M.A. IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES
SEMESTER ASSESSMENT PLAN

LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Employ relevant theories perspectives, principles and concepts.

> **Objective 1.1** To synthesize the major communication theories, issues and concepts.
> **Objective 1.2** To apply the major communication theories, issues and concepts.
> **Objective 1.3** To critique the major communication theories, issues and concepts.

Goal 2: Evaluate and implement a range of research methodologies for investigating, understanding, and explaining communication phenomena.

> **Objective 2.1** Interpret Communication scholarship.
> **Objective 2.2** Evaluate Communication scholarship.
> **Objective 2.3** Apply Communication scholarship.
> **Objective 2.4** Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship.
> **Objective 2.5** Engage in Communication scholarship using the research traditions of the discipline
> **Objective 2.6** Differentiate between various approaches to the study of Communication.
> **Objective 2.7** Contribute to scholarly conversations appropriate to the purpose of inquiry.

Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.

> **Objective 3.1** Demonstrate understanding of the different philosophical perspectives and schools of thought and their impact of doing scholarship.
> **Objective 3.2** Articulate the importance of communication expertise in career development and civic engagement.
> **Objective 3.3** Identify the interdisciplinary connections between communication studies and other scholarly fields.
> **Objective 3.4** Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.

These goals were drawn from the National Communication Association's (NCA) Learning Outcomes in Communication (LOC) Project (NCA, 2015). This project addressed the question of what graduates from a program of study in Communication should know, understand, and be able to do—at each degree level. The project was supported by a grant from Lumina Foundation to engage 30 competitively selected and diverse scholars from around the nation in a "Tuning" process of the discipline. "Tuning is a collaborative process that convenes experts in a discipline to identify and articulate the distinctive skills, methods, and substantive range for the discipline" (NCA, 2015, para. 2). In this way, our M.A. program seeks to align itself with the disciple, as well as express the learning objectives most appropriate for graduate study.

METHOD

<u>**Student Work Products:**</u> Throughout their Master's program, students will construct and ePortfolio of materials and signature assignments from each of their classes. Examples of the types of student work include:

Goal 1:
- "Mini-Comps" Exam responses from COMM 600: Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication.
- Annotated bibliography that explores a particular theory/issue/concept or the history/development of the field.
- Annotated reading list around a theory build as a study-guide for the Comprehensive Exam (COMM 685).

Goal 2:
- Research proposal produced at the end of each methods class (COMM 602 Quantiative Research Methods & COMM 603 Qualitative Research Methods).
- Student theses/project proposals (COMM 685).
- Completed theses (COMM 699) completed projects (COMM 686).

Goal 3:
- Reflection on student work portfolio as it relates to the department's goals/objectives
- Personal statement that explaining how the student is situated as a scholar in the communication studies discipline.

<u>**Signature Assignments:**</u> Allow the flexibility of tailoring an assignment to the content of a class while engaging specific PLOs. Signature assignments will be recommended for faculty to use and adapt for their classes.

<u>Ideas for signature formative assessments</u>
1. Provide students with a real-life scenario. Ask them to interpret the issue/problem or identify it. Have students respond to the scenario using theories and research methods. Ask them to justify their choice.
2. Provide students with a controversial statement [the statement could involve a particular philosophical perspective]. Ask them to respond to that statement using a research-informed approach. What would they need in order to formulate a response?
3. Ask students to pick a theory (or assign students a particular theory). Have students describe it, evaluate it, and apply it.
4. Give a scenario, ask students to produce an appropriate artifact using theories/methods/concepts from the course (e.g. You are working for X organization, build a communication plan. In your plan indicate what theories you would apply, research methods, etc.).

<u>Ideas for Summative Assessment Instruments:</u>

1. Pick several theories, compare and contrast in respect to epistemology, ontology, axiology, and praxeology.
2. Reflect on your own philosophical assumptions, explaining in the process what you mean by epistemology, etc.

Sampling: The department will have access to these student work portfolios. Each year the Graduate Committee will randomly sample 30% from the assignments that are mapped to the PLOs being assessed that year.

Data Analysis: The Graduate Committee members will evaluate the student work using the Assessment Rubric (see Appendix 1). It is expected that 85% of student work products will meet the "Developing" or "Mastery" level for the PLO being assessed. PLO's not meeting this level of performance will be discussed in committee and in the department to determine how we can better meet the PLO in the future. Changes will be incorporated into the Assessment Plan for the next cycle of review.

