *journalism*
& *mass communications*
AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



Assessing the Diversity Standard (Indirectly).

QUALITATIVE COMMENTS FROM THE SENIOR EXIT SURVEY:

"Diversity is a HUGE issue in communications, and I don't feel like it is ever adequately covered. **I had to get my experience in diversity elsewhere, and once I was exposed to the importance of it I could see just how much the JMC school was lacking...**I have been embarrassed (**SIC**) to be a K-State student..."

"The only time I ever heard any teacher focus on anything related to diversity was **a lecture on demographics in an ad class**. We can do better."

Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

Reviewers examined work from two upper-level undergraduate courses:

- **MC 670 Advertising and Social Responsibility:** Class presentations on cultural sensitivity in advertising campaigns.
- **MC 685 Media Management:** Papers written on the issue of diversity in the workplace.



Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

EVALUATION OF DIVERSITY

Assignment _____ Student _____
 RATING: 1=Unacceptable; 2=Poor, 3=Satisfactory, 4=Strong, 5=Outstanding

Language use reflects an awareness of diversity issues.	NA	1	2	3	4	5
Work contains accurate portrayals/representations of diverse groups.	NA	1	2	3	4	5
Work shows problem solving based on needs of a diverse audience.	NA	1	2	3	4	5
Work shows that student is working outside his/her perspective.	NA	1	2	3	4	5
Student work addresses and accounts for the diversity represented in the demographics of society.	NA	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS:

SCORE _____

Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

MC 670 ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Mode</u>
1. <i>Language use reflects an awareness of diversity issues.</i>	3.29	*2.50
2. <i>Accurate portrayals/representations of diverse groups.</i>	3.14	*3.00
3. <i>Problem solving based on needs of a diverse audience.</i>	2.79	*2.00
4. <i>Student is working outside his/her perspective.</i>	3.14	*3.00
5. <i>Work addresses and accounts for the diversity represented in the demographics of society.</i>	2.78	1.50

(*)—Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

N= 7

Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

- The results suggest that students may need more exposure to the nuances of appropriately communicating to minority groups according to their cultural lifestyles, customs and sensitivities.



Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

MC 685 MEDIA MANAGEMENT

<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Mode</u>
1. <i>Language use reflects an awareness of diversity issues.</i>	3.21	*3.00
2. <i>Accurate portrayals/representations of diverse groups.</i>	N/A	N/A
3. <i>Problem solving based on needs of a diverse audience.</i>	2.64	3.00
4. <i>Student is working outside his/her perspective.</i>	3.01	3.00
5. <i>Work addresses and accounts for the diversity represented in the demographics of society.</i>	2.66	3.00

(*)—Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

N= 35

Assessing the Diversity Standard (Directly).

- The work from this class represents below-average application of students' knowledge of differences between demographic groups.



Closing the Loop: Taking Action on Diversity.

Faculty were made aware of the deficiencies in diversity education, and the following classes adopted new projects to enhance the focus:

- **MC 316 Internet Journalism**—a required course for all print and electronic journalism students—began an applied focus on cultural sensitivity and reporting issues pertinent to racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled, gays/lesbians/bisexuals and various religious cultures.
- **MC 645 Public Relations Campaigns**, using research showing that HIV/AIDS cases disproportionately affect minority populations, required students to develop a culturally sensitive education campaign targeting female minority populations in Manhattan and surrounding areas.

Closing the Loop: Taking Action on Diversity.

- Two classes—**MC 712 Environmental Communication** and **MC 740 Risk Communication**—conducted “Toxic Tours,” sending students on field trips to inspect environmentally hazardous sites in Kansas to discover how marginalized populations are affected by such risks.

Additionally, the School made some moves to develop new classes dealing with multiculturalism:

- **MC 662 International and Intercultural Public Relations** was launched as part of a new PR curriculum, designed to acquaint students with the nuances of communicating across international borders and cultures.





Closing the Loop: Side Benefits of Assessment.

The findings of assessment have had other positive aspects in promoting the diversity standard.

- **Diverse Mass Communicators:** New student group creates cultural awareness among JMC students.
- **Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media:** The Center, in cooperation with the Miller School, has taken a lead in sponsoring panels, discussions and lectures in relation to Community Cultural Harmony Week each fall.