Academic Learning Compacts
MA Mass Communications & Journalism
2011 – 2012
Due: May, 2012

In 2004, the Florida Board of Governors resolved that universities, through their boards of trustees, would establish guidelines and procedures for the development and implementation of Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) to ensure student achievement in baccalaureate degree programs in the State University System. In support of ongoing SACS Accreditation, at USFSP, ALCs are used for both undergraduate and graduate programs and include assessment of student learning in: content/discipline skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, and civic engagement.

On an annual basis, academic programs must update their ALCs to reflect ongoing data collection activity, use of results for improvement, and ongoing monitoring of the impact of changes made from previous assessment. The beginning of the review cycle for the upcoming year must reflect any new goals/objectives, changes in performance standards to meet those goals/objectives, and changes in collection tools/methods for the upcoming year. The cycle ends with year-end review of ALCs.

The Planning, Effectiveness and Budget Committee (PEBC) is responsible for coordinating the overall university ALC review process and compiling results for use by each of the college deans. The Office of Institutional Research provides staff support to the PEBC in their annual review of ALCs.

It is the responsibility of college deans to initiate and coordinate conversations with their academic program faculty to: 1) provide a summary statement about their academic program performance over the previous year including high points and low points; 2) provide a summary statement of changes that were made as a result of ongoing assessment and the positive/negative impact of the changes that were made; 3) complete the ALCs for the previous year; 4) update the ALC for use in the upcoming year; and 5) obtain appropriate sign-off by their respective dean.

It is the responsibility of each dean to: 1) provide a summary statement about the performance of the academic programs in their college over the previous year including high points and low points; 2) provide a summary statement of changes that were made as a result of ongoing assessment and the positive/negative impact of the changes that were made; and 3) develop a matrix of academic program goals/objectives that are aligned with college goals/objectives.

With the exception of cover/signature pages, materials should be submitted electronically to either the Institutional Effectiveness folder on the Q-drive or should be attached to an email sent to jegon@usfsp.edu. Paper copies of ALCs will be maintained in the IR Office.
Summary Statement – College Performance in 2011-12
Provide a summary statement about college performance over the previous year including high points and low points.

Summary Statement – Impact of Changes Made in 2011-12
Provide a summary statement about changes that were made in your college as a result of ongoing assessment in 2009-10 and the positive/negative impact of the changes that were made.
University Mission
The University of South Florida St. Petersburg offers distinctive graduate and undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences, business, and education within a close-knit, student-centered learning community that welcomes individuals from the region, state, nation and world. We conduct wide-ranging, collaborative research to meet society's needs and engage in service projects and partnerships to enhance the university and community's social, economic and intellectual life. As an integral and complementary part of a multi-institutional system, USF St. Petersburg retains a separate identity and mission while contributing to and benefiting from the associations, cooperation, and shared resources of a premier national research university.

College Link to Institutional Mission-based Goals/Objectives

On the list below, please identify the Strategic Goals and Objectives (Points of Focus, 2009 – 13) that your division is responsible for. A detailed listing of Goals and Objectives are found in Attachment 1.

TO BE COMPLETED BY COLLEGE DEAN

1. Academic Performance:
   _ 1.1 _ 1.2 _ 1.3 _ 1.4 _ 1.5

2. Student Engagement:
   _ 2.1 _ 2.2 _ 2.3

3. Diversity and Inclusion:
   _ 3.1 _ 3.2 _ 3.3

4. Research and Creative Activities:
   _ 4.1 _ 4.2 _ 4.3

5. Environmental Stewardship
   _ 5.1 _ 5.2

6. Administrative and Financial Stewardship
   _ 6.1 _ 6.2 _ 6.3 _ 6.4 _ 6.5
College Mission Statement

Please include the Mission Statement and Goals/Objectives for your College and/or the URL to the location of this information on the web.

TO BE COMPLETED BY COLLEGE DEAN

Academic Program-linked College Mission-based Goals/Objectives

Please develop a matrix of Goals/Objectives for each academic program in your college that aligns with institutional mission-based goals/objectives. Also, please develop and use a consistent nomenclature for goals/objectives in your materials.

TO BE COMPLETED BY COLLEGE DEAN

Please complete one ALC matrix for each of the academic programs in your college
Summary Statement – Academic Program Performance in 2011-12
Retirement, sabbaticals and leaves made it more difficult than usual to assess consistency in some subjects, including law. Despite that, however, certainly student applied research projects showed dramatic improvement from the previous assessment period. This was mostly because of stricter enforcement of deadlines and more clarification of requirements, but also because faculty members were urged to be more involved earlier in the project and thesis process. JMS’s staffing situation, with retirement, sabbaticals, leaves and faculty participation in the new online M.A. Strong areas remain theory, law, and ethics. While there are issues, the program is generally strong in exposing students to issues and some practice in diversity and multiculturalism. Further, the program has successfully integrated technology into the curriculum and continues to adapt to the ever-changing digital environment. Areas of concern stem mostly from the fact that graduate students have four required classes (theory, law, ethics and project or thesis). They can be advised into other classes, but not forced to take them. That means that not every student will be exposed to the same things, and some, as a result of their choices, can miss certain areas altogether. The required courses can expose students to much of what is required, but the department will have to create ways to spread some of the areas of competency across more classes to ensure that most students get what we think they need in the program. We still need to work on the comprehensive exam, which is a major assessment tool. We’ve not yet configured an exam that we think fully serves our needs.

