

Communication Annual Assessment Report AY17-18

Summary

Throughout varied and numerous assessment activities, students in Communication performed particularly well at collaborating with one another and communicating with external clients. Overall, student performance consistently met and exceeded expectations and, in some cases, led directly to career opportunities.

I. Major Degree Programs

Advertising BA	Photojournalism BA
Communication BA	Public Relations BA
Interdisciplinary Documentary BA	Radio BA
Journalism BA	Social Media and Digital Strategy BA

II. Degree Programs and Learning Outcomes Assessed AY17-18

Advertising BA: Introduction to Advertising Course Outcomes

- Explain the functions of advertising and the various positions within it
- Understand various advertising theories and their implications and relevance, within a historical framework
- Comprehend and be able to develop a basic multi-platform campaign
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the media professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- Gather and report information thoroughly and accurately using a wide range of sources

Advertising BA: Ad Agency Course Outcomes

- Execute primary and/or secondary research, analyze that information, and use it to develop strategic communication recommendations that solve problems posed by an actual client
- Work collaboratively to successfully develop integrated strategic recommendations and/or creative elements (advertising, promotions, and PR) on time and on budget
- Present recommendations and creative executions to the client by using industry best practices (including reviewing the situation, recommending an insight-based solution, and explaining how his or her work answers the problem)

Public Relations BA: Public Relations Writing Course Outcomes

- Prepare press releases and other PR writings that demonstrate critical thinking skills related to the 5W's – who, what, where, when, and why.
- Craft messages to promote PR strategies, evidenced by pre-writing documentation.
- Write, revise and polish PR content in media communications in form and style that meets professional standards

Radio BA: WCRX Practicum Course Outcomes

- Produce a professional quality radio/audio portfolio
- Identify and understand the decision-making process involved with ethical dilemmas and issues

Social Media and Digital Strategy BA: Intro to Social Media and Digital Strategy Course Outcomes

- Discuss some of the best social media and digital strategy practices in business, media and nonprofits, assessing brand building ideas, audience engagement approaches and emerging trends.
- Identify and apply the terminology and fundamentals of social and other digital media platforms.

III. Assessment 1: Introduction to Advertising (54-1600): Advertising BA

Method

Students in Introduction to Advertising took a 60-question, multiple choice final exam. From FA17, instructors analyzed students' scores in two of the sections for strengths and weaknesses relative to the program and course outcomes. 56 students took the exam.

Results

Faculty noted that a strength for both courses was identifying different types of headlines. A weakness was the pull strategy question, though it was noted that it was a somewhat misleading question. They expressed that they hope to build future assessments around course projects to learn more about student performance on their created advertising work at the introductory level.

IV. Assessment 2: Ad Agency (54-4978): Advertising BA

Method

In Ad Agency, the Advertising capstone course, student teams partnered with eight external start-up clients (provided by 1871), with each team developing advertising campaigns for and communicating with their team over the semester. To create multi-faceted work, the Ad Agency teams partnered with students from the Public Relations Campaigns (54-4702) capstone course. The clients completed a rubric with eight criteria and a scale of Did not Meet Expectations, Met Expectations, and Exceeded Expectations (see Appendix A), and provided qualitative feedback as well. During SP18, 21 students in Ad Agency and 18 students in PR Campaigns participated on the eight teams.

