Annual Program Report
2024-2025

The report(s) should be inclusive of all levels, degrees (i.e. certificates, bachelor's and master's), modalities and locations.

Department: **Communications Media**

Department Chair: **Jeff Warmouth**

Department Assessment Committee Contact: **Randy Howe**

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research and Planning by June 1, 2025.

Section I: Program Assessment (please complete this section for each program in your department)

Program: **Communications Media, B.S.**

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

I.   List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (Please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?
PLO-1	Students should demonstrate proficiency in the core tools and skills of the discipline.	The five program learning outcomes (PLOs) are listed on several university catalog websites—repeated for each concentration in Communications Media. To see them, look below this table and click on the hyperlinks or on the adjacent URLs. *	Annually, at the end of the academic year per the *Internship Performance Appraisal Form*.	AY 2025. PLO-1 was the focus for the B.S. in Communications Media in the AY.
PLO-2	Students should be able to apply aesthetic principles to their work by developing and defending a portfolio that demonstrates craftship and meets professional standards for their discipline.	* see below.	Formatively, after each student's portfolio review, prior to their internship. A more formal, summative evaluation occurs at the end of the academic year.	AY 2022
PLO-3	Students should be able to explain how their work fits in the historical and theoretical context of the discipline.	* see below.	Formatively, after each student's portfolio review, prior to their internship. A more formal, summative evaluation occurs at the end of the academic year.	AY 2022.

PLO-4	Students should apply core theoretical principles to the analysis and critique of media.	* see below.	Formatively, after each student's portfolio review, prior to their internship. A more formal, summative evaluation occurs at the end of the academic year.	AY 2022.
PLO-5	Students should recognize and apply ethical perspectives to their work.	* see below.	Annually, at the end of the academic year per the *Internship Performance Appraisal Form*.	AY 2022.

*   Five program learning outcomes (PLOs) are listed on several university catalog websites—repeated for each Communications Media minor and concentration. To see them, click on the hyperlinks below or on the adjacent URLs.

- · **Communication Studies** or https://catalog.fitchburgstate.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=46&poid=11334&returnto=3259
- · **Film/Video** or https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/filmvideo-production-concentration-communications-media-bs
- · **Graphic Design** or https://catalog.fitchburgstate.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=43&poid=10423&returnto=2969
- · **Photography** or https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/photography-concentration-communications-media-bs
- · **Public Relations, Social Media and Advertising** or https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/public-relations-social-media-and-advertising-production-concentration-communic ations-media-bs
- · **Technical Theater** or https://catalog.fitchburgstate.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=46&poid=11454&returnto=3259
- · **Theater** https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/theater-concentration-communications-media-bs

Communications Media faculty are further encouraged to post relevant PLOs and SLOs to their syllabi.

II.   **PLO Assessment** (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.) Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the "loop closed"?
PLO-1	This assessment looks at student core tool knowledge (K) and skill (S) as developed in the concentrations through their respective programs of study. Knowledge and skills culminate in an internship, which is in the student's last program semester, an experience that is monitored by a Department Supervisor, who is a member of the Communications Media faculty; further observed by a Site Supervisor, a professional in the field at the sponsoring entity (e.g., a film company, graphic design firm, theater company, photo studio, game studio, advertising agency, marketing firm). Student knowledge of the tools in the profession (K) and ability to use them (S) are evaluated by means of an Internship Appraisal (cont)	The student's last semester in the program, which, by design, should be the 4th year, second semester.	All students who complete an internship.\n\nFor the record, students are qualified for internship if they attend a series of internship preparatory seminars; submit an Application for Internship; arrange for a portfolio defense with Communications Media faculty; certifies as eligible for an internship; maintains a list of possible internship sites; evaluates possible new internship sites; and ascertains the current willingness of each site to provide a quality internship. The internship is a full semester, full-time work experience.	"Yes" answers from all Site Supervisors in the field on these two questions:\n\nDid the intern demonstrate acceptable overall knowledge of his/her discipline to be competitive with potential entry-level job applicants?\n\nDid the intern demonstrate acceptable knowledge of software and hardware required to be competitive with potential entry-level job applicants? (cont.)	The loop is never fully closed with decisions made yearly as to how to continue to improve. The gap in the loop is larger in some years than others.\n\nConcentration coordinators and the Department Assessment Committee are given the results via a shared Google document by the Assessment Committee contact.\n\nConcentrations are left to discuss if deemed necessary, such as during summer retreats or AY25-26 meetings with colleagues. All are encouraged to offer feedback during the summer months or when they reconvene in the next academic year.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the "loop closed"?
	Form. The first two questions, completed by the Site Supervisor in the field at the end of the Internship, focus specifically on discipline knowledge and knowledge of hardware and software.			Site supervisors are further asked to comment on their answers, which is taken into account.	
PLO-2	A Likert-style survey, titled the Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form, which is a Google Form, assesses the student's ability to apply aesthetic principles to their work by developing and defending a portfolio that demonstrates craftship (S) and meets professional standards for their discipline. The portfolio is developed throughout the student's program, assessed in the internship interview, which typically takes place in the semester before internship. A representative from the concentration and the Internship Director orchestrates the student's defense, which involves looking at, and discussing the portfolio. They then, individually, complete a survey (i.e., two evaluator surveys per Internship candidate).	The student's second to last semester in the program, which, by design, should be the 4th year, second semester. The Graphic Design concentration will, in addition, develop and assess portfolios mid-way through their student's program of study.	All students who are in the process of qualifying for internship. The student is typically engaged in a series of internship preparatory seminars at this point.	Portfolios should at the least be of "acceptable" in their design, material, and presentation quality. Likert-scale choices run from *Unacceptable* to *Needs Improvement* to *Acceptable* to *Exceeds Expectations* to *Excellent*.	Concentration coordinators and the Department Assessment Committee are given the results via a shared Google document by the Assessment Committee contact. Concentrations are left to discuss if deemed necessary, such as during summer retreats or AY25-26 meetings with colleagues. All are encouraged to offer feedback during the summer months or when they reconvene in the next academic year.

