SDSU
San Diego State University

Curriculum, Assessment and Accreditation
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Journalism (BA) – PSFA

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Step 1: Student Learning Outcome

DLO 1: Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.

Step 2: Assessment Methods and Measures

Between Fall 2021 and Spring 2025: Pre-test and Post-Test in JMS 200 and capstone courses with multiple embedded questions. In 2018, the matrices were updated to clarify the courses in which specific outcomes were expected to be introduced (I), developed (D), and mastered (M). Introduced indicates exposure/awareness, developed shows understanding and explaining, and mastered suggests application. This update served to better differentiate the delivery of program learning outcomes across the curriculum. The current competencies are tested in the SAEs for Advertising, Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations on Qualtrics when students are near graduation, from four different capstone classes, as part of graduation requirements. Each of the four emphasis areas is assessed with at least five exam questions for each degree learning outcome.

Step 3: Criteria for Success

Determined annually by department; an ANOVA score is determined from the pre- and post-test scores and it is expected there to be a statistically significant difference.

Step 4: Summary of Results

This is the first year we decided to not do a pre-test and post-test measure of the DLO. The faculty voted that only one exam is necessary at the end of the students' time in the program. So only one exam was administered in the fall 2025 and spring 2026 to the graduating seniors.

Fall 2025 data showed improvement on some of the questions in the exams for different areas. Spring 2026 data also showed improvement on some of the questions in the exams for different areas. Some questions had to be revised for item quality and item correctness. Please see the attached results data for specifics – presentation files of the data.

Step 5: Action Plan

The results were shared with the faculty and they made adjustments to their exam questions by area and the revised questions showed improvement in the following semester.