December 19, 2011

The Communication Department’s assessment report is below. The report is not very elaborate as the department has not given assessment the time needed thus far this year. We do gather effective information from our assessment course, COM 489, and do work with the data and student exit essays in department meetings. We need to be more diligent about working with the specific learning outcomes. Report prepared by Phil Backlund.

Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Please enter the appropriate information concerning your student learning assessment activities for this year.

Academic Year of Report: _2010/2011_____________ College: ___Arts and Humanities___
Department ___Communication______________ Program: _Communication Studies_______

1. What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?
   a. Understanding multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse (including western, eastern, and others)intellectual underpinnings of communication.
   b. Competency in presentation, preferable in more than one form.
   c. Competency in systematic inquiry in the analysis of communication systems and processes.

2. How were they assessed?
   In answering these questions, please concisely describe the specific methods used in assessing student learning. Please also specify the population assessed, when the assessment took place, and the standard of mastery (criterion) against which you will compare your assessment results. If appropriate, please list survey or questionnaire response rate from total population.
   a. Competency ‘a’ above, was addressed directly in three courses—Com 253—Interpersonal Communication, COM 302—Intercultural Communication, and COM 401—Language, Thought, and Communication. The assessment methods were course assignments that focused on multiple theoretical perspectives. In addition, COM 489—Portfolio, assessed their attainment of this objective. Students assessed were Communication Studies majors in these courses. Com 401 was taught Fall 2010, COM 253 was taught Winter 2011, and COM 302 and 489 were taught each quarter. Students were compared to department developed criteria.
   b. Competency ‘b’ was assessed in a required course, COM 450—Advanced Public Speaking and in COM 489. All Communication Studies students are required take this course. It was taught in Spring, 2011. Student presentations are compared to a rubric developed by the National Communication Association.
   c. Competency ‘c’ was addressed in COM 365—Organizational Communication and COM 451—Assessment of Communication Behavior, in addition to COM 489. Again, all Communication Studies students are required to take these two classes. Both were taught in winter, 2011. As noted before, COM 489 is taught each quarter. Students were evaluated against professor developed criteria.
3. What was learned?
In answering this question, please report results in specific qualitative or quantitative terms, with the results linked to the outcomes you assessed, and compared to the standard of mastery (criterion) you noted above. Please also include a concise interpretation or analysis of the results.

In COM 489, it was determined that 90% of students achieved competency ‘a’ at the “exceeded expectations” level, while 10% met expectations. Data for competency ‘c’ suggested that 60% of students exceeded expectations while 40% met them. Data for competency ‘b’ was unavailable. We were satisfied with the results for competency ‘a.’ For competency ‘b,’ while we do not have data, anecdotal evidence suggests that student shave a problem with transfer of learning—that is, taking the principles learned in one situation and applying them to another. Students who are able to give more-than-competent presentations in one class, many times do not apply that skill to other situations. This, in fact, is quite distressing to us. This will be addressed as noted in number 4 below. 

In regard to competency ‘b,’ we do know that Communication students have difficulty with research methods and with thinking in methodological terms. They do not easily apply research methods to gathering data on specific hypotheses. This will be addressed as well.

4. What will the department or program do as a result of that information?
In answering this question, please note specific changes to your program as they affect student learning, and as they are related to results from the assessment process. If no changes are planned, please describe why no changes are needed. In addition, how will the department report the results and changes to internal and external constituents (e.g., advisory groups, newsletters, forums, etc.).

We will address the two points noted above through re-structuring of classes. First, we will directly address the transfer of learning issue by more closely linking our classes together so that one builds more clearly on previous classes. We will also make evaluation criteria more consistent between the classes. Next, we will push the students harder to learn the material in research methods. We will re-focus assignments, strengthen tests, and improve feedback. We plan no changes to competency ‘a,’ as we are satisfied with the results.

5. What did the department or program do in response to last year’s assessment information?
In answering this question, please describe any changes that have been made to improve student learning based on previous assessment results. Please also discuss any changes you have made to your assessment plan or assessment methods.

Faculty in the three majors in our department address the results of assessment obtained primarily through the feedback gathered in COM 489 through a combination of course revision, assignment revision, and improved communication among the faculty.

6. Questions or suggestions concerning Assessment of Student Learning at Central Washington University:
Central Washington University  
Assessment of Student Learning  
Department and Program Report

Please enter the appropriate information concerning your student learning assessment activities for this year.

Academic Year of Report: _2010/2011_____________ College: ___Arts and Humanities___  
Department ___Communication______________ Program: _Journalism_______

1. What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?
   a. Technical skills: Students will be able to create news stories by discovering and evaluating diverse sources, work a beat, and do computer assisted research. Students will be able to produce quality audio and video, to write thorough and compelling articles.
   b. Ethical behavior: Students will understand the historical socio-political and cultural context for the ethical decisions they must make.
   c. Specialization: To know in-depth at least one journalism specialty: print, online, or broadcast.
   d. Leadership skills/working in a team.
   e. Convergent media skills: Students will be able to use multiple media outlets to deliver the content they gather.