PLO #	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the "loop closed"?
PLO-3	A Likert-style survey, titled the *Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form*, which is a Google Form, assesses the student's ability to explain how their work fits in the theoretical context of the discipline (K). It currently does not seek information on the historical context, another area of focus in PLO-3. For the record, required theory courses bookend a student's program of study in Communications Media, with two introductory courses in the freshmen year, and a pair of upper-level theory courses from a menu of courses required in the junior and senior years. At this point, only the perception of a student's theoretical knowledge (K) is assessed in the portfolio defense. A representative from the concentration and the Internship Director each attend a student's defense, and then individually complete a survey for the student after looking at their portfolio (i.e., two evaluator surveys per Internship candidate).	The student's second to last semester in the program, which, by design, should be the 4th year, second semester. The Graphic Design concentration will, in addition, develop and assess portfolios mid-way through their student's program of study.	All students who are in the process of qualifying for internship. The student is typically engaged in a series of internship preparatory seminars at this point.	At the least, "some" theoretical knowledge is hoped to reveal itself during the portfolio defense. The Likert-scale choices run from *Imperceptible* to *Lacking* to *Some* to *Fair Amount* to *Extensive*.	Theory professors are given the results and are left to discuss if needed, such as during any summer retreats or AY25-26 meetings. The Assessment Committee contact has placed this information in a shared Google document. All in the department are also encouraged to offer feedback during the summer months or when they reconvene in AY26.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the "loop closed"?
PLO-5	Ethical behavior (A) is developed in the concentrations through their respective programs of study. This work culminates in practice in an internship in the student's last program semester, an experience monitored by a Department Supervisor, one of our Communications Media faculty, further observed by a Site Supervisor at the sponsoring entity (e.g., a professional film company, graphic design firm, theater company, photo studio, game studio, advertising agency, marketing firm). The student's ethical perspective is assessed at the end of the internship in the 6th question of the Internship Appraisal Form. A yes/no answer is provided by the Site Supervisor in the field at the Internship site. The supervisor may also comment on their response.	The student's last semester in the program, which, by design, should be the 4th year, second semester.	All students who complete an internship.	"Yes" answers from all Site Supervisors in the field to the question, "Did the intern demonstrate appropriate ethical integrity?"	Concentration coordinators and the Department Assessment Committee are given the results via a shared Google document by the Assessment Committee contact. Concentrations are left to discuss if deemed necessary, such as during summer retreats or AY26 meetings with colleagues. All are encouraged to offer feedback during the summer months or when they reconvene in the next AY.

Every PLO gets some attention from year to year. Additionally, the Assessment Committee to the department determines a PLO of the Year for special attention, which started in AY25 with PLO-1. As mentioned, last year, but not addressed in the current year, the Assessment Committee should consider ways to assess the history component of PLO-3; and PLO-4 in its entirety, "Students should apply core theoretical principles to the analysis and critique of media." Barring any changes, theory faculty (Foundational) may address this after AY26, after its upcoming, intensive self-study

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you "closing the loop"?

