

**Academic Year 2008-2009 Assessment Report  
Elliott School of Communication  
Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Wichita State University**

**Narrative Explanation**

**Background:** Consistent with the ESC Assessment Plan updated and approved by the ESC faculty in Oct. 2004, we administered three of our four assessment tools in AY 08-09, including: the senior satisfaction survey, senior portfolio evaluation, and senior exit exam (critical thinking/analytical writing exercise). The fourth assessment tool, the alumni survey, was not administered. As our Plan stipulates, the alumni survey is only administered periodically. Plans are underway to examine converting the alumni survey from mail/telephone instruments to a web-survey. All four of these assessment tools align with program goals and objectives and expected learner outcomes identified in the assessment plan.

**Summary Results:** All assessment tools were administered to students enrolled in COMM 472 (Senior Portfolio), a required one-credit course for ESC graduating seniors. **The senior satisfaction survey** data measures satisfaction levels along fourteen items with respect to various features of our degree program, courses, faculty & staff, facilities, etc., (results on file in ESC). Results (fall & spring) met or exceeded our expectations. The **senior portfolio** evaluation forms (a collection of a student's best work evaluated by an outside professional) were taken as a whole from both semesters and tabulated along seven indices. Results met or exceeded expectations. Finally, the **senior exit exam** (a critical thinking and analytical writing exercise) was randomly sampled from both semesters for grading purposes along two indices. Results met or exceeded expectations.

**Break-out Results:** The **Satisfaction Survey results** were derived from 83 anonymous respondents who took the survey in fall and spring. Key summary findings included: an overwhelming majority of students believe (1) the ESC increased their basic overall knowledge of communication, (2) the degree they obtained will help them find a job in the communication industry, (3) ESC classes increased their writing, speaking and visual skills, (4) ESC faculty are highly qualified, and (5) they would recommend the ESC to others interested in the field. (Full results available from the ESC).

**Critical Thinking Test Results** were derived from a random sample of tests (21 out of 83) taken anonymously in both semesters of COMM 472, Senior Portfolio. A brief writing assignment that prompts critical reflection on rhetorical elements of a famous American public address is evaluated for critical thinking (accuracy of observation/interpretation skills) and analytical writing (a writing model that utilizes claim, proof, and analysis). Tests were graded by a faculty member who teaches COMM 535, the required analysis course for all communication students. Key summary findings included: Seven students exceeded expectations (scored satisfactory on both indices); eleven students met expectations (scored satisfactory on one index; less than satisfactory on the other). Three

students scored unsatisfactory along both lines. These results are consistent with prior results. (Full results available from the ESC)

**The Portfolio Evaluation Results** were derived from 101 portfolio evaluations from both semesters conducted by outside communication professionals. Student identity was concealed in the coding process. The evaluation template rated seven items on a scale of 1 to 5 (5=very strong; 1=very weak). The overall average for all portfolios was 4.12, a slight increase from last year (4.11). The highest average scores for all portfolios were on the quality of the portfolio (4.15) and the oral presentation of the portfolio (4.29).