Summary Statement – Impact of Changes Made in 2010-11
Instituting stricter deadline requirements on projects and encouraging more faculty involvement were at least partially responsible for a much-improved set of projects. Most faculty said dramatically improved. That was also likely a function of the caliber of the graduating students, but the changes made by the department, including discussing elements of a rubric that remains in creation, were surely effective. Responding to interest in a more convenient and technologically centered journalism offering, the department came close to completing work on its online Digital Journalism and Design program. We were disappointed (again) in results of the comprehensive examinations, with which we’ve tinkered for the past several years. And, the likelihood is that we will do it again in an attempt to find a structure that best determines what our students know. We had much better success in putting students in leadership situations and determined that we could, in fact, assess leadership. However, we also determined that this was only part of what we needed. We have to not only strengthen the assessment, but also discuss as a faculty the teaching of leadership consistently across the curriculum. We held our own, but did not improve on advising, which with more adjuncts will become a bigger issue. In critical thinking, faculty discussions did help to deliver more consistency and measurable events, but work there is just beginning, including making more consistent our assessment of the wide range of activities (term papers, assignments, projects, discussions, etc.) that play a part in determining the critical thinking assessment.
Academic Learning Compacts: 2011 – 2012

“… to ensure student achievement in undergraduate and graduate degree programs …”

Mission of Academic Program (include URL):

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<tr>
<th>List Program Goal(s) / Objective(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Goals / Objectives must be mapped to College Goals / Objectives – use consistent nomenclature.</td>
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<td>[Please note impact of any changes that were made as a result of 2010-11 assessment]</td>
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ALCs must address student learning in four areas: 1. Content/Discipline Skills; 2. Communication Skills; Critical Thinking Skills; and 4. Civic Engagement.

## 1. Content/Discipline Skills

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<td>1a. Students will demonstrate knowledge/understanding of principles of ethics, history, law and theory and explain and assess media practices through them</td>
<td>1a The completion of comprehensive exams (and three core courses of theory, law, ethics); plus, assignments specifically in these areas in various classes. Assessment done by committee and individual instructors.</td>
<td>1a. Students complete comprehensive exams to the satisfaction of three professors (one from each subject area) who base evaluations on agreed upon minimum standards of knowledge, critical thinking, and expression. Students analyze, explain and where appropriate resolve ethical, historical, legal and theoretical concepts associated with media development, practice and influences. Evaluation based on agreed upon standards appropriate for the exam questions. The three core courses address theory, law,</td>
<td>1a. Adjustments to comprehensive exams resulted in marginal improvement in assessment of student performance in these areas. However, the department will need more time to make surer determinations. Students in theory, ethics and law classes continue to meet competency requirements in those areas, based on papers and tests. Theory, in particular, undergoes changes as a result of new media technologies. Students showed a better understand of the scope of those changes as a result of new books; however, they</td>
<td>1a. With a new incoming chair and the retirement of the longtime law professor, the faculty will again look at the comprehensive exams and make determinations about what works and what doesn’t. This is an ongoing issue we’ve yet to resolve satisfactorily. Theory, law and ethics all are changing as a result of the new digital environment and vast changes in the media industries; therefore, these courses will continue to evolve; although, none of those faculty (or students) reported problems of any magnitude. Faculty will continue to find ways to</td>
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and ethics and require substantial media history from their various perspectives.

need to better understand theory implications of the digital media environment. More group work on cases studies in ethics appeared to help students better understand difficult concepts and also got more participation from quieter students. The retirement of the longtime law professor has made assessing law more difficult. However, the current instructor instituted role-playing assignments that helped students understand difficult concepts and added a book review that made issues in libel more accessible. History has been more successfully integrated into classes other than law, theory and ethics, all of which have history components that faculty reported succeeded appropriately. In at least one writing course, grad students successfully researched and presented projects on various aspects of the history of journalism. Students showed competency in all of these areas, and they are not major concerns of the department at the moment. However, faculty members will make some changes. In law, the instructor will add the showing of a documentary that will not only bring up further issues of libel, but also get at pressing issues of definitions of both “news media” and “journalist.” The theory instructor will alter the way the final paper is assigned to get better results on papers that have at least been over the last few years, in general, closer to satisfactory than excellent.