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
Other than GPA, what data/ evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	Beyond Grade Point Average, which is, for the record, monitored with possible ramifications to students for program dismissal should their GPA fall below 2.5 in the major; it is the Internship, either at the initial portfolio defense leading into it or at the conclusion of the field experience, that is the primary source of program data that looks at whether or not students are satisfactorily completing the program. Data is collected with two instruments: 1) the *Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form* and 2) the *Internship Performance Appraisal Form*. Below are calendar year 2024 results in brief (i.e., specific Site Supervisor comments, of which there are many, are omitted but have been shared with Coordinators and Assessment Committee members). Abbreviations: F/V = Film/Video; GD = Graphic Design, Photo = Photography, PRSA = Public Relations, Social Media and Advertising, TETA = Technical Theater; and THEA = Theater. The Portfolio Defense Evaluation is an evaluation of student portfolios that are reviewed just prior to internship. The Internship Appraisal Form is completed by Site Supervisors (non-faculty, separate from the University) in the field at the end of Internship.

Portfolio Defense Evaluation (evaluated with a Google Form, January 2024-December 2024, n = 48)

Material Quality (**PLO-2**)	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 7 needs improvement; 4 acceptable; 7 exceeded expectations; and 6 excellent GD did not report any portfolio evaluations. Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 4 exceeded expectations; and 3 excellent PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 0 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 1 exceeded expectations; and 2 excellent THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 3 needs improvement; 2 acceptable; 3 exceeded expectations; and 2 excellent
Design Quality (**PLO-2**)	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 2 unacceptable; 5 needs improvement; 6 acceptable; 7 exceeded expectations; and 5 excellent GD did not report any portfolio evaluations. Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 4 exceeded expectations; and 2 excellent PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 0 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 1 excellent THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 4 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 2 excellent
Presentation Quality (**PLO-2**)	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 2 unacceptable; 5 needs improvement; 5 acceptable; 7 exceeded expectations; and 6 excellent GD did not report any portfolio evaluations. Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 4 excellent PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 0 needs improvement; 1 acceptable; 1 exceeded expectations; and 1 excellent THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 3 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 3 excellent
Sequencing	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 2 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 6 acceptable; 8 exceeded expectations; and 7 excellent GD did not report any portfolio evaluations. Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 1 needs

	improvement; 0 acceptable; 3 exceeded expectations; and 4 excellent
	PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 0 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 1 excellent
	THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 3 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 3 excellent
Professional Usefulness	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 2 unacceptable; 3 needs improvement; 5 acceptable; 7 exceeded expectations; and 8 excellent
	GD did not report any portfolio evaluations.
	Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 0 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 3 exceeded expectations; and 4 excellent
	PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 0 needs improvement; 0 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 1 excellent
	THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 1 unacceptable; 2 needs improvement; 2 acceptable; 2 exceeded expectations; and 3 excellent
Theoretical Knowledge (**PLO-3**)	F/V (n=25; 7 double concentration) – 10 imperceptible; 1 lacking; 1 some; 2 fair amount; and 3 extensive
	GD did not report any portfolio evaluations.
	Photo (n=9; 4 double concentration) – 1 imperceptible; 1 lacking; 1 some; 4 fair amount; and 2 extensive
	PRSA (n=4; 1 double concentration) – 2 imperceptible; 0 lacking; 1 some; 1 fair amount; and 0 extensive
	THEA/TETA (n=10; 2 double concentration) – 5 imperceptible; 0 lacking; 1 some; 0 fair amount; and 4 extensive

Internship Appraisal Form (data collected between January 2024 and December 2024).