Results

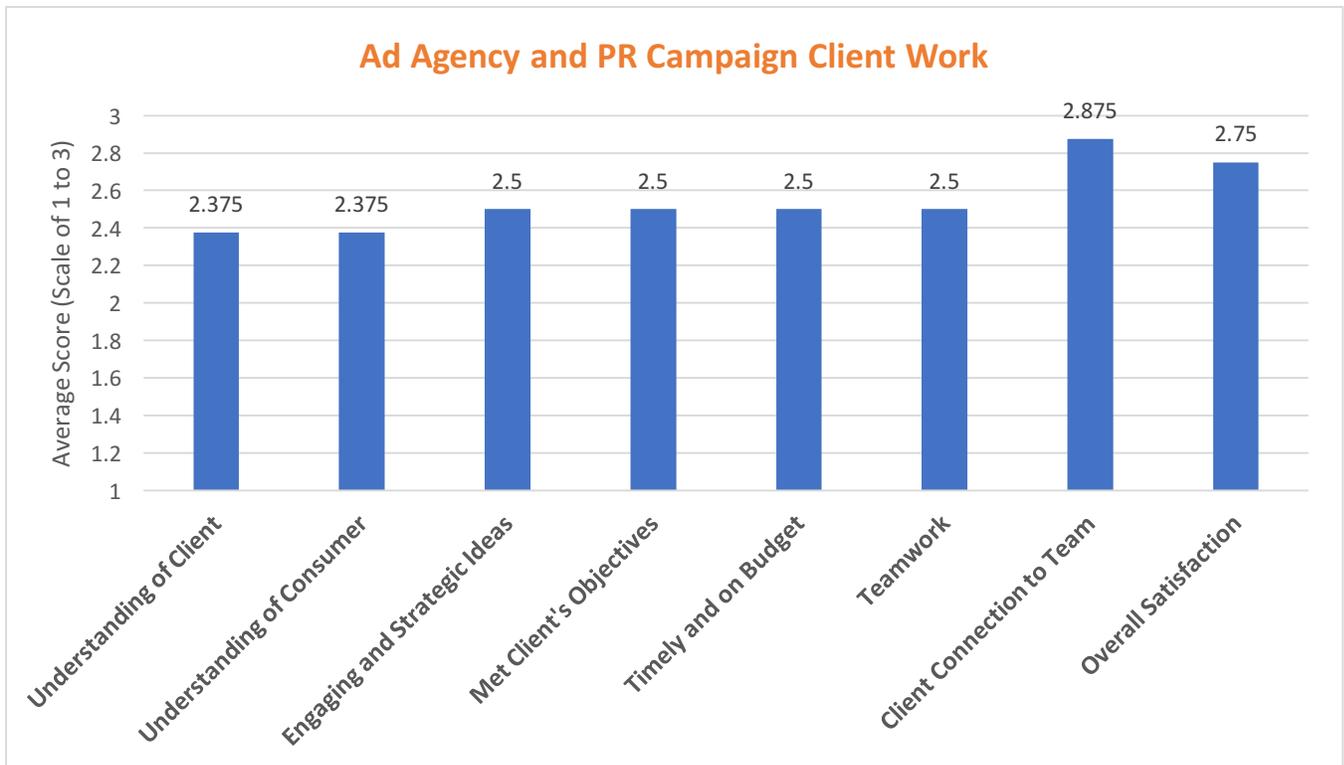


Figure 1. Ad Agency and PR Campaigns Client Work. N= 8.

Select Qualitative Comments

- “The team provided us with great insight on our product and how it was viewed from the consumer prospective.”
- “One thing that I’d love to see more of is some ‘project planning’—outlining what is going to be delivered, and by when, to simulate a real client engagement.”
- “The team is very creative and seems to complement each other well...I wish I had their support permanently 😊!”

Moving Forward

- As noted above, faculty expressed that the best ways, moving forward, to assess Advertising is through student projects and partnerships with clients (like those described above) rather than itemized exams.
- The client interaction and project management fostered by experiential-learning projects, such as the Ad Agency and PR Campaign project, prove to be effective ways to gauge student work and learning experiences.

V. Assessment 8: Art Director/Copywriter Team (21-3525) and Copywriter/Art Director Team (54-3603)

Method

Similar to previous semesters, During Spring 2018, an external panel of industry professionals observed and assessed student teams pitch a copywriting project in Art Director/Copywriter Teams & Copywriter/Art Director Teams. The problem/need was presented by the partner

agency at the start of the project. Panelists scored student performance on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= “Weak” and 5= “Strong”), using nine criteria (see Appendix B for the full criteria). 16 students, working on eight teams of two, were assessed. It is worth noting reviewers offered one student a job and followed up with several more students.

