

ASSESSMENT REPORT, AY2024-25

A. Program Information

- B.A. and B.S. in **Advertising & Public Relations**
- B.A. and B.S. in **News & Sports Media**
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- Program assessment website: <https://www.k-state.edu/media-communication/about/accreditation.html>

Introduction and summary

Designed to comply with expectations of the K-State Office of Assessment and the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), this report offers a summary of the A.Q. Miller School's assessment plan and its outcomes for 2024-25 in the programs of **News and Sports Media (NSM)** and **Advertising & Public Relations (Ad&PR)**, which launched Fall 2022.

To assess means to measure the validity of student learning outcomes (SLOs) in coursework and, subsequently, to draw relevant lessons for improving curriculum and instruction. ACEJMC Standard 3, which is titled "Assessment of learning outcomes," requires the School to "regularly assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures that engage communication professionals" and use results to improve curriculum and instruction, and, in doing so, to close a loop with Standard 2, which is titled "curriculum and instruction." Standard 2 reads: "The unit provides a curriculum and instruction, whether onsite or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse global and domestic society."¹

The School activated two indirect measures of the 10 ACEJMC "professional values and competencies" (SLOs) in the academic year 2022-2023. ACEJMC used to require 12 SLOs, which were collapsed to 10 three years ago. We continue to measure 12 SLOs, separating, for instance, competencies into domestic/multicultural and global diversity proficiency. The direct measures took the form of a pre- and post-test and internship evaluations. The indirect measure appeared as a satisfaction survey of seniors.

¹ "[A guide to assessment of learning outcomes for ACEJMC accreditation](#)," Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

B. Outcome Report

Assessment Method(s) *(must include at least one direct measure)*

- **Direct measures used in AY2024-25:**

- I. ***Pre- and post- test (“assessment exam”)***: Pre-majors took a pre-test in MC 100 Orientation, and seniors took the same test in the form of a post-test nearer the conclusion of the program in MC 580 Storytelling Across Platforms (the capstone for the NSM program) and in MC 581 Strategic Communications Campaigns (capstone for the Ad&PR program). The assessment tests were administered to measure the validity of SLOs across general coursework and to inform curriculum and instruction. Notably, the post-test given to seniors is used to compare the results of graduating students to those of incoming freshmen, who are given the pre-test. Seniors’ scores are not linked to their respective freshman cohort (the scores don’t capture changes in the same individuals). To more precisely determine the desired level of program impact, the School could devise a plan to carefully track students’ progress as they move from freshman to senior status.

Of the 38 valid responses to the post-test, 16 were collected in MC 580 (News & Sports Media capstone) and 22 in MC 581 (Ad&PR capstone) via a Qualtrics survey. The pre-test was administered in MC 100 (SMC Orientation) and was completed by students across majors (Ad&PR, COMM, DGIN, and NSM).

NSM

In the News and Sports Media program, only return of concern in the post-tests (scores with an average below 2.0 in a summative score where 4=maximum points) was in **Global Diversity** (mean 1.75). The NSM faculty will need to discuss these findings in the coming year and develop a plan to address students’ learning in global diversity. The graduating students scored highest in their knowledge of **Theories** (mean 3.25) and lowest in **Global Diversity**. The previous assessment period had zero returns of concern. Overall, comparisons (computed with independent-samples t-tests) between the pre-test cohort and the post-test NSM group show statistically significant improvements in 5 out of 12 SLOs. While not statistically significant, the means improved in all 12 SLOs from pre- to post-test. The comprehensive results for NSM are presented in Table 1.

Ad&PR

In the Advertising & Public Relations program, there were two returns of concern (a mean score below 2.0 on a 4-point summative scale) in **Math and Statistics** (mean 1.5) and **Freedom of Speech** (mean 1.82). This is the second assessment period that math and statistics have been a return of concern. The Ad&PR faculty will need to discuss these findings in the coming year and find ways to address students’ learning in mathematics and statistics, as well as freedom of speech. The Ad&PR students scored highest in their knowledge of **Theory** (mean 3.27), and independent-samples t-tests found that they had a significantly higher score than the incoming cohort on 3 of the 12 SLOs. The comprehensive results for Ad&PR are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Average points for each SLO in the pre-test and post-test groups - NSM

<i>SLO</i>	NSM Pre-test		NSM Post-test	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 – Freedom of Speech	1.12	.94	2.81*	1.22
2 – History	1.68	1.09	2.25*	1.23
3 – Domestic Diversity	2.60	1.03	2.93	1.00
4 – Global Diversity	1.60	1.05	1.75	1.06
5 – Theories	2.53	1.33	3.25*	1.13
6 – Ethics	2.15	1.16	2.69*	1.01
7 – Critical Thinking	2.40	.94	2.5	1.03
8 – Research	2.02	1.05	2.31	1.01
9 – Writing	1.88	.98	2.25	1.34
10 – Critical Evaluation	1.86	.95	2.06	1.12
11 – Math and Stats	1.74	.95	2.13	1.02
12 - Technology	2.24	1.17	2.94*	1.12
	<i>N=129</i>		<i>N=16</i>	

*Statistically significant difference, on a summative score where 4=maximum points, with 4 items out of 4 answered correctly.

- Differences between the pre-test and each program's post-test were analyzed with independent-samples t-tests.