2. How were they assessed?
   In answering these questions, please concisely describe the specific methods used in assessing student learning. Please also specify the population assessed, when the assessment took place, and the standard of mastery (criterion) against which you will compare your assessment results. If appropriate, please list survey or questionnaire response rate from total population.
   Each competency was assessed through appropriate course work and those student portfolio analysis in COM 489—Portfolio. All Journalism students were evaluated on each of the competencies.

3. What was learned?
   In answering this question, please report results in specific qualitative or quantitative terms, with the results linked to the outcomes you assessed, and compared to the standard of mastery (criterion) you noted above. Please also include a concise interpretation or analysis of the results.
   a. For competency ‘a,’ data showed that 50% of students exceeded expectations and 50% met expectations.
   b. For competency ‘b,’ data showed that 50% of students exceeded expectations and 50% met expectations.
   c. For competency ‘c,’ data showed that 100% of students exceeded expectations
   d. For competency ‘d,’ data showed that 50% of students exceeded expectations and 50% met expectations.
   e. For competency ‘e,’ data showed that 50% of students exceeded expectations and 50% met expectations.
   Journalism faculty were generally pleased with the results and believe that, for the most part, students are learning what they should be learning. Further analysis is needed.

4. What will the department or program do as a result of that information?
   In answering this question, please note specific changes to your program as they affect student learning, and as they are related to results from the assessment process. If no changes are planned, please describe why no changes are needed. In addition, how will the department report the results and changes to internal and external constituents (e.g., advisory groups, newsletters, forums, etc.).
5. **What did the department or program do in response to last year's assessment information?**

In answering this question, please describe any changes that have been made to improve student learning based on previous assessment results. Please also discuss any changes you have made to your assessment plan or assessment methods.

Faculty in the three majors in our department address the results of assessment obtained primarily through the feedback gathered in COM 489 through a combination of course revision, assignment revision, and improved communication among the faculty.

6. **Questions or suggestions concerning Assessment of Student Learning at Central Washington University:**
Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Please enter the appropriate information concerning your student learning assessment activities for this year.

Academic Year of Report: _2010/2011_____________ College: __Arts and Humanities___
Department ___Communication______________ Program: _Public Relations

1. **What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?**
   a. Technical skills: to gather data, information processing, practice writing
   b. Consultant skills: to combine strategies, tactics, and planning in order to achieve goals
   c. Specialization: to know in-depth at least one of the public relations specialties
   d. Leadership skills/working in a team/understanding of corporate PR
   e. Persuader skills: To learn how to influence and/or persuade audiences with solid and well chosen arguments.

2. **How were they assessed?**
   In answering these questions, please concisely describe the specific methods used in assessing student learning. Please also specify the population assessed, when the assessment took place, and the standard of mastery (criterion) against which you will compare your assessment results. If appropriate, please list survey or questionnaire response rate from total population.

   Each competency was assessed through appropriate course work and those student portfolio analysis in COM 489—Portfolio. All Public Relations students were evaluated on each of the competencies.

3. **What was learned?**
   In answering this question, please report results in specific qualitative or quantitative terms, with the results linked to the outcomes you assessed, and compared to the standard of mastery (criterion) you noted above. Please also include a concise interpretation or analysis of the results.

   a. For competency ‘a,’ data showed that 42% of students exceeded expectations, 29% met expectations, and no data was gathered on 29%.
   b. For competency ‘b’ data showed that 57% of students exceeded expectations, 29% met expectations, and no data was gathered on 14%.
   c. For competency ‘c,’ data showed that 86% of students exceeded expectations, 14% met expectations.
   d. For competency ‘d,’ data showed that 71% of students exceeded expectations, 29% met expectations.
   e. For competency ‘a,’ data showed that 86% of students exceeded expectations, 14% met expectations, Public Relations faculty were generally happy with the results. Given that we have two new people teaching PR courses, further faculty conversations among the three PR faculty are taking place to both address the results and to determine future action.

4. **What will the department or program do as a result of that information?**
   In answering this question, please note specific changes to your program as they affect student learning, and as they are related to results from the assessment process. If no changes are planned, please describe why no changes are needed. In addition, how will the department report the results and changes to internal and external constituents (e.g., advisory groups, newsletters, forums, etc.).
We have no specific plans related to changes to the curriculum with the exception of initiating this year a communication consulting agency. This agency will proved students with a wonderful way to gain practical experience. We are very interested in seeing how this addition will impact the students PR knowledge and skills.

5. **What did the department or program do in response to last year’s assessment information?**

In answering this question, please describe any changes that have been made to improve student learning based on previous assessment results. Please also discuss any changes you have made to your assessment plan or assessment methods.

Faculty in the three majors in our department address the results of assessment obtained primarily through the feedback gathered in COM 489 through a combination of course revision, assignment revision, and improved communication among the faculty.

6. **Questions or suggestions concerning Assessment of Student Learning at Central Washington University:**