

Program of Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Adopted August 2022, Revised July 2026

Introduction

Kansas State University—one the first three universities to operate under the Morrill Act—has remained true to its land-grant heritage: bringing the benefits of research and service directly to the people of Kansas, the nation, and the world.

The A. Q. Miller School of Media and Communication (SMC) is fully accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) and offers Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees at the undergraduate level and the Master of Arts degree at the graduate level. The school consists of four undergraduate degrees, including two accredited programs: Advertising and Public Relations (BA/BS) and News and Sports Media (BA/BS). Each degree program requires a core curriculum that provides students with a foundation of knowledge and understanding of research methods, diversity, law, ethics, and history, common to all areas of mass communication.

Mission of Kansas State University

The [mission of Kansas State University](#) is to foster excellent teaching, research, and service that develop a highly skilled and educated citizenry necessary to advancing the well-being of Kansas, the nation, and the international community. The university embraces all, encourages engagement and is committed to the discovery of knowledge, the education of undergraduate and graduate students, and improvement in the quality of life and standard of living of those we serve.

Mission of the A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication

The A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication develops skilled, mindful, creative, and ethical communicators who elevate voices and stories, lead transformation and innovation and practice influence and advocacy for good.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Assessment of student learning in the A. Q. Miller School of Media and Communication will be based on the following core competencies and values as specified by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications:

1. Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press 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 service to all people and communities.
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.
10. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communication professions in which they work.

Assessment Methods and Evidence

Assumptions guiding the collection of evidence about student learning are these: that assessment should be conducted **systematically and over time**, that both **qualitative and quantitative methods** are of value, that assessment of student learning at the program level **should be used to evaluate the curriculum** (not individual faculty teaching performance) and that **results should confirm what students are learning and be used for curriculum improvement**. In the A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication, assessment of students' level of achievement of the 10 goals for student learning occurs 1) by direct methods during students' programs of study and 2) by indirect methods from students, alumni, faculty and constituents external to the School to determine perceptions of the effectiveness of the program and to identify barriers or assets that characterize the learning experience for students.

Procedures for Direct Methods of Evaluation

The Miller School's Associate Director for Undergraduate Studies, working with the Assistant Directors, is responsible for initiating the assessment procedures detailed in this document. There are four specific annual tasks associated with assessment: 1) planning and conducting assessment for each academic year, 2) reviewing results from the previous year's assessment, 3) recommending changes in curriculum or assessment procedures as revealed by that review, and 4) facilitating a meeting with each program to discuss proposed changes.

What Is Assessed

ASSESSMENT EVALUATION EXAM

The A.Q. Miller School will administer an annual examination designed to test the knowledge and competencies of students in our curriculum, with questions based on the 10 learning areas described above. The exam will be administered among two groups of students. First, to establish a baseline of knowledge, we will give the exam to students enrolled in MC 100 SMC Orientation. Secondly, to gauge the competencies of students completing the program, we will give the exam to students enrolled in the capstone classes of the two accredited degrees: MC 580 Storytelling Across Platforms (for NSM majors) and MC 581 Campaigns in Advertising and Public Relations (for Ad & PR Majors).

Frequency: Annually, Fall and Spring semesters.

REVIEW OF SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECTS

Projects produced by students in the capstone classes in each of the School's two accredited degrees, MC 580 Storytelling Across Platforms and MC 581 Strategic Communication Campaigns, are evaluated by industry professionals. Friends of the A.Q. Miller School, alumni, and/or other qualified industry professionals review projects and evaluate work according to a rubric containing items relating to applicable SLOs. Feedback is delivered to the instructor of each course. **Frequency:** Annually, Fall and Spring semesters.

INTERNSHIP ASSESSMENT.

All majors in the A.Q. Miller School must complete at least one, one-hour internship. Internship evaluators are asked to assess students' task-related skills as they apply to the relevant ACEJMC learning objectives, meaning that not all SLOs will be applicable in certain learning situations. **Frequency:** Annually, Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

Indirect Methods

In addition to the procedures described above, the school will employ indirect methods of ascertaining feedback about student learning outcomes. Using the indirect measures listed below, the unit will have more assessment options and a broader understanding of the effectiveness of the curriculum and related student activities in meeting the school's learning objectives.

SENIOR EXIT SURVEYS

Surveys will be conducted among graduating seniors each year to ascertain strengths and weaknesses of the students' educational experience in the Miller School. Specifically, the exit survey will incorporate questions relating to the school's student learning objectives, as well as other questions relating to students' overall quality of satisfaction with their learning experience. Seniors enrolled in the school's two capstone classes, MC 580 and MC 581, are required to complete the exit survey. **Frequency:** Annually.

ALUMNI SURVEY

A survey of Miller School alumni will be conducted annually to determine recent alumni perceptions of the value of their education and their professional and civic achievements. Again, specific feedback will center around alumni evaluation of their learning experience in the Miller School, including specific questions dealing with our effectiveness in meeting the 12 learning objectives.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS, RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

Each degree program faculty will review enrollment numbers and retention and graduation rates periodically to ensure that the A.Q. Miller School is maintaining a high level of interest among students at Kansas State University. Sudden increases or decreases in enrollment will be identified and analyzed to determine the cause of such trends. Retention and enrollment numbers will also be discussed during at least one of the school's all-hands meetings.

STUDENT AWARDS, PRIZES, PLACEMENTS AND ADMISSIONS INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Reviewing individual student awards and achievements helps the faculty evaluate the curriculum's effectiveness in teaching various writing, reporting, and production skills. Job placement data can provide additional background relating to the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing students for careers in mass media. Graduate program admissions data can help faculty determine how the curriculum is preparing students in writing, critical thinking, research and other higher-level academic skills. This data is summarized and reviewed annually by faculty to identify and build on program strengths.

SYLLABI AND ASSIGNMENTS

Syllabi and assignments from classes will be reviewed on a periodic basis to assess follow-through in incorporating the learning outcomes previously listed in this document.

Assessment Report Annual Recommendations

Each year, individual programs will meet to discuss the assessment report's findings. Results of annual assessment efforts are presented to faculty in a meeting where strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum are discussed, noting the weaker student performances among program learning objectives. Faculty will be encouraged to make note of needed student learning improvements and challenged to improve efforts to enhance learning in the weaker areas in applicable courses. To ensure that assessment measures are used to complete the loop of improvement of the curriculum and instruction, the annual discussion will identify courses of action for improving student learning.

Courses of action might include the following:

- Addition, deletion or modification of individual courses.
- Modifications in curricular requirements.

- Development of specific areas of faculty competence.
- Shifts in resources for staffing sections, hiring or equipment.
- Shifts of emphasis of goals and assignments across levels or within categories.
- Raising standards of performance through grading practices and faculty expectations.