Did the intern demonstrate acceptable knowledge of software and hardware required to be competitive with potential entry-level job applicants? (PLO-1)	**F/V: 32 yes, 0 no (100% positive)** **GD: 13 yes, 0 no (100.00% positive)** **Photo: 8 yes, 0 no (100% positive)** **PRSA: 5 yes, 0 no (100% positive)** **TETA/THEA: 7 yes, 0 no (100% positive)**
Did the intern demonstrate appropriate initiative to be competitive with potential entry-level job applicants?	F/V: 32 yes, 0 no (100% positive) GD: 11 yes, 2 no (84.62% positive) Photo: 7 yes, 1 no (87.50% positive) PRSA: 5 yes, 0 no (100% positive) TETA/THEA: 7 yes, 0 no (100% positive)
Did the intern demonstrate oral and written communication skills appropriate to your organization and/or profession?	F/V: 29 yes, 3 no (90.63% positive) GD: 12 yes, 1 no (92.31% positive) Photo: 7 yes, 1 no (87.50% positive) PRSA: 4 yes, 1 no (80.00% positive) TETA/THEA: 7 yes, 0 no (100% positive)
Did the intern demonstrate appropriate time management skills?	F/V: 29 yes, 3 no (90.63% positive) GD: 13 yes, 0 no (100.00% positive) Photo: 7 yes, 1 no (87.50% positive) PRSA: 5 yes, 0 no; (100% positive) TETA/THEA: 6 yes, 1 no (85.71% positive)
Did the intern demonstrate appropriate ethical integrity? (**PLO-5**)	F/V: 32 yes, 0 no (100% positive) GD: 13 yes, 0 no (100.00% positive) Photo: 8 yes, 0 no (100% positive) PRSA: 5 yes, 0 no (100% positive) TETA/THEA: 7 yes, 0 no (100% positive)

	If an opening for an employee at this level in your organization existed, would you consider this intern to be competitive?	F/V: 31 yes, 1 no (96.88% positive) GD: 12 yes, 1 no (92.31% positive) Photo: 7 yes, 1 no (87.50% positive) PRSA: 5 yes, 0 no (100.00% positive) TETA/THEA: 7 yes, 0 no (100% positive)
Who interprets the evidence? **What is the process?** **(e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)**	Typically, student **portfolios** are assessed by the respective Film/Video, Photography, PRSA, or Theater/Technical Theater <u>Concentration Coordinator and Internship Director,</u> by means of a *Portfolio Evaluation Form*, a form set up digitally with Google Forms. The form is used to assess students separately by both parties (i.e., they both have a say), during the internship interview, which occurs in the semester prior to a student's final semester or internship, with each student one of many in a semester's cohort. Feedback is formatively conveyed to the student in-process. The data, which is related to areas considered important for a prospective professional's portfolio (e.g., quality, design, sequencing, professional usefulness) is collected for further discussion by the <u>coordinators and their respective faculty</u>. Other data is used to inform Communications Media instruction specifically (e.g., theoretical knowledge), further interpreted by <u>theory faculty</u>. For the record, Graphic Design has their own process for evaluating portfolios. *Internship Performance Appraisal* data is solicited during **internship** with a form as responded to by <u>site supervisors, individuals from the field who work and supervise Communications Media interns on their site</u>. The form assesses the students work during internship. The form is administered digitally, also by means of a Google Form, after, or toward the tail end of, a student's internship. Questions on the form can be seen to relate to the department's five Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). The data, or evidence, is <u>interpreted by the concentrations</u>, including Graphic Design. Summatively, the collected data from portfolio reviews and the internship are aggregated for the calendar year (e.g., 2024) into a Feedback Request Form that is distributed <u>annually</u> to coordinators at the end of the academic year (e.g., AY25). The request form is set-up by a department faculty who acts as the Assessment Coordinator. It is presented in a Google Doc format, with blocks set up for coordinators to record their feedback, if any, as early as possible in the Spring semester. Responses are ultimately needed by the end of the month of May, given back to the Assessment Coordinator and the Department Chair, who work together to assemble this information for the required end of the year Assessment Report, which is further filed in the Assessment Office on June 1. All faculty are expected to respond in whatever way they see fit to address any areas reported on in an effort to improve. All data and data collection instruments are looked at by the Assessment Committee, a group composed of the Assessment Coordinator, Concentration Coordinators, area Chairs from sister programs' Game Design, Digital Media Innovation, and Applied Communication, and the Department Chair, with an intention to make improvements to the assessment process, as well as to prioritize what should be assessed going forward.	

What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)	The Assessment Committee in AY25 decided to look at PLO-1, which deals with tool proficiency, or more specifically, the learning outcome wherein "students should demonstrate proficiency in the core tools and skills of the discipline." Data collected with the *Internship Performance Appraisal Form* in calendar year 2024 demonstrate that Communications Media is doing an outstanding job at preparing students for internship in this regard. As reported above, 32 Film/Video, 13 Graphic Design, eight Photography, five PRSA, and seven Theater/Technical Theater students received the answer of "Yes" for the question, "Did the intern demonstrate acceptable knowledge of software and hardware required to be competitive with potential entry-level job applicants?" That's 65 positive and no negative ratings for seeking the B.S. degree in Communications Media. This indicates that they were proficient. **There were no specific changes** recorded in the feedback forms.