TIMEFRAME

Yearly cycle:

Fall:
- Student work products will be collected and evaluated
- Results aggregated

Spring:
- Report to Department Faculty
- Lead faculty discussion of results/reflection on changes to be made to program
- Write Assessment Report
- Share Report with University Assessment Office

3-Year Cycle:

Each Goal will be evaluated on a 3-year cycle:
- Year 1 (2020-21): Goal 1: Evaluated Fall 2021
- Year 2 (2021-22): Goal 2: Evaluated Fall 2022
- Year 3 (2022-23): Goal 3: Evaluated Fall 2023

INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE

The Graduate Coordinator, as chair of the Graduate Committee (or a designee), is responsible for doing the following each academic year:
- Sampling and collection of student work product (Fall)
- Implementing Committee evaluation (Fall)
- Aggregating results (Fall/Spring)
- Reporting to Department Faculty (Spring)

- Leading faculty discussion of results/reflection on changes to be made to program (Spring)
- Writing Assessment Report incorporating changes (closing the loop) (Spring)
- Posting Assessment Report to Department (Blackboard or other department centralized place for policies & reports) (Spring, before the end of the academic year)

The Department Chair (or a designee) is responsible for doing the following before the end of each academic year:
- Ensuring the assessment process take place each year
- Forwarding the Annual Assessment Report to the College Assessment Coordinator
- Posting the Annual Assessment Report to the CSUSB Assessment Officer

ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES WITH INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES

The Appendix 2 Table indicates how the M.A. in Communication Studies' program learning outcomes (PLO's) align with CSUSB's institutional learning outcomes (ILO's). It demonstrates that the program contributes in greater or lesser ways to all of the ILO's. As expected of a graduate program, our PLOs most align with ILO 2: Depth of Knowledge, and ILO 4: Ways of Inquiry.

References

National Communication Association (2015). *Learning Outcomes in Communication Project*. Washington, D.C.: National Communication Association. Available from https://www.natcom.org/learning-outcomes-communication

Appendix 1: Communication Studies MA Assessment Rubric

Goal 1: Employ relevant theory perspectives, principles and concepts			
	1. Introductory	**2. Developing**	**3. Mastery**
Objective 1.1 Articulate the major communication theories, principles and concepts.	Describe a Communication theory, principle, or concept in general terms only without specific details or context	Summarize several Communication theories, principles, or concepts with appropriate details or contexts	Compare, contrast, and/or synthesize several Communication theories, principles, and concepts successfully
Objective 1.2 Apply the major communication theories, principles and concepts.	Identify a Communication theory, principle or concept that could be applied to a particular situation, question, problem, or context	Apply a Communication theory, principle, or concept in an extended or detailed manner to a particular situation, question, problem or context	Evaluate the utility of various Communication theories, principles, or concepts in an applied setting
Objective 1.3 Critique the major communication theories, principles and concepts.	Use personal preference & experience only as a basis to critique Communication theories, principles & concepts	Use set (given) criteria only to critique Communication theories, principles & concepts	Compare/contrast Communication theories, principles & concepts critique them based on set (given) and novel criteria

Goal 2: Employ and/or understand research methodologies in assessing, interpreting, and applying information on communication questions

	1. Introductory	**2. Developing**	**3. Mastery**
Objective 2.1 Interpret Communication scholarship	Identify relevant scholarly Communication research to address a particular information need	Summarize or annotate relevant scholarly Communication research to address a particular information need	Construe new meanings or conclusions based on relevant Communication scholarship
Objective 2.2 Evaluate Communication scholarship	Classify Communication scholarship by its topic or complexity only		Assess the quality of Communication scholarship based on appropriate warrants (e.g. validity, reliability, power, resonance, triangulation, etc.)
Objective 2.3 Apply Communication scholarship	Choose Communication theories, principles, or practices to address a problem, question, or issue	Plan or design a Communication event, message, intervention using relevant theories, principles, or practices to address a problem, question, or issue	Implement a Communication event, message, intervention using relevant theories, principles, or practices to address a problem question or issue
Objective 2.4 Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship.	Identify a question, claim or hypothesis for communication study	Evaluate a question, claim or hypothesis for Communication study	Formulate a question, claim or hypothesis for Communication study
Objective 2.5 Engage in Communication scholarship using the research traditions of the discipline	Differentiate quantitative and qualitative research in general, but unable to recognize particular research methods	Recognize and describe various research methods and their associated traditions.	Collect and analyze data from within at least one research tradition. Decide on an appropriate method to solve a problem, address a question, or test a hypothesis
Objective 2.6 Differentiate between various approaches to the study of Communication	Unable to describe limitations and affordances of different approaches to research. Cannot commit to or appropriately select a particular method to address a question, problem, or hypothesis	Emerging but inconsistent ability to decide on an appropriate method to solve a problem, address a question, or test a hypothesis.	Successfully implement different approaches in research. Successfully choose method to address a question, problem, or hypothesis
Objective 2.7 Contribute to scholarly conversations appropriate to the purpose of inquiry.	Little to no ability to describe what the scholarly conversation is.	Summarize an extant body of literature to address the purpose of inquiry (e.g. support/refute an idea,	Propose different methods & approaches to add to existing conversation. Identify the niche of their research design. Explain the

