

MJF Assessment Summary Report
July 30, 2013

What we assessed

- Print and Internet Journalism Program (PINT)
 - Stories from JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism
 - Stories from JRN 370 News Reporting and Writing
- Broadcast Journalism Program (BJ)
 - Scripts and rundowns (a blueprint of a news show) from JRN 381 Broadcast News Writing
 - Scripts and rundowns from JRN 481 Broadcast News Reporting and Producing
 - Scripts from JRN 388 Electronic News Gathering
 - Scripts from JRN 592 Newscast Practicum
- Department SLO 3 Ethics
 - Final exam ethics question from JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism
 - Ethics essay from MED 220 Case Studies in Mass Media
 - Public affairs case study projects from MED 581 Media Ethics

How we did it

- Over 3 years we determined what programs to assess and set up a 3-year rotation for all majors in MJF. We decided to assess our journalism program and Department SLO 3 Ethics first. We followed the process of creating SLOs, rubrics, curriculum mapping, and a timeline, and collected and posted materials.
- Original Journalism SLOs:
 - PINT SLO 1: Students will be able to understand what news is
 - BJ SLO 1: Students will be able to understand traditional news values including timeliness, impact, proximity, prominence, conflict, novelty, drama
 - PINT and BJ SLO 2: Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to understand the packaging of news across various media platforms
 - PINT and BJ SLO 3: Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to critically analyze information
- Original Department SLO 3 Ethics
 - Students will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the standards of ethical issues.
- We did a trial assessment in Fall 2012 and the real assessment in Spring 2013. The trial assessments helped tremendously because we recognized problems in some SLOs and our assessment process.

What we found

- From the trial journalism assessment
 - We needed to revise SLO 1 for PINT because what we really wanted to teach students was how to create work that was immediately publishable, a skill they need during their internships and immediately upon graduation. Our original PINT SLO 1 did not address that goal. **NEW PINT SLO 1: Students will be able to create journalistic works that would be publishable in a professional news outlet**
 - We also need to create a new rubric for SLO 1.
 - Other SLOs for PINT and BJ worked well.

- From the real journalism assessment
 - Some classes reflected where students should be in their skill progression.
 - Some classes did not reflect SLOs. Ex: SLO 2 was not reflected in JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism and JRN 370 News Reporting and Writing.
 - Students generally have poor journalism writing skills. Ex: Associated Press style.
 - There is inconsistency in what full-time faculty and per course faculty are accomplishing in classes with multiple sections, especially JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism.
 - We determined specific areas of students' strengths and weaknesses. Ex: Strength in spelling (perhaps because of Spellcheck; Weakness in grammar and punctuation, especially commas).
 - International students face writing challenges and cultural differences that often make journalism classes difficult for them.
 - We did not assess an adequate number of assignments to get meaningful data.
 - It was difficult to calculate data accurately using the paper assessment form we created.
- From the Ethics assessment
 - Ethics is discussed more in our journalism curriculum than in our production and studies classes.
 - We thought the Department SLO 3 Ethics worked well in the trial assessment, but the real assessment showed we needed to make some changes in how we assessed it.
 - JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism should be eliminated from this SLO because the SLO is too advanced for this introductory class and only journalism majors are required to take it.
 - Using a combined essay question in MED 220 Case Studies in Mass Media that asks students about their understanding of Social Responsibility Theory and Media Literacy proved to be too broad resulting in essays that were not focused on ethics.
 - We should eliminate Part 2 of the Public Affairs Case Study project that asks students to write a personal statement that discusses their progress as an ethical leader in their chosen media field beginning with their MED 120 Mass Media in Society class. It also asks them to reflect on what they have learned about ethical leadership over the past four years at Missouri State University. Many students are transfers who did not take MED 120 at MSU, and Part 1 of the Case Study Project already asks them for a personal response to the media case study they have chosen to analyze. We found that Part 2 was not needed because it provided less insight into how well we meet this SLO.