As fields change, so too must Communications Media. Hence, this loop will never be fully closed. Concentrations should continue to adapt to the practices in the field in terms of technologies used and processes followed.

Per their program of study, it should be noted that not all Graphic Design students complete a 12 credit internship – some complete a 6 credit internship plus Design Studio. This concentration might consider an alternative means for assessing whether or not these students have learned graphic design tools.

Continuing some notes from the last Assessment Report (AY24).

For all concentrations, portfolios are expected to stay current to the practices found in the corresponding field. Concentrations keep up with professional practices by adjusting course instruction, possibly through equipment purchases or instructional and/or program of study changes. Each student portfolio is expected to improve as well through the professional experiences that will occur during the student's internship. Communications Media faculty remain a part of the internship process. They review portfolio progress at various checkpoints during the Internship. Communications Media is somewhat satisfied to have formulated a process for obtaining <u>portfolio</u> data. But there are questions surrounding the review process, which may vary from faculty to faculty or intern to intern; and continued confusion with the lack of a rubric that goes back to AY22. These are among the issues to discuss in AY26, perhaps during the scheduled Self-Study; and/or in AY27, once new actions come out of the Self-Study.

Communications Media appears satisfied with how it obtains and disseminates <u>internship</u> data. The process of data dissemination is still cumbersome but improved. It still requires a fair amount of manual data assembly (e.g., cut and paste). This will be looked at again in AY27 (it was in AY24 and AY25; there is no Assessment reporting to be done in the AY26 Self-Study year). Revisions will look to continue to streamline the response process to and from vested faculty, further looking to distribute data as early in the year as possible. The promise of Watermark, software purchased by the University and dedicated to assessment, makes some in the department optimistic about this. It will most certainly be a topic for the department Assessment Committee to take on when it reconvenes in AY27. |

B.S. in Communications Media Concentration Summary

- For **Film/Video**, officially during the year, they had four proposals approved in campus governance. In their feedback response report, the Coordinator mentions that they are in the process of updating its mission and vision statements. Also, in the response report, they noted that they have had discussions about the 2019 Self-Study Action Plan and the suggestion for some concentrations to become distinct majors. For this, they noted that "there is a lot to consider - including unintended consequences and potential impacts on the department." When reviewing internship appraisal data, to the first item concerning student knowledge in the discipline, they noted that they will continue to "work with our advisory committee to evolve our area of study." In response to a few negative internship reviews of a student's written and oral skills, they acknowledged that "communication skills can, and should be improved. I would want to report out to the rest of the film/video faculty and think through ways we can incorporate interpersonal and professional communication skills in our courses." They further acknowledged that there is room for improvement for students in terms of time management skills. Looking ahead, they felt that PLO-3 would be their preferred area of focus in the next assessment year (i.e., historical and theoretical context of their discipline). Also, the Coordinator made some comments concerning portfolios, "Yes, there is a clear deficit in theoretical knowledge. Additionally, while the majority of students were acceptable or higher, clearly many are struggling." He added that for Assessment Plan planning, that a PLO on oral and written communication may be worth adding.

- For **Graphic Design**, in their feedback response report, the concentration put forward three proposals to campus governance in AY25.

- For **Photography**, the feedback response report noted that they put forward five proposals to campus governance in AY25. The Coordinator said, "By creating new courses and aligning our prerequisites to better suit student development in the medium, we are opening pathways for students to explore and complete the photography concentration." Regarding the 2019 Action Plan coming out of the self-study, with "the external reviewer's suggestion to revise the program structure to move to distinct majors", the Coordinator wrote, "Photography is well suited within the Communications Media major. The Photography concentration, with its accessible minor and dual concentration model, supports other communications media concentrations and is a viable concentration and career option for students." Regarding the positive ratings of the student's overall knowledge of the discipline, "Yes, this data impacts photography's approach to teaching and curriculum development. Photography will continue to dedicate resources to implementing new technologies and software programs to keep our students at the forefront of professional standards." To the only negative response of eight regarding student initiative, "Yes, this data helps photography understand how successful we are in developing students' drive,

passion, and initiative to be competitive in their careers. While most of our students are succeeding in this, the feedback from Lisa Fischer Photography helps us to understand the emphasis of potential employers' needs for strong communication skills and self-motivation in our students." Similarly to the only negative response of eight to the question regarding oral and written skills, "Yes, the data confirms the importance of developing interpersonal skills in our students. After reviewing the data, Photography will implement curricula that involve more group and peer to peer work to help develop interpersonal skills in our students." And for the one negative response concerning time management, "Yes, Photography will continue to develop experiential project-based learning to help students develop time management skills. In reading the responses from our intern sites, students working with family emergencies and the confines of public transportation might be disadvantaged in this area, making it more difficult for them to plan and manage time effectively." All ratings were positive for ethical integrity and near-perfect for being hired into an entry level position, "The data supports our goal of building students ready for photography careers upon graduation", the Coordinator wrote. Looking forward, the Coordinator suggests PLO-2 on aesthetic principles for future focus, specifically, "Students should be able to apply aesthetic principles to their work by developing and defending a portfolio that demonstrates craftship and meets professional standards for their discipline."

