



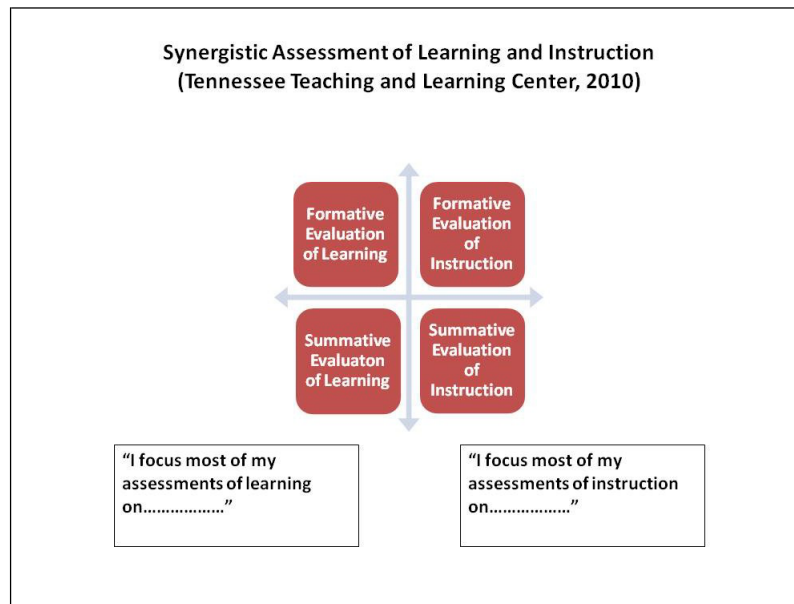
THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

TOMBRAS SCHOOL OF ADVERTISING
AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Assesment Plan

(updated 11/2023)

The assessment plan begins with a statement of learning goals that are built on the core professional values and competencies that underlie curriculum in the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) accredited units. The assessment plan then builds on those values and competencies by describing how learning is assessed both for current students and graduates. Next, the plan addresses broader programmatic assessment. Finally, the plan addresses the ways in which professionals and alumni are involved in the assessment process and also outlines a strategy for applying data from assessment to enhance learning outcomes. The Tombras School’s assessment plan is built on both a formative assessment (ungraded, usually anonymous, feedback by students impression of his or her own learning or a student’s opinion about elements of a course or program of study) and summative assessment (graded work, direct course rubrics) of learning and teaching in the classroom.



Goal of the Tombras School’s Assessment

The mission and values of the Tombras School are enumerated below. The broad goal of the

Tombras School's assessment plan is to evaluate how well the school is serving that mission and vision.

Vision

The future of the University of Tennessee's College of Communication and Information lies in innovative learning, scholarship, and societal engagement. The primary aspiration of the college can be summarized in a single word: excellence. The college and its individual units will become recognized for their excellence internationally, nationally and regionally and for the caliber of their research and creative activity, teaching and service. Collaboration across the units will maximize our contributions to the university and society. Aligned with this vision, the School of Advertising and Public Relations is one excellent School with two strong and distinct programs committed to teaching, research and service to the professions.

Mission

The College of Communication and Information is a community of scholars and creators devoted to the study of communication and information and their related processes and technologies. This mission is achieved through excellence in research/creative activity, teaching and service. The college shares the values of intellectual pursuit, diversity, international and intercultural awareness, engagement and other core ideals of the University of Tennessee in the land-grant tradition. The Tombras School of Advertising & Public Relations applies the College's mission to its programs.

Student Learning Objectives

The core professional values and competencies identified in the curriculum and instruction standard for ACEJMC form the basis for key learning goals in the Tombras School. These goals reflect student outcomes, that is what the student should be able to do, and not teaching objectives, what the course or teacher will do. Those values and competencies are listed below. At the end of each, a word or phrase is used as a shortened reference for the competency.

1. Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and

PBRL 492: Foreign Study	PBRL - E													
PBRL 493: Independent Study	PBRL - E													
CCI 150: Communication in an Information Age	ADVT - R PBRL - R													

Assessment of Student Learning

Undergraduate student learning is assessed in five ways:

1. Each faculty member sets learning objectives for each class and grades students based on how well they demonstrate mastery of course content. Advertising and public relations faculty have developed teaching guidelines for all regularly offered undergraduate classes. Since both majors work off the idea that courses build a body of knowledge throughout the curricula, these guidelines offer guidance to faculty in terms of structuring courses and material that need to be mastered in each course and subsequently assessed.
2. Each spring faculty members conduct direct assessment of core competencies as part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accreditation process.
3. Students participate in the California Critical Thinking Skills Test, which is designed to predict strength in critical thinking in authentic problem situations and success in professional development. Student scores are tracked regularly.
4. The College conducts an annual exit survey of its graduating students. The survey is primarily designed to assess the quality of the programs offered in CCI units, including advertising and public relations, and the degree to which students believe the programs have prepared them for entering their chosen professions or higher education. At times, the School also conducts its own exit survey of students in the major who are graduating.
5. Practicum supervisors are surveyed regarding the skills, knowledge, and competencies of the students they supervised.

Program Assessment

The undergraduate advertising and public relations majors programs are also assessed as part of a comprehensive assessment plan. This is carried out in three ways:

1. Until the 2007-2008 academic year, all undergraduate and graduate areas were required to submit to a separate periodic evaluation of their program. After 2007-2008, the university decided that for accredited programs, the accreditation process and program review process would be combined with the re-accreditation process.
2. Program accreditation for advertising and public relations is conducted by the ACEJMC.
3. Approximately every five years, the College and/or the School survey alumni concerning overall satisfaction with educational experience and applicability of the degree to future work in mass communication fields.

Involvement of Practitioners in Assessment Process

Practitioners are involved in seven ways:

1. The Alumni Advisory Board reviews Tombras School curriculum, interviews students, and evaluates student projects.
2. The Alumni Advisory Board created a new office, the Accreditation Liaison, in 2023. This individual partners with the Tombras School's accreditation committee chair to provide insights and prepare for accreditation reviews.
3. Practitioners sit on the Board of Visitors for the college that review a wide range of academic and professional issues.
4. Practitioners regularly contribute to the teaching mission both as adjuncts/lecturers and guest lecturers.
5. Practitioners are occasionally asked to review syllabi and other educational materials to provide feedback on how well instruction fits with current practice in journalism and mass communication. This includes focus groups or other formal/informal research processes evaluating capstone projects, syllabi and other educational materials.
6. Practitioners regularly contribute to reviewing capstone courses, and in many class sit on a panel of professional judges in evaluating major capstone projects and presentations.
7. Practitioners are asked to provide feedback about student practicums and internships.
8. Practitioners regularly participate in professional field trips and provide feedback.
9. Practitioners regularly participate in UT and CCI job and internship fairs and provide feedback.

Application of Data to Improvements in Programs

Based on both formative and summative assessment of learning and instruction, each of the assessment tools listed above is used in a process of continued reflection on ways to fine-tune instruction with a focus on achieving learning goals. Data collected in the six tools for assessment of student learning can point to specific courses and/or competencies that need attention. Assessment from graduates is broader and more general and addresses issues such as overall satisfaction with educational experience and applicability of the degree to future work in journalism and mass communication fields. Program-level assessment provides data for more holistic assessment and feedback for continual improvement. Each year, the faculty and/or assessment committee of the School will review reports on assessment materials and identify specific action steps that address key findings from those reports.

Oversight

The ADPR Assessment Committee oversee implementation of the plan as well as preparation and presentation of results. Along with the director, committee members will lead discussion on assessment concerns each semester. The director will oversee the Assessment Committee and ensure that all aspects of the plan are implemented each semester.

Timeline

Implementation of this plan is immediate, and its evaluation is continuous. Assessments are made yearly. Following each formal assessment, results are discussed both with the faculty and the alumni advisory board to identify opportunities for improvement.