Department Wide Assessment of

Seniors and the Major Program

Kenneth R Albone
Rowan University

Department of Communication Studies
201 Mullica Hill Rd
Glassboro NJ 08028
856-256-4500 ext 3393

Department Wide Assessment of

Seniors and the Major Program:

Rubric Form

Kenneth R Albone
Rowan University

Department of Communication Studies
201 Mullica Hill Rd
Glassboro NJ 08028
856-256-4500 ext 3393

Rowan University

Assessment of [Name of College and Department]

Rowan University

Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Planning

[This is an official form of the above-named unit. List your departmental goals as they apply to the Mission and Goals of your University. To assist in aligning your current goals with the University mission and goals, the University mission statement and goals should be provided below. Certain units may not be able to respond to every goal due to the nature   of the support that some units provide.]

The MISSION of your UNIVERSITY	The GOALS of your UNIVERSITY

Section One: Mission of the Department
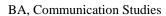
Your department's mission statement:

Section Two: Feedback from the Community and Constituencies

      List of the constituencies used for the assessment of the department:

Section Three: Summary of Program's Annual Assessment
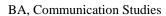
Summary paragraphs of assessment:

Improvements

List of success and areas needing improvement:

Program Goal 1: Put your first program goal here.

Improvements:

List of success and areas needing improvement:

Program Goal 2: Put your second program goal here.

<u>Improvements:</u>

List of success and areas needing improvement:

Program Goal 3: Put your third program goal here.

<u>Improvements:</u>

List of success and areas needing improvement:

Program Goal 4: Put your fourth program goal here.

Improvements:

List of success and areas needing improvement:

Continue for your number of program goals.

Section Four: Assessment Result Matrix

Program Goals	Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	**Targeted Quality** for Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	**Assessment Tools** used in the measurement	**Observed Quality** of Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	**TARGET** **3** = exceeded; **2** = met; **1** = not met; **X** = add X to **unplanned target** (e.g. 3X) NA = 9	**Proposed Improvements** to be implemented for the next evaluation cycle
Program Goal 1: Put goal one here.	**Learning Goal 1.1:** Put a learning goal here.					
	Learning Outcome 1.1.1 Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	1 Any comments.	Fill in appropriately if needed.
		Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	1 Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
	Learning Outcome 1.1.2. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	1 Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
	Learning Outcome 1.1.3. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	1 Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.

	Learning Outcome 1.1.4. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
		Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
	Learning Goal 1.2. Put a learning goal here.					
	Learning Outcome 1.2.1. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
	Learning Outcome 1.2.2. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.
	Learning Outcome 1.2.3. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.

	Learning Outcome 1.2.4. Put an outcome goal here.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately.	Fill in appropriately. x% exceeded expectations; y% met expectations; z% did not meet expectations	Any comments	Fill in appropriately if needed.

The rest of the goals and learning outcomes would follow.

Assessment of College of Communication and Creative Arts, BA Communication Studies

[This is an official form of the above-named unit. List your departmental goals as they apply to the Mission and Goals of Rowan University. To assist in aligning your current goals with the University mission and goals, the University mission statement and goals are provided below. Certain units may not be able to respond to every university goal due to the nature of the support that some units provide.]

The MISSION of ROWAN UNIVERSITY

A leading public institution, Rowan University combines liberal education with professional preparation from the baccalaureate through the doctorate. Rowan provides a collaborative, learning-centered environment in which highly qualified and diverse faculty, staff, and students integrate teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, and community service. Through intellectual, social, and cultural contributions, the University enriches the lives of those in the campus community and surrounding region.