| 1b. The student will demonstrate potential for leadership in professional or academic callings | 1b. Graduate students demonstrate leadership by making class presentations in both undergraduate and graduate programs and in other settings in and out of the university; by acting as editors and lead reporters in classroom and other journalism exercises and projects; on taking the lead in classroom and other discussions; by taking the initiative to publish both | 1b. Faculty ask students to make various presentations; e.g., to provide context for course materials or additional information for topics in undergrad courses. Faculty evaluated these presentations by standard guidelines, but also on appropriateness of material and delivery of material for the situation, which speaks to leadership ability. When students act as editors and lead reporters, 1b. We’ve always offered much leadership opportunity (because in a small innovative/entrepreneurial program students have to figure ways to get all they need) but the ALCs led us to more carefully assess performance in the last year or two. Some students revel in this, taking appropriate control of classrooms, offering wide-ranging ideas, attempting substantial | 1b. We can adequately assess leadership, and now we have to figure out as a faculty how to teach it. Finding out we could assess it was a big step for the program, because it meant that we had to formally recognize the things we did to foster leadership among our grad students. What we found was that we had a number of things that indicated which of our grad students might effectively be said to have leadership |

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journalistic and academic work, and through the kinds of ideas they put forth and projects they undertake. Further, at least six graduate assistants get many opportunities to display leadership through special assignments. Faculty assess their ability to work with people and get people to work for and with them, and their skills in handling typical and difficult situations. When they lead discussions, faculty assess preparation, participation, and their ability to inspire discussion. Some students create papers and articles they can submit to various professional and academic publications. This is initiative that speaks to leadership. Finally, students with leadership ability likely offer ideas beyond routine comments, and undertake projects with more depth and potential impact than students seeking to get by with less. Graduate assistants work on a variety of projects (including organizing sessions at meetings) that demonstrate leadership ability, which is fostered and evaluated by faculty.

1c. Students will produce substantial journalistic/creative or academic works applying academic and/or professional competencies.

1c. The completion of an applied research project or a master’s thesis (under the supervision of a faculty committee composed of a designated supervisor and one or two additional faculty).

1c. Students complete applied research project or thesis based on committee review applying agreed upon standards suited for the individual professional or academic effort. Theses, evaluated by three-person committees, reflect many comprehensive exams criteria, depending on topic. Projects reflect criteria through form and content, reflecting awareness of legal, ethical, theoretical and potential, but largely, those were students came into the program possessing these qualities. We learned that faculty members did, in fact, on an individual basis, encourage students to lead more, but that we as a faculty have inconsistently taught them how to lead. So, that's the next project. We have leaders, and now we've will find ways to, consistently across the department, teach leadership in the way that we now encourage it.

1c. Faculty members were close to unanimous in saying that the projects and theses improved dramatically over the past year. Some of this can be attributed to the quality of student, but much to changes made after last year’s assessment to strictly adhere to project deadlines and encourage more faculty participation in both projects and theses. Most students produced excellent and sophisticated projects that met or exceeded faculty assessment/discussion, about half the graduate students come close to competency in this area. We discovered through assessment that we have excellent students who quite comfortably take and perform well in leadership roles. Other students reluctantly take leadership roles and perform fine. But, too many can be said to not to excel in this. So, we can adequately assess leadership, and about half our students can be said to adequately take on leadership roles.

1c. Most of our endeavors paid handsome dividends in this area during this assessment period. Especially attempts to get more faculty involved in theses and projects and a stricter adherence to deadlines. We paid closer attention to project and thesis topics, and as a result, we got far better projects and perhaps better theses as well. To improve even more, we will redo the portion of the website that
historical issues and values, and accepted standards of appropriate journalistic practice. These indicated by ethical and legal appropriateness, attention to potential effects and influences, and demonstration of knowledge of the position, function and role of research or creative material produced. Evaluation based on standards that include sound, relevant topics; form and format; grammar, academic style; knowledge of media ethics, history, law, and theory principles; and critical thinking/analytical skills.

departmental guidelines, which include significance and quality of content or production, worthiness in terms of news or media, and journalistic/aesthetic or technological appropriateness. Students uniformly exceeded expectations in most of these areas. The thesis is evaluated in some of these same areas, but also in terms of appropriate methodology and research, and other areas common and widely known in academic research. The theses during this assessment period met or exceeded departmental expectations.

explains projects and theses to provide clearer instructions and to ensure that students have a better understanding of what is required. Loss of faculty members due to leaves, sabbaticals and a retirement has resulted in more adjuncts, which means that fewer faculty members are available to spend substantial amounts of time with theses and projects, and we need to work to evenly distribute this workload while still allowing students choices in committee members and chairs. We will also solidify our new stricter guidelines for completing thesis and projects.