		address a question/problem, or illustrate a gap in the literature).	need to extend inquiry in a specific area.

Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of the discipline and it central questions.

	1. Introductory	2. Developing	3. Mastery
Objective 3.1 Demonstrate understanding of the different philosophical perspectives and schools of thought and their impact for doing scholarship	Identifies some theoretical perspectives of scholarship. Cannot make direct connections between paradigms and the "doing" of scholarship	Differentiate theoretical perspectives and methods.	Appropriately connect major theoretical perspectives to methodological choices of doing scholarship
Objective 3.2 Articulate the importance of communication expertise in career development and civic engagement	Express that communication is important for career and civic engagement, but cannot connect it to specific communication theories, concepts, or scholarship that inform these processes	Identify the features of communication expertise in terms of theories, concepts, or scholarship that lead to successful career development and/or civic engagement	Apply communication theories, concepts or scholarship to practical problems in professional and/or civic life
Objective 3.3 Distinguish the communication discipline from related areas of study	Distinguish Communication Studies from other disciplines mostly in terms of what it isn't (not psychology, not anthropology, not just speech making, etc.)	Describe how communication study overlaps with the scholarly interests in other disciplines. Trace the history or influence of at least one branch of the discipline in relation to other disciplines.	Distinguish the unique ways in which a communication scholar might examine a situation, question, or phenomena vs how other disciplines might study it.
Objective 3.4 Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture & power relations.	Identify features of communication that may influence the process of meaning-making.	Illustrate how contexts, history, culture, or power relations influence the process of meaning-making	Compare/contrast the process of meaning-making through a contextual, historical, cultural, or power-relations lens.

Appendix 2: Alignment of MA in Communication Studies Learning Outcomes with CSUSB Outcome

ILO's	PLO's
1. **Breadth of Knowledge:** Students identify, explain, and apply multiple approaches to problem solving and knowledge production from within and across disciplines and fields to intellectual, ethical, social, and practical issues.	**Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.3** Identify the interdisciplinary connections between communication studies and other scholarly fields.
2. **Depth of Knowledge:** Students demonstrate a depth of knowledge in a specific discipline or field and apply the values and ways of knowing and doing specific to that discipline or field to intellectual, ethical, social, and practical issues.	**Goal 1: Employ relevant theories perspectives, principles and concepts.** **1.1** To synthesize the major communication theories, issues and concepts. **1.2** To apply the major communication theories, issues and concepts. **1.3** To critique the major communication theories, issues and concepts. **Goal 2: Evaluate and implement a range of research methodologies for investigating, understanding, and explaining communication phenomena.** **2.1** Interpret Communication scholarship. **2.2** Evaluate Communication scholarship. **2.3** Apply Communication scholarship. **2.4** Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship. **2.5** Engage in Communication scholarship using the research traditions of the discipline **2.6** Differentiate between various approaches to the study of Communication. **2.7** Contribute to scholarly conversations appropriate to the purpose of inquiry. **Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.1** Demonstrate understanding of the different philosophical perspectives and schools of thought and **3.2** Articulate the importance of communication expertise in career development and civic engagement. their impact of doing scholarship. **3.4** Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.

