

## LSUA Annual Assessment Form

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Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies

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2015 - 2016

Reporting Unit

Academic Year

### Section I

#### LSUA Goal:

II a. All academic curricula and programs will demonstrate currency and rigor.

#### Statement of Purpose

#### Unit Desired Outcome:

1. Graduates will be familiar with the major concepts, theoretical trends, empirical findings, and historical trends in communications studies.

#### Assessment Methods and Criteria

1. Outcome one is generally assessed with a short 15 question multiple choice exam. It is usually administered to communication studies majors who enroll in the required course CMST 1061 Communication Fundamentals. This exam covers basic communication concepts and theories in topics such as listening, speaking, small group interaction, nonverbal communication, and media. It is hoped that students score 11 out of 15 questions correct.

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### Section II

#### Results of Assessment

1. No assessment activity was undertaken during the 2015-2016 academic year for learning outcome one due to the fact that most of the graduates in 2016 spring had taken this course (CMST1061) earlier in their career in the CMST program.

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### Section III

#### Use of Results

1. The communication studies faculty and the department head will discuss the plan of administering the test to future graduates at a specific time and location in order to gather data for assessing learning outcome one.

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#### LSUA Goal:

II a. All academic curricula and programs will demonstrate currency and rigor.

#### Statement of Purpose

#### Unit Desired Outcome:

2. Graduates will understand and apply basic research methods in communication studies, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.

#### Assessment Methods and Criteria

1. Outcome two is generally assessed based on the research papers CMST majors submit to complete the course requirement for CMST 4900 (Research Methods). This course is typically taken by CMST majors in their final two semesters. A panel of Communication Studies faculty will evaluate papers using a rubric that evaluates 7 areas: Introduction, Literature Review, Research Design and Methods, Results or Data Analysis, Discussion and Conclusion, References and APA Format, Grammar and Writing. The areas will be evaluated as Below Average (1 point), Average (2 points), Good (3 points), and Outstanding (4 points). It is desired that graduates score average or higher on at least three areas of the rubric: Introduction, Literature Review, and Discussions and Conclusions or graduates score average or higher on the overall rating of the paper.

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### Section II

#### Results of Assessment

1. No assessment was undertaken for learning outcome two due to a change in the communication studies curriculum and 2016 spring class schedule. CMST4900 (research methods in communication), which usually provides data for assessment of learning outcome two was removed from the core courses and therefore not required to be taken by every CMST graduate. It was not offered during 2016 spring. Therefore, no data was available for assessment purpose.

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### Section III

**Use of Results**

1. The CMST faculty needs to discuss how to assess learning outcome two (students' research ability) in the future given the change in the curriculum as stated above.
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### Section I

#### LSUA Goal:

II a. All academic curricula and programs will demonstrate currency and rigor.

#### Statement of Purpose

#### Unit Desired Outcome:

3. Graduates will communicate effectively in a variety of forms and settings, including oral, written, and mediated communication.

#### Assessment Methods and Criteria

1. The CMST faculty decided to use graduates' performance in CMST 4160 (persuasive communication) as the basis for assessing learning outcome three. CMST 4160 is a required course (on most versions of the CMST degree plan) for CMST graduates. The MCO of the course states the course objectives as • "To describe ideas which make up the rational decision making process; to form and implement procedures for acceptable argumentation by preparing and delivering speeches of persuasiveness; • To present effective argumentation by evaluating arguments presented by politicians, lawyers, debaters, and others by engaging in dialogues pertaining to those arguments. • To enhance students critical thinking skills and to develop proficiency in generating, and constructing effective arguments." It is therefore determined that it is appropriate to use students' performance in this class to assess graduates' "oral and written communication". There are seven graduates in spring 2016. All but one of them took CMST 4160 in spring 2015 or spring 2016. They were evaluated on their oral and written communication with four oral presentations and two papers. Their scores given by the course instructor composed the data for assessing learning outcome three (except mediated communication). It is desired at least 70% of the graduates scores 70% or above on both the oral and written communication assignments.

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### Section II

#### Results of Assessment

1. Assessment data are available for six among seven of the 2016 graduates (86%). The total scores (of four presentations) for all six graduates are 91%, 87%, 88%, 76%, 80%, and 78%. The total scores (of two papers) for all six graduates are 92%, 90%, 86%, 86%,

90%, and 84%. The results show that 100% of the graduates meet the assessment criteria and suggest that the program is functioning to bring about the targeted learning outcomes.

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### **Section III**

#### **Use of Results**

1. Since this is the first time the program has assessed learning outcome three, the CMST faculty will discuss ways to further improve the assessment method and process. For example, future instructors of this course (CMST 4160) may invite all CMST faculty to a final presentation to assess students' oral communication and/or have all faculty evaluate the students' final papers on a given grading rubric. This method could improve the reliability of the assessment and thus give us a better idea of the functioning of the program. The CMST faculty also needs to discuss ways to assess "mediated communication" which is part of learning outcome three.
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