*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.
2. Communication Skills

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<td>2a. The student will demonstrate high competency in reporting, writing and visual/digital skills required by professional journalists and/or other media workers and apply legal, ethical and other principles and best standards to the practice of journalism and other media activity.</td>
<td>2a. Completion of journalistic work based on agreed upon professional and departmental standards that define best practices of the craft, including reporting, writing, design, display, and where appropriate, dissemination.</td>
<td>2a. Students complete various journalistic projects that meet agreed upon professional and departmental criteria for publishable work. These include, but are not limited to, accepted, correct, appropriate, relevant, effective and/or aesthetic topic and research; grammar, usage, and style; approach and tone; organization according to media; layout/design; video and audio; and other relevant elements that define publishable content as defined by current practices and standards. Also, the department considers context; legal, ethical, multicultural sensitivities; and orientation and intended audience. All of these are based upon professional practice and almost two decades of faculty members defining and redefining departmental standards.</td>
<td>2a. Our professional journalism masters program succeeds in teaching students what they need to work in a media journalism environment, and that didn't change, as evidenced, even in this market, by grads finding appropriate jobs. Findings indicated that graduate students were competent in the basic skills of reporting and writing; however, as with the undergrads, they showed some weakness in journalistic style. Based on projects, papers, tests and discussions in the technology classes, most students met or exceeded expectations. As before, we continue to face the issue of balancing software and course content instruction. As might be expected, in the inaugural social media courses students showed an unfamiliarity with producing SM content, an area that needs to be enhanced. Based on content produced, students showed competency in reporting and writing skills and in applying legal, ethical, and diversity and other sensibilities, in NNB, Newriting and Editing and other courses focusing on those skills.</td>
<td>2a. In the past assessment period, we did not solve the problem of diminished advisement in either program. So, the continued result of the loss of office staff (and of faculty to leaves and sabbaticals and the increase of adjuncts) is that students sometimes end up with poor schedules or a poor path through the program. We have some indication that relief may come this year, but advising will remain an issue. The media environment changes rapidly, and we've also had changed. Introduction of a fully online M.A. program focusing on skills required in the digital environment gives emphasizes technology, design and journalism that should produce highly competitive graduates. We are addressing social media, both theory and content, in new classes, and will begin to integrate some of that in existing classes as the media environment requires. We still need to address journalism style issues, as well as software instruction.</td>
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<td>2a. Students will demonstrate 2a. Completion of 2b. This speaks not only to mastering technological skills</td>
<td>2b. Students meet 2b. Most classes offer</td>
<td>2b. Technology will not level</td>
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ability to create multi-media news and other media content consistent with agreed upon standards and demonstrate knowledge of the implications of news and media content created and disseminated through this newer technology on the broader society

required to produce and disseminate media content, but also to achieving some kind of understanding about the implications of new and media content and dissemination in the digital media environment. Faculty assess these areas through class projects, articles, and papers in a variety of classes in which students take multi-media approaches to producing and disseminating news and media content.

professional and departmental standards for news and media content (including accuracy, worthiness, appropriateness, significance, grammatical and stylistic correctness), and demonstrate through means of production or dissemination a working knowledge of professional skills that deem them competent in areas of technology, including knowing appropriate software, ability to create blogs and websites, ability to execute appropriate designs and graphics, ability to create and manipulate photographs and videos according to professional standards.

opportunities for faculty to measure student performance in one or more of these areas. Students routinely assess effects and influences of new media technologies, including social media and cell phones. JMS hasn't routinely taught production of content in those areas. Without more specialized faculty members, probably not possible in a unit this size, we are not able to offer myriad possibilities in this area. However, this new goal/objective is designed to move the department toward offering more comprehensive content. In the new classes on social media, the instructor said students were unable to effectively create SM content. Assessment indicates most students show excellent ability to create websites and blogs using Web templates. Some more advanced create these sites without templates. Findings show in these areas, students graduate with capabilities to get jobs involving work with blogs and websites. In visual communication, theory, ethics and other classes, students learn the implications of technology in journalism and media content. Findings indicate most have a good understanding of real and potential influences of media produced through and in digital technology.

out; therefore journalism and media programs cannot level out. JMS students are generally quite capable in reporting and writing news and, if they want it, can get a good grounding in visual communication skills they need to work with websites, photography, and video. They have only some opportunities to learn how to produce social media content. They get many opportunities to explore how media technologies affect content and how multi-media content can influence audiences and society. In all, we've deemed our students generally competent in this broad area. Because students choose most of the courses they take, they are guided to courses they need to achieve certain purposes through advising. So, to improve results in this new objective/goal, we need to do several things:
1) Improve advising
2) Find more ways to teach the practical aspects of social media
3) Focus on the objective/goal to increase opportunities to assess, i.e., measure, results.