- For **PRSA** (Public Relations, Social Media and Advertising), the Coordinator, in their feedback response report, responded to how they were doing with the mission. Specifically, "the application of disciplinary knowledge from the field of Marketing Communications in the production of real world client projects continues to be a powerful and compelling guiding pedagogy with successful learning outcomes for students in the PRSA concentration. Although we are not currently competing annually in the National Student Advertising Competition due to shrinkage in the program, we continue to have great success with an extensive range of other "applied" projects that subsequently comprise the professional caliber portfolio work students defend *en route* securing a placement in their full-time capstone internships." He adds that the "statement remains strong broadly speaking, though artificial intelligence looms large as an increasingly important dimension for professional designers, writers, strategists, and the marketing communication field as a whole." Meanwhile, "This vision remains strong, valuable, and marketable as evidenced in the successful job placement of PRSA alumni after they graduate, and then subsequently as they continue to advance in their careers; a high percentage of PRSA graduates advance to management positions such as social media manager or marketing communication director within a few years of graduation, and a significant percentage of graduates eventually pursue graduate study in Marketing Communications, Public Relations, Social Media Production/Management, Business, or a related professional field of study."

Through campus governance, restrictions were removed from two courses, *Client Project Production* and *Writing for Advertising*, for which the Coordinator wrote that each are "valuable courses for students university-wide, particularly insofar are they teach students how to produce professional media through guided experiential learning in the real world."

Coming out of the 2019 Action Plan where it was suggested that the department consider the external reviewer's suggestion to revise the program structure to move to distinct majors, "In addition to a likely diminishment of cross-pollination and synergies shared above, there is an essential math problem that may make such distinct majors impractical, or even impossible: the shrinkage of students in the Communications Media Major in recent years from over 700 students to roughly 400 students, in combination with a tight institutional budget, would make the faculty expansion that is necessary for legitimate full-bodied majors unrealistic."

All reviews on the *Internship Performance Appraisal* form were positive. To PLO-1 on knowledge, "Dr. Moody's successful introduction of real world client work early in the program strengthens and enriches PRSA Student Learning Outcomes 1-4, particularly insofar as the curriculum and objectives in his Social Media PR and Advertising course integrates seamlessly with the remaining four courses in the concentration. Until we return to competing in the National Student Advertising Competition, which strongly emphasizes marketing research and outcomes, we will need to find other ways to build "#5: Perform market research" into the curriculum of each PRSA course. This should be performed in the following natural sequence: pre-formatively (e.g., within the evaluation sections of proposals, PR Plans, Marcomm Plans, and Plans Books), formatively (through the actual application of methodologies introduced in blueprint documents), summatively in the form of client hand-offs and debriefings, and ultimately transformatively with an eye towards long term continuous improvement." To technology proficiency, the PLO of the Year, "We continue to see strong student learning and success spanning our core curriculum, but there is a fundamental need to strengthen students' team building, team work, and collaborative leadership skills. It is easy to assume students will learn these soft skills, including the complex processes of coordinating the production of an ambitious PRSA project spanning weeks or even months, but these interpersonal skills and processes need to be taught, guided, and assessed now more than ever. These are also invaluable and highly marketable skills in the marketing communication field that are essential to students' upward mobility into

