

# South Dakota State University

## Academic Program/Co-Curricular Unit Assessment Plan

Academic Program/Unit Name	Master of Mass Communication Program
Department/Office	School of Communication and Journalism
Department Head/Administrator	Dr. Joshua Westwick, director, and Dr. Becky Kuehl, associate director
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### SDSU MISSION & VISION STATEMENT (PATHWAY TO PREMIER 2030)

#### Mission Statement

South Dakota State University offers a rich academic experience in an environment of inclusion and access through inspired, student-centered education, creative activities and research, innovation, and engagement that enhances the quality of life in South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world.

#### Vision Statement

South Dakota State University will be a premier land-grant university recognized for high value, innovation, and bold impact.

#### Core Values

**People-Centered:** We strive to create a culture where all thrive and are supported on their personal and professional paths toward lifelong learning, growth and opportunity.

**Creativity:** Creativity is our cornerstone to expand knowledge, develop human understanding, and enrich quality of life. We believe that the best academic programs bring innovative teaching and transformative research together.

**Integrity:** We act with organizational and personal integrity, through honest interactions, professionalism, transparent and accountable decision-making and respect for others.

**Diversity:** We are committed to diversity of community and ideas. We believe in a supportive, inclusive, collaborative, and cohesive environment with a focus on access and opportunity for all. We actively seek collaboration, and we respect individuals with differing perspectives, backgrounds and areas of expertise.

**Excellence:** Excellence is achieved through continuous improvement, assessment, and accountability. We embrace bold action and adapt to an ever-changing world. Individually, we are experts at what we do. Collectively, our impact is even stronger.

#### Goals

- Achieve excellence through transformative education
- Cultivate and strengthen community engagement
- Foster innovation and increase Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA)
- Be a growing, high-performing and healthy university

## PROGRAM/CO-CURRICULAR UNIT MISSION/VISION/GOALS STATEMENTS

### Mission Statement

The School of Communication and Journalism fosters the development of exemplary communicators as industry leaders, scholars, professionals, entrepreneurs, and educators through innovative curricula, research, practice, and opportunities.

### Vision Statement

To be a leader in the fields represented by the School of Communication and Journalism.

### Core Values

#### People-Centered

- Improve the quality of life and wellbeing of citizens, communities, and tribal nations in South Dakota, the nation, and the world through professional, scholarly, and creative activities, and democratic dialogue.
- Demonstrate empathy for one another.

#### Creativity

- Encourage success in scholarship, artistic growth, and the desire for lifelong learning and creativity through reflective practice.
- Creatively use tools and technologies appropriate for our fields.

#### Integrity

- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity, as well as the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press.
- Represent oneself honestly through critical, creative, and independent thinking.

#### Diversity

- Demonstrate respect for the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of communication in a global society.
- Recognize the diversity of all learners.

#### Excellence

- Embrace and champion endeavors that challenge boundaries, reframe definitions, and push the limits of our academic programs and disciplinary understanding.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the disciplines in which we work.

### Master of Mass Communication Program Outcomes

The Master of Mass Communication (MMC) is an online degree program that consists of advanced professional studies. While it has theoretical underpinnings, the primary purpose is to enhance knowledge and skills for application in professional practice. Fifty percent or more of the courses must be skills-based. This degree targets professionals in journalism, mass communication and related fields and builds on students' current levels of experience and skills, making them more marketable. The Master of Mass Communication prepares students for the increasingly competitive workforce and changing disciplines in mass communications.

The following student learning outcomes are designed to meet the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) professional values and competencies expectations for professional master's programs. The ACEJMC assessment guideline states, "The unit regularly assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures that engage communication professionals and annually 'closes the loop' to make tangible improvements to curriculum and instruction."

The ACEJMC professional values and competencies were updated for FALL 2022. According to ACEJMC, graduates of accredited programs must be aware of and be able to do the following:

SLO 1. 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.

SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

SLO 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.

SLO 4. Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.