3. Critical Thinking Skills

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<th>Goals/Objectives</th>
<th>Means of Assessment/Criteria for Success</th>
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<th>Plan for Use of Findings in</th>
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<td>Corroborating Evidence*</td>
<td>3a. The student will analyze and synthesize materials and interpret, examine and appraise media behaviors, effects and practices and their roots and contexts.</td>
<td>3a. Demonstrate mental skills associated with critical thinking, including analysis, synthesis, interpretation, examination, appraisal, reasoning and creativity/innovation. Students answer questions requiring analysis of information from texts, classes, discussions, a concept and reading list, and other sources. The four-hour exam requires students to synthesize rather than summarize as they develop ideas and appraisals about ethical decision-making, legal influences, and theoretical underpinnings for journalistic practice and influence. They use another set of skills in applying what they know of theory, law, and ethics to situations taken from present or historic news accounts. They examine motivations, influences, consequences, and practices and provide explanations.</td>
<td>3a. About 25 percent of students got satisfactory answers on all components of the comprehensive examinations. Another 60 percent had minor or relatively minor revisions to exams to earn a satisfactory. About 15 percent of students taking comprehensive exams had to do extra work to pass the exam. One student failed the exams. In general faculty members found the exams to be similar to previous semesters. They accurately measure some areas of student achievement and less accurately measure others. Most students didn’t read the book on the comprehensive book list, and the exam didn’t comprehensively cover the assigned readings. Faculty members found that about 80 percent of students were able to satisfactorily apply theory, ethics and law to journalistic issues, and most students showed clear evidence of competency in analysis and interpretation. Theses and projects demonstrated that students had achieved competency in most of the qualities associated with critical thinking. In the end, faculty members were satisfied that most students met most requirements that make up the critical thinking competency.</td>
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<td>3a. Comprehensive Exams given in the areas of media ethics, law, and theory, and assessed by a committee of faculty according to accepted departmental standards. The same skills are also applied to Applied Research Projects and Theses.</td>
<td>3a. Students complete class papers, projects, reviews, reading papers, and other</td>
<td>3b. Students exhibit skills commonly associated with critical thinking, including</td>
<td>3b. This is a broad area that covers considerable ground across classes. Faculty do have are basically consistent</td>
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assignments in most classes. Relevant faculty members evaluate these according to generally accepted departmental requirements and individual requirements of the faculty members.

most listed above, in term papers and other assignments required for many of the graduate classes, including the three core classes, theory, law, ethics. While class papers and other assignments cover many topics, have different requirements, lengths, formats, etc., faculty members have consistent expectations in terms of basic skills and characteristics students should demonstrate. For term papers, these include meeting or exceeding minimum standards in appropriate topic, clarity, research, organization, and contribution to the class.

Skills associated with critical thinking, including analysis, reasoned thinking, creativity, are expected as part of most class papers. Class projects and other assignments are highly individualistic and faculty members use them in many different ways. They can, however, demonstrate students’ ability to solve problems and overcome obstacles, a good measure of critical thinking.

In what they consider acceptable analysis, synthesis, organization, clarity, and other characteristics of term papers. Not every faculty member formally assesses these in every class; however, faculty members generally agreed that at least 75 percent of students met at least minimum standards on class papers with little to moderate feedback. Another 15 percent met standards after considerable feedback, and the rest either didn’t meet standards or came close after substantial help. Most students were able to show adequate critical thinking abilities in addressing legal and ethical issues in assignments and exercises, and those assessed showed such abilities in dealing with newswriting and editing issues. In vis com, individual assignments proved more effective than group exercises in evaluating and presenting research articles and in the explorations class, students about 90 percent of students demonstrated competency in skills associated with critical thinking when they were asked to predict and present how news might be presented in the future.

make assignments that require students to use critical thinking and often demonstrate critical thinking in examples, class studies, discussions, and other activities. However, they don’t always measure it in a way that’s suitable for these reports. One of many goals in the coming semesters is to make this kind of assessment routine in critical thinking (as well as several other areas). Still, enough faculty members do assess critical thinking as a routine part of class that we are able to say that about 75 to 80 percent of our students can readily be said to meet this competency. To improve on that we will first organize our assessment by taking better advantage of what we already do, and then determine across the department how we can institute consistent, specific measures in this area.

4. Civic Engagement

|------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
### 4a. Students will demonstrate awareness of human, educational, environmental and other similar needs of the community and through the community the public at large.

Graduate students have various opportunities to engage in work with the community, especially in elective courses such as Neighborhood News Bureau. In some other practical classes, including News writing & Editing, faculty members focus on news coverage of the community and therefore students become familiar with community issues. In more conceptual classes, some faculty members have components on civic or community journalism and students become familiar with journalistic issues involving community. Some students are exposed to civic engagement activities through internships.