The GOALS of ROWAN UNIVERSITY
(Based on 2009 Middle States Evaluation Report)

I.   To provide a collaborative, nurturing, learning-centered environment to educate students with an excellent liberal education and professional preparation to meet the challenges of the future.
II. To excel in teaching and scholarship through the integration of best practices, creative knowledge discovery, and research.
III. To foster an environment that attracts, supports, and retains highly qualified and diverse students, faculty, and staff.
IV. To be valued for partnership with the community and regional industry for providing opportunities for economic, educational, cultural, and social enrichment

Section One: Mission

The Department of Communication Studies educates students to understand and apply communication theories and concepts in their professional, social and personal lives. These theories and concepts include the knowledge of how to generate and attribute shared meaning; the use of critical thinking and listening skills; the respect for cultural diversity; the use of communication as a civic responsibility; the use of technology to send and receive messages; the platform experience necessary for professional achievement and social leadership; the recognition of the need for communication education; an understanding of the nature and power of language; and a commitment to communication ethics.

Section Two: Feedback from the Community and Constituencies

- Graduating seniors who took the pilot portfolio course in Spring 2013 reported that it overall helped them critically evaluate themselves and what they have learned in their major; however there was a theme that students wished professors would foster a stronger connection between the portfolio process and courses in the major.
- Graduating Senior students surveys from 2012 indicated that they were very satisfied with preparation for the workplace, depth and breadth of coverage of topics, faculty advising, and quality of teaching, but were dissatisfied with scheduling of courses and quality of equipment
- Seniors suggested to continuously remind students throughout the major about keeping papers for the senior portfolio
- Seniors also suggested focusing our efforts on increasing the public speaking component of the major

- Graduating seniors surveys from 2011 (Communication Studies) showed that a majority of our graduating seniors are not employed at the time of graduation (76.9%)
- In 2012, Dr. Lorin Arnold, the Dean of the College of Communication, commented that the "goals are appropriate to the program, connected to the overall mission of the college and university, and will serve the needs of students/graduates of the program."

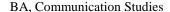## Section Three: Summary of Program's Annual Assessment

Traditionally, the Department of Communication Studies has assessed graduating seniors through the use of portfolios that students construct by collecting papers from past classes and submitting them in their senior seminar course. The results of last year's assessment showed that we needed to: 1) create stricter guidelines on the included materials, 2) provide our learning goals to students in constructing their portfolios such that they can speak to them in their paper selection and self critique, and 3) provide mechanisms that would allow us to assess learning goals that were difficult or impossible to be assessed previously, such as professional correspondence.

In response to these discovered needs, the portfolio requirements were revamped such that students were required to provide assignments from all of their core courses from Introduction to Communication Studies through Senior Seminar. Additionally, we began the process of constructing a 1-hour portfolio course that would guide students through the process (instead of it being "tacked on" to a course in which it wasn't central) and provide exercises for students to complete that would allow us to better assess specific learning goals.

Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major. Some discussion will be given to the patterns in the findings of the assessment, but most of the focus will be on what needs to be done to adjust our portfolio process.

Improvements
- In AY2011-2012, we experienced difficulty assessing several of the program goals because the portfolios did not include related materials. (More on this will be explored with each program goal.) As a result, we constructed three general recommendations for improvement. These were:
    o Students should be given all the goals of the assessment early in their career at Rowan, such as in the Intro or Theory course, and be guided on how to choose papers to meet these goals.
    o Advisors should speak with advisees about these goals during meetings.
    o Department Course Curriculum Committees, as appropriate, will be charged with assessing student progress based on in class experiences.

- For AY2012-2013, in response to the first recommendation, students were provided with the learning goals in constructing their portfolios. Although we will not see the full effect of these changes until we have students who were exposed to these goals throughout their major, the

simple addition of the goals being made explicit to the students created a shift in the portfolios toward being more of an argument rather than a loosely compiled pile of assignments. More specific observations are discussed below in response to the findings for the program goals.

- The changes noted in the second and third recommendations are cultural shifts in the functioning of the department that are underway; however, the effects of these changes will be difficult to assess until we have a few classes of students progress through the major with them in place.

Program Goal 1: Develop graduates are theoretical and conceptual thinkers and are well-rounded communicators, capable of speaking, listening, and writing clearly.