SLO 5. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;

SLO 6. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;

SLO 7. Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

SLO 8. Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

SLO 9. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;

SLO 10. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

SLO 11. Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

## Curriculum/Experience Map (“Learning Opportunities”)

ACEJMC Competencies & Values	Introduce/Awareness	Reinforce/Understanding	Master/Application
SLO 1. 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.	MCOM 705: Introduction to the Master of Mass Communication	MCOM 730: Media Law Case Studies MCOM 513: International Media	MCOM 788: Master’s Research Problems/Project
SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and	MCOM 705	MCOM 786: Conducting Professional Research MCOM 513 MCOM 653	MCOM 788

institutions in shaping communications.			
<b>SLO 3.</b> 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.	MCOM 710: Cross-Platform Storytelling	MCOM 746: Cross-Platform Campaigns MCOM 513 MCOM 620: Writing for Media Audiences CMST 540: Health Communication CMST 541: Current Issues in Health Communication	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 4.</b> Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.	MCOM 705	MCOM 710 MCOM 761: Social Media Management	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 5.</b> Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.	MCOM 705	MCOM 746 CMST 510: Organizational Communication MCOM 574: Entrepreneurial Media MCOM 653: Mass Communications Teaching Methods MCOM 620 MCOM 761	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 6.</b> Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.	MCOM 705	MCOM 786 MCOM 574	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 7.</b> Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.	MCOM 705	MCOM 786 CMST 510 MCOM 653 MCOM 761	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 8.</b> Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.	MCOM 705	MCOM 786 MCOM 574 MCOM 653	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 9.</b> Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.	MCOM 705	MCOM 710 MCOM 746 MCOM 730 MCOM 574 MCOM 653 MCOM 620	MCOM 788
<b>SLO 10.</b> Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the	MCOM 705	MCOM 710 MCOM 746	MCOM 788

communications professions in which they work.		MCOM 761	
<b>SLO 11.</b> Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.	MCOM 705	MCOM 710 MCOM 746 CMST 540 CMST 541 MCOM 653	MCOM 788

### Assessment Methods Description

**Two methods of assessment will be used to measure the 11 student learning outcomes:**

**Assessment Method #1**

Student Exit Survey

Students will complete the exit survey at the end the semester they are graduating to assess their own understanding of the ACEJMC student learning outcomes.

**Type of Assessment:** Indirect measure

**Timeline:** Conducted every semester; analyzed yearly during the spring.

**Oversight:** Graduate Program Coordinator

**Benchmark:** 4.0 on a 5.0 point scale

**Frequency:** Yearly

**Use of Information:** This indirect measure is designed to determine how well students feel they understand the student learning outcomes based on ACEJMC program accreditation standards. We will identify gaps in achieving student learning objectives and adjust curriculum accordingly during the next academic year.

**Assessment Method #2**

Professional Project and Coursework Evaluation

Student professional projects will be evaluated during or after project presentations by a committee consisting of the project advisor, a professional representative (formerly graduate representative) with experience applicable to the project area, and at least one graduate faculty member.

**Type of Assessment:** Direct measure

**Timeline:** Conducted every semester; analyzed yearly during the spring.

**Oversight:** Graduate Program Coordinator

**Benchmark:** 4.0 on a 5.0 point scale

**Frequency:** Conducted every semester during program presentations; analyzed yearly during the spring.

**Use of Information:** The direct measure is designed to ensure that the program is meeting the values and competencies required for ACEJMC program accreditation. We will identify gaps in achieving student learning outcomes and adjust curriculum accordingly during the next academic year.

## **Communication Plan**

Yearly assessment results will be shared with the School of Communication and Journalism faculty and staff members at an established School monthly meeting and also with the School of Communication and Journalism Advisory Board Members at their annual meeting. In addition, yearly results will be shared with the School of Communication and Journalism Student Advisory Board. Assessment findings will be translated and appropriate information will be shared through university outlets.

## **Reference**

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2023). *Principles of accreditation*.  
<http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/principles/>