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

Academic Year of Report: 2013/2014 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. Persuader skills: To learn how to influence and/or persuade audiences with solid and well-chosen arguments.
   d. Facilitate disciplinary and interdisciplinary integrative learning for creative inquiry.

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. All our students are required to submit a portfolio before graduation that is assessed in COM 489 Portfolio Assessment class. All Public Relations students were evaluated on each of the competencies:

   Technical skills were evaluated in COM 208, COM 370 and COM 491/493.
   Consultant skills were evaluated in COM 470 and COM 492.
   Persuader skills were evaluated in COM 345 and COM 350.
   A disciplinary and interdisciplinary integrative learning perspective was evaluated through a thorough review of all our course assignments.

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.

   Our internship reports indicate that overall there is a high level of satisfaction among our PR students with the quality of the education received in this major. However, some things have not changed from previous reports. It seems that the most appreciated aspect of their education by the students is the hands-on and experiential learning provided by courses such as COM 470 and the Central Communication Agency. The requirement of an internship for graduation is highly valued by our students. After graduation, they feel fully confident in their abilities when entering the job market.
The successful participation of some of our students in the Bateman competition sponsored by PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) conveys a sense of excellence in the program among our students. A number of them feel that participating in this competition is a reward and proof of the good reputation of our program.

CWU’s PRSA chapter is also highly appreciated by our students who see it as a way to gain leadership skills and be connected to the professional world while in college.

Some students miss a higher level of specialization in the major due to the lack of variety of courses and the fact that we only have two truly PR professors.

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 hired a new tenure-track professor who is a specialist in financial communication and investor relations. This is an area in high-demand and we expect a number of our students to choose it as an area of specialization.

We are reviewing all the writing classes so they are truly intensive in writing and clearly differentiated from our foundation class, COM 270.

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.

Last year, some employees showed in their internship evaluations some concern about the quality of the writing of some students and their lack of initiative. This year we integrated writing in a number of our classes that are not writing-specific. We think it is representative of the overall improvement that 90 percent of our students met or exceeded expectations in technical writing and the level of negative observations of the employees have decreased considerably.

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