What we did as a result

- Journalism
 - We have a PINT Journalism Program Review Committee that met over the summer and determined recommendations we will present to the full faculty in the Fall to update our PINT curriculum. Our goal is to better prepare our PINT majors for the realities they face during internships and once they graduate.
 - We appointed a full-time faculty member to meet with JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism per course faculty to make sure class goals and assignments are consistent across multiple sections.
 - We decided to implement additional class assignments and exercises to address major areas of student deficiencies beginning in Fall 2013. Ex: Teach grammar and journalism style in context rather than through quizzes and creating a formalized process to incentivize students to read more news, i.e., blogging about stories and analyzing story structures, leads, etc.
 - We met with Miko McFarland, Study Away Advisor, to explore ways to get international students who have higher level English writing and speaking skills into our journalism

program. We are still considering options including additional program admission requirements (tests and interviews) and better communication with international students and universities abroad about the proficiencies students need before arriving at MSU.

- To get more meaningful data and increase the number of assignments we are assessing, next time we will add assignments from JRN 372 Public Affairs Reporting, JRN 376 Business Reporting, JRN 477 Publications, JRN 378 Multimedia Journalism, JRN 476 Editing, JRN 374 Opinion Writing and additional assignments from JRN 370 News Reporting and Writing and JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism.
- To make it easier to calculate data accurately, next time we will use an electronic database system.
- We removed some classes from the assessment of some SLOs. Ex: Not using JRN 270 to assess SLO 2 and 3.
- We created plans to make sure we communicate SLOs and our assessment process to per course instructors.
- We realized PINT students must have more multimedia skills including being able to shoot and edit video, so we are recommending requiring JRN 378 Multimedia Journalism for all PINT majors. We should also change the number from JRN 378 to JRN 478 to signal that it is as a higher level class and to better reflect where it should fall in students' skill progression.
- We will recommend adding MED 365 Digital Film and Media Production to our list of suggested electives and encourage students who want to develop more multimedia production skills to take it.
- We will recommend changing the number of JRN 372 Public Affairs Reporting to JRN 472 to better reflect it as a capstone class for PINT majors.
- We will recommend changing the name of JRN 476 Newspaper Editing to Copy Editing and Design to better reflect the content of the class, which has evolved over the years, and to remove a name that might seem dated.
- We will recommend a more appropriate sequence of classes for PINT majors starting in their freshman year. JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism → JRN 370 News Reporting Writing → JRN 476 Copy Editing and Design → JRN 478 Multimedia Journalism → JRN 472 Public Affairs Reporting. This will better prepare them for their internships.
- Ethics
 - Since Ethics is not discussed adequately across our department curriculum, we have begun a discussion on how we can incorporate our Department SLO 3 Ethics into all our classes. We will continue this discussion at our Fall retreat and seek suggestions from faculty for bringing Ethics more into class discussions and assignments in our Media Production and Studies classes. The upcoming assessment of our comprehensive majors, Digital Film Production and Media Production in 2013-2014, and subsequently our non-comprehensive majors, Film Studies and Media Studies in 2014-2015, will help identify additional areas to accomplish this goal.
 - We will add MED 130 Fundamentals of Media Convergence to replace JRN 270 Introduction to Journalism, which we decided to eliminate because the Ethics SLO is too advanced for this introductory class and only journalism majors are required to take it. All students are required to take MED 130, and it would be more consistent with MED 220 Case Studies in Mass Media and MED 581 Media Ethics.
 - We will ask a single question for students' Ethics essays in MED 220 Case Studies in Mass Media solely about Social Responsibility Theory to get more focused responses.
 - We will eliminate Part 2 of the Public Affairs Case Study project that asks students to write a personal statement that discusses their progress as an ethical leader during

their time at MSU because it is not needed and does not provide assessment information we need.

Conclusion

From our assessment of PINT and BJ Journalism and Department SLO 3 Ethics, we are well prepared to assess our other programs.