Improvements:
- In the AY2011-2012 assessment, we concluded that this program goal was overall being met. However, there were a few instances where we had difficulty assessing the outcomes because students did not include papers that demonstrated their proficiencies with regard to some of their goals. In response to this, we made the following recommendation s:
  o We recommended that the departmental course curriculum committees discuss ways to emphasize in each class the relevance and utility of communication theories and concepts and to encourage students to include application papers in which this goal is emphasized in their portfolio.

- In addition to this change, we provided our learning goals to our seniors, required that students include papers from all of their core courses, and provided further guidance in our portfolio course in helping students select assignments that demonstrated this set of proficiencies. In this round of assessment, there were no instances of evaluators not being able to assess a learning goal. Although this sample was smaller and not as representative as last year's sample, we saw a decrease in the proportion of portfolios that did not meet expectations for the various learning goals. Since there has been too little time for the cultural changes in the stress of theoretical utility to take effect, we speculate that this was more due to an improvement in the guidance of the portfolio construction process rather than an improvement in the students.

- Although, we were pleased with our observations of this program goal both from an assessment and education standpoints, we have the following recommendation for AY2013-2014:
  o In addition to the theoretical and conceptual understanding already being fostered in our students, we recommend that professors in our department be proactive in helping students incorporate theories and concepts into their actual arguments instead of them sequentially summarizing the material from sources and separately providing their arguments.

- In our AY2011-2012 assessment, we made the following recommendations for improvement for learning goal 1.2:
  o To meet learning goal 2 (students understand the nature and power of language), we propose that all students include a paper from Rhetorical Criticism (or similar course) in their portfolio. Rhetorical Criticism will be a required class starting in Spring 2013, so all of our

majors will eventually have a paper from this class. For students who will graduate without needing this requirement, we will allow them to include a substitute paper from another course that they believe demonstrates this quality.
- o To meet learning goal 3 (students possess effective written, oral, and learning communication skills), we recommend introducing an oral presentation in the newly proposed Senior Portfolio class.

- In the AY2012-2013 assessment processes, we again found that students were overall able to write in a variety of forms. Improving from last year, the implementation of the first recommendation led to us being able to assess every portfolio on the importance of language choices on enabling and/or constraining meaning. We were additionally pleased that the majority of our students met expectations on this learning goal.

- Due to us not yet working out the logistics of how to best incorporate an oral presentation into the pilot of the portfolio course, we were still unable to assess the learning goals pertaining to audience analysis, oral delivery, and peer critique. Due to this, we shall repeat and expand the second recommendation from last year:
- o We recommend including an oral presentation in the Senior Portfolio class that involves audience analysis of peers, delivery of the presentation, and a peer critique exercise following the deliveries.

Program Goal 2: Develop graduates who are effective at primary and secondary research.

Improvements:
- In our AY2011-2012 assessment, we found that it was difficult, overall, to assess this program goal because portfolios generally lacked an included assignment that demonstrated students' competencies in this area. For what was present, we observed some deficiencies in students' abilities. In response to this, we made the following recommendations:
- o We recommended that faculty share their overall assessments of students knowledge and credibility of courses at the conclusion of each year during appropriate departmental meetings.
- o We recommended evaluations be made within the Department Course Curriculum Committees during their bi-yearly reviews on students' knowledge on the credibility of sources.
- o   We recommended that students include a quantitative and qualitative methodology paper from the 4 credits Research Methods class that we started offering in the Fall 2012.

- The first two recommendations have been slowly integrated into the cultural functioning of the department, but it is still too early to detect their effects.

- In response to the third recommendation, the 4 credit research methods course was created, and an entry from this course was required in the portfolio. However, students frequently included entries that showed either their proficiency with quantitative methods or qualitative methods, but seldom both.

- Further the wider variety of included materials in the portfolio made it easier to assess students' knowledge in selecting credible sources, but it still seems apparent that our ability to assess this is not ensured with the portfolio standards in their present form. Due to these issues, the following recommendations are for next cycle and beyond:
  - Portfolios should continue to require research methods assignments/papers; however it should be designated that entries must include method proposals or executions from BOTH quantitative and qualitative methods.
  - The lab that is now part of the 4 hour method course that focuses on this specific issue should be considered as a required portfolio entry.