Students will participate in both formal and informal civic engagement activities in some required and other classes in the program, and through the required journals, papers, and other reporting mechanisms they will recount their experiences; research, analyze, and report community issues; note successes and address ways to overcome failures; produce materials helpful to the people and organizations with whom they worked, as well as materials suitable for media dissemination; and engage in other activities/practices that demonstrate the awareness they gained during the civic engagement experience.

Grad students are not consistently exposed to civic engagement activities in required classes. Although, at least in ethics and theory, students are exposed to case studies, exercises, readings and/or discussions that emphasize issues resulting from journalists participating (as journalists or citizens) in community improvement activities. Grad students who take Newswriting and Editing are exposed to concepts about community reporting, and those in NNB (advanced reporting) participate in civic engagement activities. In other classes, the instructor sometimes choses to host a formal civic engagement activity of which grad students might be a part. In general, however, most graduate students probably do not take part in formal civic engagement activities; however, most are exposed to discussions, case studies or readings that involve some kind of civic or community journalism, or some kind of civic engagement as it pertains to journalism.

The department hasn't yet decided on a policy for civic engagement at the graduate level. The three required courses offer less opportunity for formal civic engagement activities that are present in other courses. However, as they aren't required, graduate students aren't consistently exposed to civic engagement year after year. Journalism isn't the best major for formal class civic engagement activities; however, such have occurred in several classes. The department has made other issues priorities during the past year or two, and still has to determine where and how civic engagement fits into the graduate curriculum beyond the current scattered and inconsistent efforts, and then, of course, how to assess and measure it.

*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.*

### 5. Multiculturalism / Diversity

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<td>5a. Students will:</td>
<td>5a. Academic and</td>
<td>5a. Graduate students in</td>
<td>5a. Grad students in NNB in a</td>
<td>5a. While the department has</td>
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Identify, question, analyze and address media issues of concern associated with people of different cultures, ethnicities, social status, gender, sexual orientation, religious orientation and political ideology and apply best journalistic and academic practices in seeking to ensure the fullest and most fair representation for all in the diverse communities journalists serve.

| professional work is assessed by instructors and must meet commonly accepted departmental and professional practices, developed over many years and continually assessed. Graduate students have opportunities in the core classes of theory, law, and ethics and in most conceptual classes to research, study, present, address, and/or otherwise be exposed to community/multiculturalism readings, practices, issues. Some classes, including Race, Gender and Class and Neighborhood News Bureau because of their content and/or setting and purpose are well positioned to raise issues and experiment with various approaches. All graduate students, through core and elective courses, complete projects, papers, and assignments that focus on community/multiculturalism. | virtually all classes will complete papers/projects and/or assignments that meet minimum agreed upon departmental and/or professional standards. Students will, for example, recognize issues of diversity and multiculturalism (including stereotyping and other media representation, inclusiveness, bias, etc.); know sources of information that address them and/or engage in primary research; do projects where appropriate in under-represented communities or work with entities that primarily serve those communities; report on their research and experiences in projects and papers; and show awareness of diversity and multiculturalism issues in class papers, journalistic work, and discussions. | professional setting deal directly with these issues, which comprise the course content in Race Gender and Class. In Newswriting and Editing, students research specific issues and present them to the class. In ethics and theory, required classes, students consider issues stemming from the ethics and effects of portrayal, exclusion, stereotype, etc., and in law, students explore legal issues. More than 90 percent of the students in ethics were able to recognize diversity/multicultural issues in a concept exam and appropriately apply ethical analysis as to how they might be addressed. Guest speakers emphasize these issues. In papers, tests, articles and other media content production, discussions, and research and presentations, most students show the kind of awareness and sensitivity that demonstrate competence in this area. | worked to expose all students to activities and exercises that can measure their abilities to know and understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism, it has several areas to improve. One is making this awareness and sensitivity routine, rather than often related to special assignments and components of classes. For example, in routine production of news and other media content outside NNB, students don’t always automatically diversify their content or sources. In these and other areas the department needs to discuss ways to institutionalize this practice. In the new online program, a diversity consultant works with faculty members to make their classes more inclusive and sensitive to these issues. |

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**Academic Learning Compacts: 2012 – 2013**

“… to ensure student achievement in undergraduate and graduate degree programs …”
### 1. Content/Discipline Skills