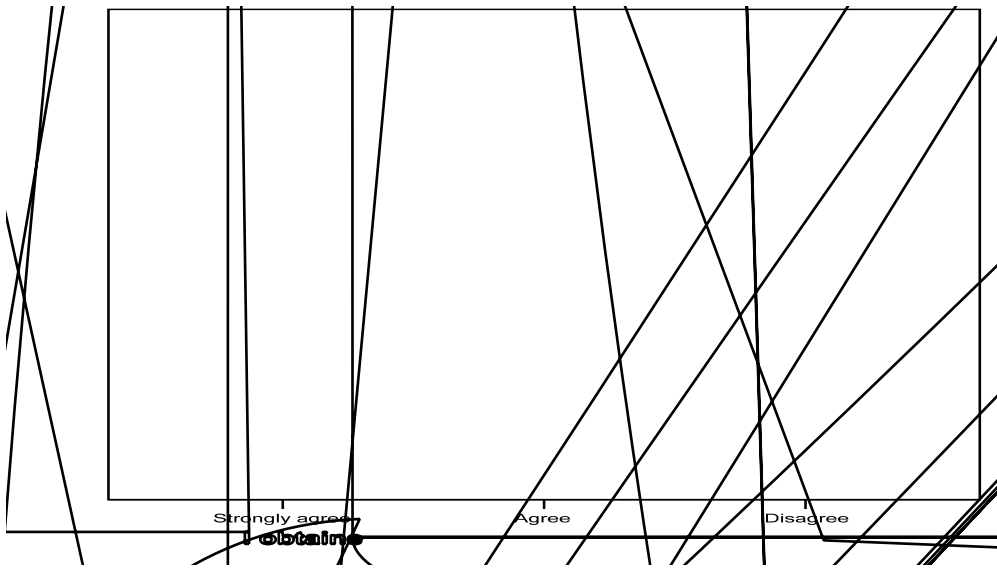
**Recommendations for Assessment Collection:** In our 2004/2005 assessment report, the ESC faculty made recommendations for change in how we collect assessment data. These were implemented in this report and include: portfolio evaluations forms are now standardized across emphasis areas; portfolio evaluation forms now protect anonymity in the data collection process; portfolio evaluations are now tabulated and sampled in some way like the critical thinking exercise for timely results; portfolio forms now account for progress in basic communication skills. ESC Faculty should review the critical thinking assessment tool. The tool tests specific knowledge from one class (COMM 535), but students may not have taken the class or may have taken it several semesters earlier. While only three students did not meet expectations, we should continue to monitor whether the instrument accurately and reasonably assesses student knowledge.

**Recommendations for Program Changes:** Two important issues were raised in the open-

# **Fall 2008 – Spring 2009 Exit Questionnaire Results**

Elliott School of Communication

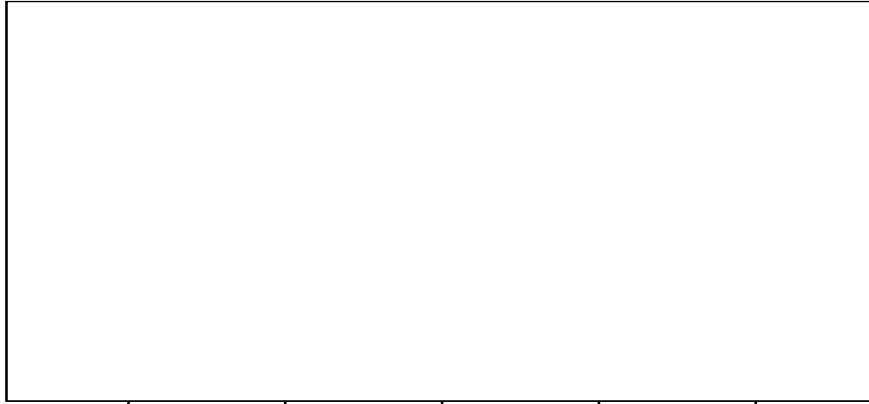






## Meeting Students' Educational Goals/Post-graduation plans

A majority of the respondents indicated their goal in seeking a degree was to pursue a career in the communication industry, however, some respondents did indicate they would either pursue further education or be working as an educator.



## **II. Skill Improvement/Knowledge Gained**

The respondents indicated a strong perception that courses in the ESC improved their skills and knowledge of communication. All five areas showed improvement over results from last year.

*82 out of 83 students (98.8%) either strongly agreed or agreed the ESC increased their basic overall knowledge of communication.*

*78 out of 83 students (94%) either strongly agreed or agreed that their classes in the ESC improved their writing skills.*



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**III. Learning Environment/Access to Technology**

#### **IV. Impression of the Faculty and Staff**

The respondents indicated a high level of confidence in the faculty's qualifications as well as a high level of satisfaction with regards to guidance they received from the office staff and their ESC advisers.

*76 students (91.6%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that ESC faculty are highly qualified. The other 7 students (8.4%) felt neutral on this statement.*

*73 students (87.9%) were satisfied with the guidance they received from the office staff. An additional 7 students (8.4%) were neutral. Just 3 students (3.6%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.*

*55 students (66.3%) indicated they were satisfied with the guidance they received from their ESC adviser. Only 9 students (10.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Note: this number is down from last year, when 77.9% reported satisfaction with the guidance from their adviser.*

**Value of classes at the Elliott School of Communication**