Program Goal 3: Develop graduates who are ethical citizens with sensitivity to diversity.

Improvements:
- In our AY2011-2012 assessment, we found some evidence of students demonstrating proficiency in their appreciation for ethics and diversity, but we had a great deal of difficulty assessing it in most portfolios. Consequently we made the following recommendations:
  - We recommended that each portfolio should include a final paper from the required Ethics class, as well as papers that focus on diversity, such as papers from Intercultural Communication, Ethics, Communicating Gender and the like.
  - We recommended that students address this goal in their self-assessment paper in their portfolio.

- The enactment of these recommendations led it to be far easier to assess the issues of ethics, but diversity was still difficult to assess. To address this, we make the following recommendations for next cycle:
  - Instead of just asking students to include any paper from classes that cover diversity (e.g., Communicating Gender, Intercultural Communication), the portfolio requirements should explicitly direct students to include papers that demonstrate their appreciation and understanding of issues of diversity.
  - Greater emphasis should be placed on the requirements of the portfolio self assessment to address issues of diversity.

Program Goal 4: Develop graduates who are savvy users of technology.

Improvements:
- In the AY2011-2012 assessment, we were generally unable to assess the learning outcomes underlying this program goal. In response to this observation, we made the following recommendations:
  - We recommended that students create digital portfolios, therefore giving students opportunities to incorporate technology in their learning.
  - We recommended encouraging students to include items in their portfolios that demonstrate this program goal.
  - We recommended that departmental curriculum committees discuss ways to incorporate more technology opportunities into classes.
  - We recommended that faculty engage in discussions based on their experiences as to student progress in this area.

- In response to these recommendations, we altered the requirements for students to include evidence of professional correspondence, evidence of technology usage for communication purposes when available, and reference their technology skills in their self assessment. Although there was improvement in our ability to assess these outcomes, there were still some issues. Based on our observations in this round of assessment, we offer the following recommendations for next cycle:
  - We repeat the recommendations for a digital portfolio and a sample speech that utilizes technology.
  - We also recommend that the faculty in the department question and discuss the degree to which communication technology usage is really a program goal or simply a positive outcome for some students who take elective courses in the major within which it is stressed.
- We observed that the structure of our assessment rubric for Program Goal 4 produced last year is not compliant with the Middles-States standards. Specifically, there is only one learning goal underlying the program goal.
  - We recommend that an initial task of the department assessment committee next year should be to break down the learning goal into two goals or rephrase the learning goals such that they can be more specific.

Section Four: Assessment Result Matrix

Program Goals	Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	Targeted Quality for Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Tools used in the measurement	Observed Quality of Student Learning Goals and Corresponding Student Learning Outcomes	TARGET **3 =** exceeded; **2 =** met; **1 =** not met; **X =** add X to **unplanned target** (e.g. 3X) NA = 9	Proposed Improvements to be implemented for the next evaluation cycle
Program Goal 1: Develop graduates who are theoretical and conceptual thinkers and are well-rounded communicators, capable of speaking, listening, and writing clearly.	**Learning Goal 1.1:** Students understand the role of theories and concepts for comprehending how meaning is constructed and attributed in a variety of contexts and forms.					
	Learning Outcome 1.1.1 Students will describe communication theories and concepts.	All students can identify the meanings, assumptions, and claims of communication concepts and theories	Portfolio (theory paper)	literature review and rhetorical criticism papers these outcomes were met 90% met expectations; 10% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	
		All students can identify how communication concepts and theories have been studied in the past	Portfolio (theory paper)	literature review and rhetorical criticism papers these outcomes were met 90% met expectations; 10% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40	

					graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	
	Learning Outcome 1.1.2. Students will analyze communication theories and concepts.	All students use communication concepts and theories to answer questions, guide analysis or interpretation.	Portfolio (theory, methods, senior seminar papers, as well as specialization papers)	Included papers that spanned all of the core courses helped to see a pattern of improvement. Most students demonstrated proficiency (at least by the senior seminar paper), but some applications seemed awkward. Some applications seemed to be done because it was the assignment to do so rather than out of an understanding as to what the theory/concepts offer to the discussion of the subject. 10% exceeded expectations 60% met expectations 30% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	P - Continue to require paper from each core course as implemented during this academic year.
	Learning Outcome 1.1.3. Students will evaluate communication theories and concepts.	All students explain the utility or significance of theories and theoretical applications	Portfolio (theory)	Inclusion of papers that spanned the major and students' awareness of this goal led more students to include papers that demonstrated this proficiency. 90% met expectations 10% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	

	Learning Outcome 1.1.4. Students will integrate communication theories into different contexts and forms.	All students use theories and concepts across subject areas.	Portfolio (theory, specialization, senior seminar papers)	Inclusion of papers that spanned the major and students' awareness of this goal led more students to include papers that demonstrated both of these proficiencies. 90% met expectations 10% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	
		All students use theories and concepts in contexts that have not been done in past scholarly sources	Portfolio (theory, specialization, senior seminar papers)	Inclusion of papers that spanned the major and students' awareness of this goal led more students to include papers that demonstrated both of these proficiencies. 90% met expectations 10% did not meet expectations	1 Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major.	
	Learning Goal 1.2. Students understand the nature and power of language and possess effective written, oral, and learning communication skills.					
	Learning Outcome 1.2.1. Students will	All students identify how language choices can constrain and/or enable	Portfolio	Likely due to this learning outcome being provided to students, there were far more	1 Since this review only assessed 10	

	identify the nature of power in a variety of written and oral messages.	meaning making.		entries included where students demonstrated this competence.

10% exceeded expectations
70% met expectations
20% did not meet expectations | portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major. | |
| | **Learning Outcome 1.2.2.** Students will master the writing of different types of messages and different communication styles. | All students write in a variety of academic and/or professional styles including literature reviews, critical analysis, position/argumentative papers, and research reports. | Portfolio (holistically, contains a variety of styles) | Papers included in the portfolio came from different courses - literature reviews, critical analyses, position papers

80% met expectations
20% did not meet expectations | 1
Since this review only assessed 10 portfolios, which cannot be considered representative of the roughly 40 graduates we had from the department, we are treating it more as an assessment of our assessment tool than an assessment of our major. | |
| | **Learning Outcome 1.2.3.** Students will master oral presentations for different types of audiences. | All students do effective audience analysis of audience composition (age, gender, ethnic background, education, socio-economic background) and attitudes. | Portfolio (presentation materials) | These outcomes were difficult to assess, because there were no speeches or speech outcomes or speech critiques included in the portfolios.

A couple students included PowerPoint slides that demonstrated an awareness for the level of depth to be provided during delivery through visual aids.

Could not assess. | Could not assess. | C - The inclusion of a presentation and audience analysis in portfolio class should be considered. |

| | | All students prepare and deliver audience appropriate messages for various purposes (informative, persuasive, entertainment). | Portfolio (presentation materials) | Presumably since they were provided with this learning goal, most students commented on their public speaking abilities in their self assessment. Most reported that they were very competent, but this cannot be assessed without an actual delivery.

Could not assess. | Could not assess. | C - The inclusion of a presentation and audience analysis in portfolio class should be considered. |
| | **Learning Outcome 1.2.4.** Students will give constructive feedback to different types of audience and on a variety of communication messages. | All students critique oral and written messages of their peers using the criteria of clarity, persuasiveness of the messages. | Qualitative assessment, portfolio | Could not assess. | Could not assess. | C - In addition to the addition to the presentation to the in the portfolio course, a critique written by students in response to their peers presentations may be helpful in assessing this. |

The rest of the goals and learning outcomes would follow.