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<td>1a. Students will demonstrate knowledge/understanding of principles of ethics, history, law and theory and explain and assess media practices through them</td>
<td>1a The completion of comprehensive exams (and three core courses of theory, law, ethics); plus, assignments specifically in these areas in various classes. Assessment done by committee and individual instructors.</td>
<td>1a. Students complete comprehensive exams to the satisfaction of three professors (one from each subject area) who base evaluations on agreed upon minimum standards of knowledge, critical thinking, and expression. Students analyze, explain and where appropriate resolve ethical, historical, legal and theoretical concepts associated with media development, practice and influences. Evaluation based on agreed upon standards appropriate for the exam questions. The three core courses address theory, law, and ethics and require substantial media history from their various perspectives.</td>
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<td>1b. The student will demonstrate potential for leadership in professional or academic callings</td>
<td>1b. Graduate students demonstrate leadership by making class presentations in both undergraduate and graduate programs and in other settings in and out of the university; by acting as editors and lead reporters in classroom and other journalism exercises and projects; on taking the lead in classroom and other</td>
<td>1b. Faculty ask students to make various presentations; e.g., to provide context for course materials or additional information for topics in undergrad courses. Faculty evaluated these presentations by standard guidelines, but also on appropriateness of material and delivery of material for the situation, which speaks to leadership.</td>
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discussions; by taking the initiative to publish both journalistic and academic work, and through the kinds of ideas they put forth and projects they undertake. Further, at least six graduate assistants get many opportunities to display leadership through special assignments.

ability. When students act as editors and lead reporters, faculty assess their ability to work with people and get people to work for and with them, and their skills in handling typical and difficult situations. When they lead discussions, faculty assess preparation, participation, and their ability to inspire discussion. Some students create papers and articles they can submit to various professional and academic publications. This is initiative that speaks to leadership. Finally, students with leadership ability likely offer ideas beyond routine comments, and undertake projects with more depth and potential impact than students seeking to get by with less. Graduate assistants work on a variety of projects (including organizing sessions at meetings) that demonstrate leadership ability, which is fostered and evaluated by faculty.

| 1c. Students will produce substantial journalistic/creative or academic works applying academic and/or professional competencies. | 1c. The completion of an applied research project or a master’s thesis (under the supervision of a faculty committee composed of a designated supervisor and one or two additional faculty). | 1c. Students complete applied research project or thesis based on committee review applying agreed upon standards suited for the individual professional or academic effort. Theses, evaluated by three-person committees, reflect many comprehensive exams criteria, depending on topic. Projects reflect criteria through form and content, |
reflecting awareness of legal, ethical, theoretical and historical issues and values, and accepted standards of appropriate journalistic practice. These indicated by ethical and legal appropriateness, attention to potential effects and influences, and demonstration of knowledge of the position, function and role of research or creative material produced. Evaluation based on standards that include sound, relevant topics; form and format; grammar, academic style; knowledge of media ethics, history, law, and theory principles; and critical thinking/analytical skills.

*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.

### 2. Communication Skills

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<td>2a. The student will demonstrate high competency in reporting, writing and visual/digital skills required by professional journalists and/or other media workers and apply legal, ethical and other principles and best standards to the practice of journalism and other media activity.</td>
<td>2a. Completion of journalistic work based on agreed upon professional and departmental standards that define best practices of the craft, including reporting, writing, design, display, and where appropriate, dissemination.</td>
<td>2a. Students complete various journalistic projects that meet agreed upon professional and departmental criteria for publishable work. These include, but are not limited to, accepted, correct, appropriate, relevant, effective and/or aesthetic topic and research; grammar, usage, and style; approach and tone; organization according to media; layout/design; video and audio; and other relevant elements that define publishable content as defined by current practices.</td>
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and standards. Also, the department considers context; legal, ethical, multicultural sensitivities; and orientation and intended audience. All of these are based upon professional practice and almost two decades of faculty members defining and redefining departmental standards.

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<td>3a. The student will analyze and synthesize materials and interpret, examine and appraise media behaviors, effects and practices and their roots and contexts.</td>
<td>3a. Comprehensive Exams given in the areas of media ethics, law, and theory, and assessed by a committee of faculty according to accepted departmental standards. The</td>
<td>3a. Demonstrate mental skills associated with critical thinking, including analysis, synthesis, interpretation, examination, appraisal, reasoning and creativity/innovation.</td>
<td>*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.</td>
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same skills are also applied to Applied Research Projects and Theses.

Students answer questions requiring analysis of information from texts, classes, discussions, a concept and reading list, and other sources. The four-hour exam requires students to synthesize rather than summarize as they develop ideas and appraisals about ethical decision-making, legal influences, and theoretical underpinnings for journalistic practice and influence. They use another set of skills in applying what they know of theory, law, and ethics to situations taken from present or historic news accounts. They examine motivations, influences, consequences, and practices and provide explanations.

See above

3b. Students complete class papers, projects, reviews, reading papers, and other assignments in most classes. Relevant faculty members evaluate these according to generally accepted departmental requirements and individual requirements of the faculty members.