Table 2. Average points for each SLO in the pre-test and post-test groups – Ad&PR

<i>SLO</i>	Ad&PR Pre-test		Ad&PR Post-test	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1 – Freedom of Speech	1.20	1.06	1.82*	1.18
2 – History	2.23	1.16	2.32	1.29
3 – Domestic Diversity	2.39	1.13	2.77	1.31
4 – Global Diversity	1.68	1.20	2.41*	1.00
5 – Theories	2.59	1.43	3.27*	1.67
6 – Ethics	2.31	1.14	2.86	1.04
7 – Critical Thinking	2.25	1.11	2.41	1.47
8 – Research	1.86	1.08	2.36	1.36
9 – Writing	1.81	1.14	2.09	1.31
10 – Critical Evaluation	1.85	1.09	2.05	1.10
11 – Math and Stats	1.88	1.05	1.50	1.15
12 - Technology	2.20	1.23	2.59	1.47
	<i>N=114</i>		<i>N=22</i>	

*Statistically significant difference, on a summative score where 4=maximum points, with 4 items out of 4 answered correctly.

- Differences between the pre-test and each program's post-test were analyzed with independent-samples t-tests.

II. **Internship evaluation:** All students in the Ad&PR and NSM programs are required to take MC 491 – Mass Communication Internship before they graduate. Evaluations received from 108 internship supervisors over the course of the 2024-2025 academic year indicated overwhelming satisfaction with the skillsets of the juniors and seniors in NSM and Ad&PR, as shown in Table 2. Many used adjectives such as “outstanding,” “passionate,” “dedicated,” “creative,” “thoughtful,” and “driven” to describe the interns. Some described the interns as “quick to learn, adaptive, open to feedback,” or “an excellent team member,” a “tremendous asset,” a “blessing,” and a “joy to work with,” or as someone who was “driven and quick on their feet.” The spectrum of intern qualities mentioned by supervisors ranged from “incredible work ethic” to “adaptive” to “creative and curious” to “professional.” In areas of growth, a few supervisors noted that some students could improve how they prioritize multiple projects assigned to them, their punctuality and turnaround time (“ensuring follow-through”), their assertiveness in expressing opinions (some were described as “reserved”), and their receptiveness to feedback. Overall, evaluators emphasized our students’ growth and learning, professional demeanor, dependability, and collaboration.

Multiple students had two or more internships, depending on their chosen number of credits (up to 3) in the repeatable course, MC491: Media Internship. Interns had to document 120 hours of work to earn each credit hour. Fall 2024 saw 13 evaluator comments returned, Spring 2025 saw 15 supervisor comments returned, and Summer 2025 saw 73 supervisor comments returned (for a total of 107 evaluations). A few interns received more than one evaluation for having more than one supervisor.

Internship evaluators expressed not only overall satisfaction, but also pleasure with their respective interns’ preparation and performance. The strongest scores were in **Professional Ethics** (M=4.87, on a 5-point scale, where 5=Excellent) and in **Respect for Diversity** (M=4.79), while the lowest score (M=4.54) was in **Critical Evaluation**. Overall, internship data indicate that students graduating from the NSM and Ad&PR programs are well prepared for jobs in the industry. When asked what grade they would assign to the student, the average grade was 95.9 (out of 100, SD =5.42), with a minimum of 60 and a maximum of 100.

Table 2. Internship supervisor ratings of students’ skills

SLO	N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Concepts and theories	107	2	5	4.78	.54
Professional ethics	106	2	5	4.87	.44
Respect for diversity	102	2	5	4.79	.57
Critical and Creative Thinking	106	2	5	4.59	.67
Research skills	101	2	5	4.55	.59
Writing and Oral Communication	106	2	5	4.70	.59
Critical Evaluation	104	1	5	4.54	.74
Statistics	69	4	5	4.75	.43

*Internship supervisors only rated the skills that applied to the student’s work.

- **Indirect measure used in AY2024-25:**

A senior satisfaction survey was administered by the university Office of Assessment in AY2023-24, allowing graduating students to evaluate their own learning under several SLOs. The survey indicated overall satisfaction with the rigor of instruction and positive experience received by the respondents. Without discussing the results under individual SLOs, it may still be noted that the response rate in the survey was relatively low. The senior satisfaction survey had a response rate of 12 percent, with 9 of the School's 77 graduating seniors participating. The university administered it in Summer 2024, Fall 2024, and Spring 2025 to seniors who had applied or were approved for graduation in those semesters. The university measures 5 SLOs that are loosely aligned with some of the A.Q. Miller School's 12 SLOS.

SLO 1 (critical thinking) corresponds to the School's SLO 7 (critical thinking). SLO 2 (A. written communication, B. oral communications) corresponds to the School's SLO 9 (writing). SLO 4 Making moral and ethical judgments aligns with the School's SLO 6 (ethics). Finally, SLO5 Knowledge specific to your major aligns with the School's SLO 5 (theories), SLO 8 (research), and SLO 11 (math and statistics). All SLOs scored average or above.

Table 3. Student responses to the senior satisfaction survey – Perceived improvements

SLO	Average	Above average	Excellent
Critical thinking	14%	29%	57%
Written communication	14%	29%	57%
Oral communication	29%	17%	57%
Moral and ethical judgements	43%	0%	57%
Knowledge specific to your major	0%	43%	57%

While the School was initially optimistic for higher response rates from the university-administered survey, the School will develop and deploy its own senior survey to more accurately capture self-perceptions of our programs' SLOs and achieve a higher response rate.

Summary

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that all graduates of accredited programs should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- 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;
- demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- 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;

- present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Students were directly assessed on 12 outcomes that reflect these values and competencies. While SLOs overall came back strongly, pre-test and post-test comparisons showed returns of concern for **Global Diversity** in the News and Sports Media program. Returns of concern in the Advertising and Public Relations program included **Math and Statistics** (for the second year) and **Freedom of Speech**. The programs should address these learning outcomes in their coursework in the following year. Internship supervisor evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Coursework and participation in student media organizations and clubs in the School of Media and Communication are preparing students in the Ad&PR and NSM programs to be successful in the industry. Senior exit surveys showed that graduates felt well prepared upon graduation. Graduating seniors reported at least average preparedness across all five university SLOs.