management as they advance in their careers." The fourth question that is of concern to written and oral communication had the intern not exhibiting appropriate skill, to which the Coordinator responded, "While all of this commentary remains true, at least anecdotally there may be a trend towards students seeking more individualized projects that avoid team building and teamwork. There is a strong case to be made for students to experience a broad range of individualized/customized projects and formalized team projects, and curricular merit in this balance of individual and group learning. The PRSA currently strikes a productive balance." Time management skills were assessed with the fifth question, with all students seen positively, "We continue to witness the stress and tension many students demonstrate as they struggle to manage school work, part or even full-time jobs, and complex personal lives. Broadly speaking, students have less time for their schoolwork, which continues to be a major and perhaps increasing challenge to their professional preparation and subsequent career launch." Although ethics ratings were all positive for PRSA students on Internship, the Coordinator wrote, "I have grown increasingly concerned about the ethical dimension in student teamwork, and in particular student commitment to supporting rather than relying upon one another. This is currently an insidious challenge within our curriculum design that with appropriate spotlighting and modeling might be capitalized upon, and perhaps turned into a valuable 'best practices' approach to learning superior teamwork." Another PRSA faculty who teaches a required course in the PRSA curriculum agreed, stating that the possibility of student's skirting participation in team-based projects has always been an issue, but appears more prevalent of late. The factors are difficult to pinpoint. It may be that more students in the university population also have jobs to support themselves, leaving less time to work with other students outside of class. For the *Communicating Project Design* course, adjustments have been made, such as requiring students to work together during class time, providing step-by-step instructions to help students create deliverables that are a part of the team project, and sending teammates participation surveys that help identify non-participating teammates. To the last question, employability comments were also all positive.

Looking ahead to the next PLO to focus on, the Coordinator recommended, " I suggest the convergence of individual work ethic, teamwork, and ethical professional practice integrated into a main focus. This could also involve a program survey given to the students to provide insight about how *they* see each of

these in the context of the PRSA subculture. I wonder if such a survey would be pretty revealing and edifying."

Coordinators were asked to review a draft of an Assessment Plan for the department. The PRSA Coordinator suggested, "We might drop the word "tangential" because it at least has the connotation of being pretty loosely associated with the core requirements. Many if not most of the elective courses share an important relationship with the core requirements that I believe is stronger than "tangential" suggests. I continue to feel good about each of the PLOs for PRSA, but would welcome a discussion with faculty involved in the program; perhaps we could meet to talk about this next academic year - say the spring once Randy returns (from sabbatical, Fall 2025)."

- For **Theater/Technical Theater**, in response to their feedback response report, the theater faculty stated that "I do want to note that without any tech faculty we will be unable to meet the standards of this current report which will not be the fault of the Technical Theater and Theater Concentration curriculum and faculty, but the lack of university support for a tech theater faculty replacement position (how can one recruit and deliver content with no full-time faculty) and space/facility issues going unaddressed, and university allotted funds to theater budgets being internally transferred to other COMM budgets. It is clear that the university has no interest in tech theater and theater as academic programs, and are waiting for the current faculty to retire to cut these programs." Note here that the faculty member who served as coordinator for years resigned at the beginning of the academic year, and was on sabbatical during the writing of the assessment report.

- For **Theory** (Foundational), the faculty look forward to the self-study with plans to revisit the theoretical knowledge assessment question on the *Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form*, possibly suggesting alternative means for assessing their work.

Section II - Departmental Outcomes

A. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY23-24 **Add more rows as needed**	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy **Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3**	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
The continued process evolution of having a department Assessment Committee consisting of members from the department.	Goal Five: Adding this committee helps us to assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely. 5.2 Assert Fitchburg State's approach to integrating high-quality professional programs with strong liberal arts and sciences studies as a key University differentiator that also differentiates our graduates.	

As part of the full department course offerings, an AY23 proposal was made: "Based on NECHE guidelines, we propose to renumber courses in COMM, GAME, TETA, and THEA to align courses with the intended year (Freshman through Senior) and with prerequisites. COMM courses are also grouped by the hundreds digit to make it easier for students to find courses in their concentrations." This was done for all courses in the department. Numbers now appear in the University catalog and Fall 2025 seat's list for the upcoming academic year, AY26.	Goal Two. This agreement can be seen to help us to continue to create the model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap. 2.1 Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	
Film/Video added a course COMM 2XXX: Intro to Video Editing as a new elective course within the Communications Media department.	Goal One. This addition forges innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	

Film/Video changed policy to allow students to take COMM 3760: Genres, Styles and Movements more than once for credit. When initially proposed the course, it was intended that students would be able to take the course more than once for credit. However, that was not an option on what was the ACC form at the time. Film Styles, Genres and Movements is a course that is designed to cover different material, based on the faculty and chosen style, genre or movement.	Goal One. This addition forges innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	
Graphic Design made an attribute request to add AIA (Integrating and Applying Learning) and IHIP (Integrate High Impact Practice) designations for the course, COMM 4700 - Design Studio and Practice.	Goal One. This addition forges innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	

Photography created a new course, COMM 3XXX: Photography Portfolio Development.	Goal One. This addition forges innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	
Theater ran the theater production of *American Underground* by Brent Askariat; and staged readings of two new plays by award-winning playwright Peter Anderegg, including a new take on *Romeo and Juliet* and an exploration of the destructive effects of narcissism, namely *The Widow Juliet* and *When You're a Star*. .	Goal Three: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region 3.6 Continue to provide educational opportunities and cultural programming that attract and engage members of the local community, including alumni.	
Visions: honors exhibition of student work from the Communications Media department.	Goal Three: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region 3.6 Continue to provide educational opportunities and cultural programming that attract and engage members of the local community, including alumni.	