3b. Students exhibit skills commonly associated with critical thinking, including most listed above, in term papers and other assignments required for many of the graduate classes, including the three core classes, theory, law, ethics. While class papers and other assignments cover many topics, have different requirements, lengths, formats, etc., faculty members have consistent expectations in terms of basic skills and characteristics students should demonstrate. For term papers, these include meeting or exceeding
minimum standards in appropriate topic, clarity, research, organization, and contribution to the class. Skills associated with critical thinking, including analysis, reasoned thinking, creativity, are expected as part of most class papers. Class projects and other assignments are highly individualistic and faculty members use them in many different ways. They can, however, demonstrate students’ ability to solve problems and overcome obstacles, a good measure of critical thinking.

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### 4. Civic Engagement:

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<td>4a. Students will demonstrate awareness of human, educational, environmental and other similar needs of the community and through the community the public at large.</td>
<td>4a. Graduate students have various opportunities to engage in work with the community, especially in elective courses such as Neighborhood News Bureau. In some other practical classes, including News writing &amp; Editing, faculty members focus on news coverage of the community and therefore students become familiar with community issues. In more conceptual classes, some faculty members have components on civic or community journalism and students become familiar with journalistic issues involving</td>
<td>4a. Students will participate in both formal and informal civic engagement activities in some required and other classes in the program, and through the required journals, papers, and other reporting mechanisms they will recount their experiences; research, analyze, and report community issues; note successes and address ways to overcome failures; produce materials helpful to the people and organizations with whom they worked, as well as materials suitable for media dissemination; and engage in other activities/practices that</td>
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Some students are exposed to civic engagement activities through internships. They demonstrate the awareness they gained during the civic engagement experience.

### 5. Multiculturalism / Diversity

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<td>5a. Students will: Identify, question, analyze and address media issues of concern associated with people of different cultures, ethnicities, social status, gender, sexual orientation, religious orientation and political ideology and apply best journalistic and academic practices in seeking to ensure the fullest and most fair representation for all in the diverse communities journalists serve.</td>
<td>5a. Academic and professional work is assessed by instructors and must meet commonly accepted departmental and professional practices, developed over many years and continually assessed. Graduate students have opportunities in the core classes of theory, law, and ethics and in most conceptual classes to research, study, present, address, and/or otherwise be exposed to community/multiculturalism readings, practices, issues. Some classes, including Race, Gender and Class and Neighborhood News Bureau because of their content and/or setting and purpose are well positioned to raise issues and experiment with various approaches. All graduate students, through core and elective courses, complete projects, papers, and assignments that focus on community/multiculturalism.</td>
<td>5a. Graduate students in virtually all classes will complete papers/projects and/or assignments that meet minimum agreed upon departmental and/or professional standards. Students will, for example, recognize issues of diversity and multiculturalism (including stereotyping and other media representation, inclusiveness, bias, etc.); know sources of information that address them and/or engage in primary research; do projects where appropriate in under-represented communities or work with entities that primarily serve those communities; report on their research and experiences in projects and papers; and show awareness of diversity and multiculturalism issues in class papers, journalistic work, and discussions.</td>
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1 – Academic Performance
Support and enhance programs that prepare students to be knowledgeable, reflective and engaged citizen scholars

1.1 Use sustained evidence of student learning outcomes and student achievement for continuous improvement
1.2 Offer certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs that meet regional needs
1.3 Implement and support information and instructional technologies that facilitate effective pedagogies
1.4 Enhance programs that specifically support academic excellence
1.5 Increase student awareness of participating in a global society

2 – Student Engagement
Enhance learning and achievement and promote retention through active engagement in curricular and co-curricular programs

2.1 Create a freshman experience that enables students to thrive and move successfully through to graduation
2.2 Foster institutional pride and strengthen connections within the campus community
2.3 Enhance opportunities for increased student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities

3 – Diversity and Inclusion
Create a vibrant, inviting, and enriching university community that values and respects all individuals and whose students, faculty, and staff represent the diversity of its region

3.1 Ensure an inclusive community where differences are respected and valued
3.2 Attract and retain a diverse student population
3.3 Increase the diversity of faculty and staff

4 – Research and Creative Activities
Encourage faculty research and creative activities, and engage students in local, national and international scholarship

4.1 Create a vibrant culture of faculty research and creative scholarship
4.2 Promote and support undergraduate research as a meaningful aspect of campus life
4.3 Enhance and support research and scholarly collaborations with community partners

5 – Environmental Stewardship
Foster stewardship of the environment and embody the values of sustainability

5.1 Enhance sustainability through energy conservation and recycling
5.2 Create a community that champions environmental awareness and sustainable living

6 – Administrative and Financial Stewardship
Enhance revenue, provide effective and efficient financial management, and ensure institutional sustainability

6.1 Create and obtain funding streams to support short and long term initiatives
6.2 Increase private and corporate funding
6.3 Strengthen academic infrastructure of the university to ensure the proper alignment of instruction, services, and student life
6.4 Strengthen institutional infrastructure for the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
6.5 Evaluate and improve facilities and processes that foster services to faculty, students, staff, and the community