3. **Critical Literacies:** Students analyze the ways artistic, oral, quantitative, technological and written expression and information both shape and are shaped by underlying values, assumptions and contexts, so that they can critically contribute to local and global communities.	**Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.4** Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.
4. **Ways of reasoning and inquiry:** Students engage in diverse methods of reasoning and inquiry to define problems, identify and evaluate potential solutions, and determine a course of action.	**Goal 2: Evaluate and implement a range of research methodologies for investigating, understanding, and explaining communication phenomena.** **2.1** Interpret Communication scholarship. **2.2** Evaluate Communication scholarship. **2.3** Apply Communication scholarship. **2.4** Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship. **2.5** Engage in Communication scholarship using the research traditions of the discipline **2.6** Differentiate between various approaches to the study of Communication. **2.7** Contribute to scholarly conversations appropriate to the purpose of inquiry. **Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.1** Demonstrate understanding of the different philosophical perspectives and schools of thought and **3.3** Identify the interdisciplinary connections between communication studies and other scholarly fields. **3.4** Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.

5. **Creativity and Innovation:** Students develop and use new approaches to thinking, problem solving and expression.	**Goal 1: Employ relevant theories perspectives, principles and concepts.**
	   1.2 To apply the major communication theories, issues and concepts.
	   1.3 To critique the major communication theories, issues and concepts.
	
	Goal 2: Evaluate and implement a range of research methodologies for investigating, understanding, and explaining communication phenomena.
	   2.3 Apply Communication scholarship.
	   2.4 Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship.
	   2.5 Engage in Communication scholarship using the research traditions of the discipline
	   2.7 Contribute to scholarly conversations appropriate to the purpose of inquiry.

6. **Integrative Learning:** Students connect disciplines and learning experiences to frame and solve unscripted problems using lenses from multiple fields, contexts, cultures and identities.	**Goal 1: Employ relevant theories perspectives, principles and concepts.**
	   1.3 To critique the major communication theories, issues and concepts.
	Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.
	   3.1 Demonstrate understanding of the different philosophical perspectives and schools of thought and their impact of doing scholarship.
	   3.4 Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.

7. **Engagement in the Campus, Local and Global Communities:** Students develop dispositions and apply intellect and behaviors to respect and promote social justice and equity on campus and across local and global communities.	**Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.2** Articulate the importance of communication expertise in career development and civic engagement.
8. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Students understand how dynamics within global communities influence the ways in which people see the world. They develop dispositions to respectfully interact and collaborate with diverse individuals and groups and acknowledge their own perspectives and biases.	**Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.** **3.4** Demonstrate understanding of the processes of meaning-making influenced by context, including history, culture and power relations.

PRELIMINARY COURSE MAP OF LEARNING OBJECVTIVES

Course	Goal 1: Employ relevant theories perspectives, principles and concepts.			Goal 2: Evaluate and implement a range of research methodologies for investigating, understanding, and explaining communication phenomena.							Goal 3: Demonstrate an understanding of Communication Studies and its central questions.			
	1.1 Synthesize comm theory	1.2 Apply comm theory	1.3 Critique comm theory	2.1 Interpret comm scholarship	2.2 Evaluate comm scholarship	2.3 Apply comm scholarship	2.4 Formulate questions for comm scholarship	2.5 Engage in comm scholarship	2.6 Differentiate approaches to comm scholarship	2.7 Contribute to scholarly converation	3.1 Demonstrate understanding of different philosophical perspectives and their impact on comm scholarship	3.2 Articulate import. of comm in career & civic engagement.	3.3 Identify connections of comm with other fields	3.4 Demonstrate understanding of how the processes of meaning-making influenced by context
6000 Intro				X	X	X								
6001 Theory	X	X	X						X		X			
6002 Quant				X	X	X	X				X			
6003 Qual			X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X
609 Digital Cultures	X	X	X							X	X	X	X	X
630 Instruct	X	X	X			X	X			X		X	X	X

670 Conflict	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X	X	X
671 Global	X	X	X					X	X					X	X
675 Strategic	X	X	X					X	X	X				X	X
689A GTA1		X				X							X	X	X
689B GTA2		X				X							X	X	X
690 Org		X		X	X		X			X	X		X	X	
691 PR						X	X	X					X	X	
692 Interpersonal		X		X	X	X	X	X		X				X	X

Course															
693 Media		X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
694 Intercultural		X		X		X	X	X				X			X
6XX Topic in Film/Cinema				X	X		X		X			X	X		
6XX Topic in Gender		X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X
6XX Topic in Applied		X				X	X	X				X	X		
695A-D Independent Study	X			X	X	X									
697A-D Internship		X				X	X					X			X
6XX Digital Methods				X	X	X	X			X					X

6XX Pol Econ	X	X	X	X	X		X					X	X	X
685 Prep	X	X		X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X
686 Project		X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
699 Thesis	X			X	X	X	X	X		X				
999 Comp. Exam	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X