Ran monthly department Admissions tours and participated in shadow programs for accepted students. Faculty planned and participated in Open Houses in Fall 2024 and Future Falcon Days in Spring 2025.	Goal Five: Adding this committee helps us to assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely. 5.3 Proactively reach, engage, and recruit prospective students through marketing efforts whose reach extends regionally, nationally, and globally.	
Successfully re-hired a Visiting Assistant Professor of Photography for AY25. This was in response to multiple years of requesting a tenure-track replacement for Peter Laytin, who ran the Photography program until his retirement in 2019. The temp position is a stopgap, but will help us keep the Photography program running. In AY25, the department was approved to make this position a tenure-track position for hire in AY26.	Goal Five: Adding this committee helps us to assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely. 5.2 Assert Fitchburg State's approach to integrating high-quality professional programs with strong liberal arts and sciences studies as a key University differentiator that also differentiates our graduates.	

Planned Initiatives for AY 24-25 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Revisit and potentially update the department's mission statements.	Goal One. This addition will continue to help us to forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	

Continue to get each concentration in the Communications Media program (Film/Video, Graphic Design, Photography, Public Relations, Social Media & Advertising, Theater & Technical Theater, Theory) involved and on the Assessment Committee, which will take on the department self-study in AY26. This committee should remain inclusive to members from the other majors in the department (i.e., Digital Media Innovation, Game Design, the Graduate Program in Applied Communication) in an effort to help each other in a process that should be rewarding and not too burdensome. This committee was first established in AY25.	Goal One. This addition will continue to help us to forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	
Continue to update the *Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form* and rubrics to align with updated PLOs and concentration SLOs. Sort out how Graphic Design will assess portfolios in Studio courses. Consider what form is needed to assess Graphic Design students in Studio courses that will provide similar data to the *Internship Performance Appraisal Form*.	Goal Five: Adding this committee helps us to assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely. 5.2 Assert Fitchburg State's approach to integrating high-quality professional programs with strong liberal arts and sciences studies as a key University differentiator that also differentiates our graduates.	

Update as necessary Curriculum Mapping of Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcome (SLOs). This was done in AY24, reviewed again in AY25.	Goal Five: Adding this committee helps us to assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely. 5.2 Assert Fitchburg State's approach to integrating high-quality professional programs with strong liberal arts and sciences studies as a key University differentiator that also differentiates our graduates.	
Discuss ways to assess the new 6 credit COMM 4700 Design Studio, as this is part of a capstone option for Graphic Design students	Goal Two. This modification can be seen to help create the model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap. 2.1 Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	

Work with Career Services to create resume & portfolio guides tailored to Communications Media students	Goal One. Aligned with the previous change (above), this addition forges innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning. 1.2 Establish a learning environment in which academic and co-curricular programs work in synergy to offer applied learning experiences that prepare students for purposeful personal and professional lives.	
Continue Tech School Outreach work in the department, a committee who will work with Admissions to develop connections with vocational/technical schools and high schools, to increase recruitment and to explore additional articulation agreements. This was started in AY24, and has been discussed with some connections made in AY25.	Goal Two. Establishing such a committee can be seen to help us to continue to create the model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap. 2.1 Achieve a cultural shift around how we advise, mentor, and teach all students, especially traditionally underrepresented and underserved students, so that we meet them where they are.	

B. Departmental Accomplishments and Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

1. *23-24 Accomplishments not captured above*
2. *Initiatives that you may be considering for 24-25 academic year that you did not already capture above*

There will be no official department Assessment Committee in AY26. In its place is a committee to assemble the Department Self-Study, which is a process that the department goes through as articulated by 2018 campus governance in a proposal labelled AUC-176. It requires majors to undergo every seven years an exercise to assemble an extensive self-study document or report, followed by a visit from an outside evaluator, who in turn will make recommendations for the department to respond to and possibly address moving forward. The Assessment Committee will reconvene in AY27.

3. *Any other thoughts or information that you would like to share*