

1. Name of the Academic Program

Department of Agricultural Education, Communications, and 4-H Youth Development

2. Degree Programs that are assessed under this plan

Bachelor of science in agricultural communications

Bachelor of science in agricultural communications (double major in animal science)

3. Mission, objectives or goals of the degree program(s)

Goal Statement: The agricultural communications major provides academic and experiential preparation in agriculture and journalism/broadcasting to enable graduates to obtain employment as communications specialists in one or more of the following areas: public relations, advertising, publications, radio broadcasting, and television broadcasting.

Objectives:

- A. To recruit, advise, retain, and educate students with interest in agricultural communications.
- B. To provide a core of agricultural communications courses and agricultural sciences and natural resources courses that uniquely will prepare students for employment and further graduate study.
- C. To arrange for and supervise student internships that provide practical experience in agriculture and/or mass media and that will assist the student in bridging between academic study and future employment.
- D. To sponsor a student professional organization, Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), that will assist student in developing leadership skills and engage them in professional and social activities to refine skills and develop a professional network of colleagues.

4. Define the expected student outcomes for the degree program(s)

- A. Students will demonstrate knowledge of current communications practices, including effective writing, layout and design, photography, computer skills, and oral communications.
- B. Students will demonstrate the ability to work in a professional communications setting through an experiential-learning environment (i.e., internship).
- C. Students will demonstrate the ability to solve problems, to work independently and to work as members of a team.
- D. Students will demonstrate the ability to prepare professional quality communications work as evaluated through the annual National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Critique and Contest.

5. Identify the methods that are used to evaluate student achievement of these educational outcomes.

- A. Senior Capstone Course
Through student production of a magazine, Web site, and/or video segments, the senior capstone course will be used to evaluate the students' knowledge of effective writing, layout and design, photography, and computer skills as well as their ability to solve real-world problems, to work independently and to work as part of a team.
- B. Student Internships
Student internships provide a method to assess the students' ability to work in a professional communications setting as evaluated by the internship supervisor and the department's internship faculty coordinator. As part of this evaluation, the students' abilities in writing, layout and design, photography, and computer skills also are assessed. The students' oral communications skills are assessed through a formal presentation following the internship.
- C. Senior exit interview
At the end of their final semester, seniors will complete an exit interview questionnaire to allow them the opportunity to provide feedback to the department concerning course requirements, internship experiences, student organization experiences, etc.
- D. Alumni survey
Through the university's alumni survey, the department will collect information similar to that found through the senior exit interview questionnaire.
- E. National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Critique and Contest
This annual competition provides the department with professional critiques of each entry prepared by graduating seniors in areas such as writing, layout and design, Web site and electronic communications, and photography. In addition, rankings of these items give the department a comparison of its students to those at other agricultural communications programs throughout the United States.

6. Identify how assessment results will be integrated into curriculum planning and program improvement.

Results of these assessment methods will be shared among agricultural communications faculty to use to consider (1) modifications in existing agricultural communications courses, (2) implementation of new courses, and (3) design of curriculum plans (student degree option sheets).