Results

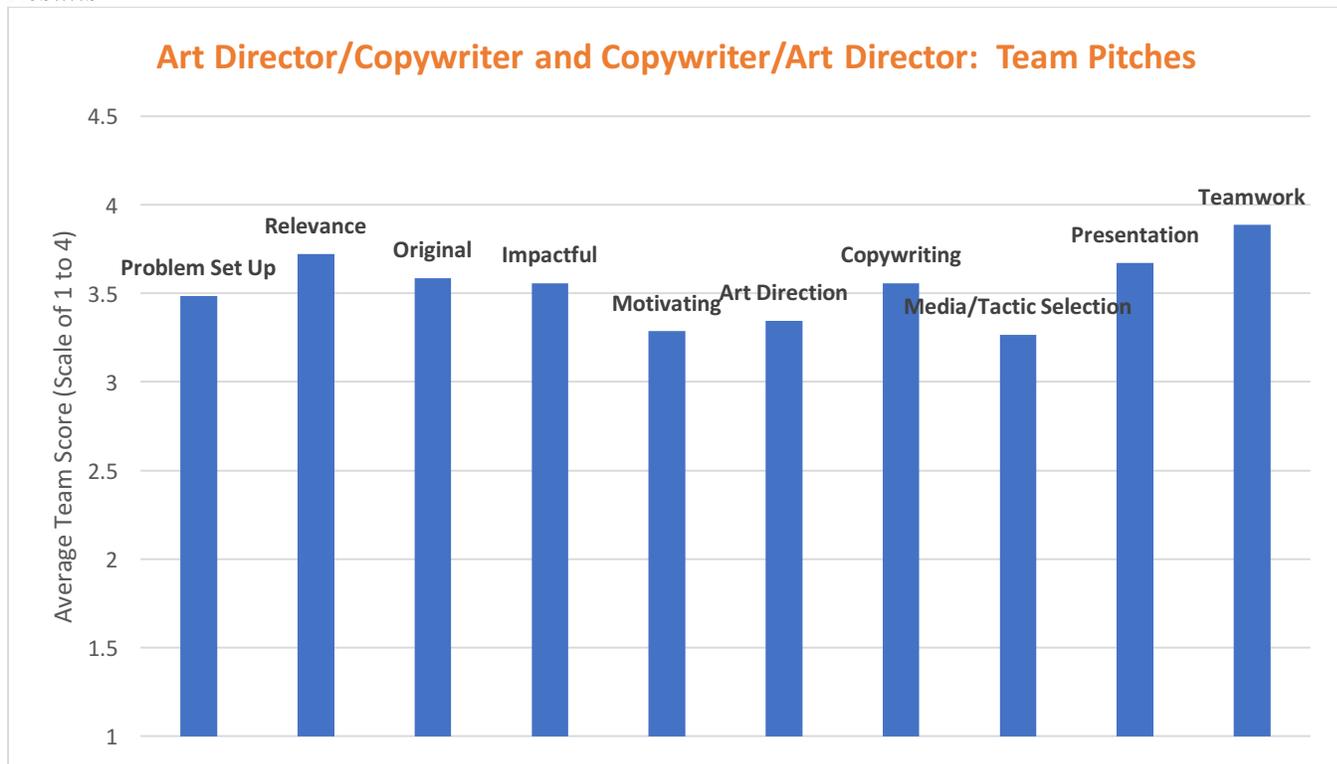


Figure 2: Team Pitches, Averaged by Criteria. N= 8.

Highest Student Performance

1. Teamwork
2. Relevance

Lowest Student Performance

1. Media/Tactic Selection
2. Motivating (Drives Behavior)

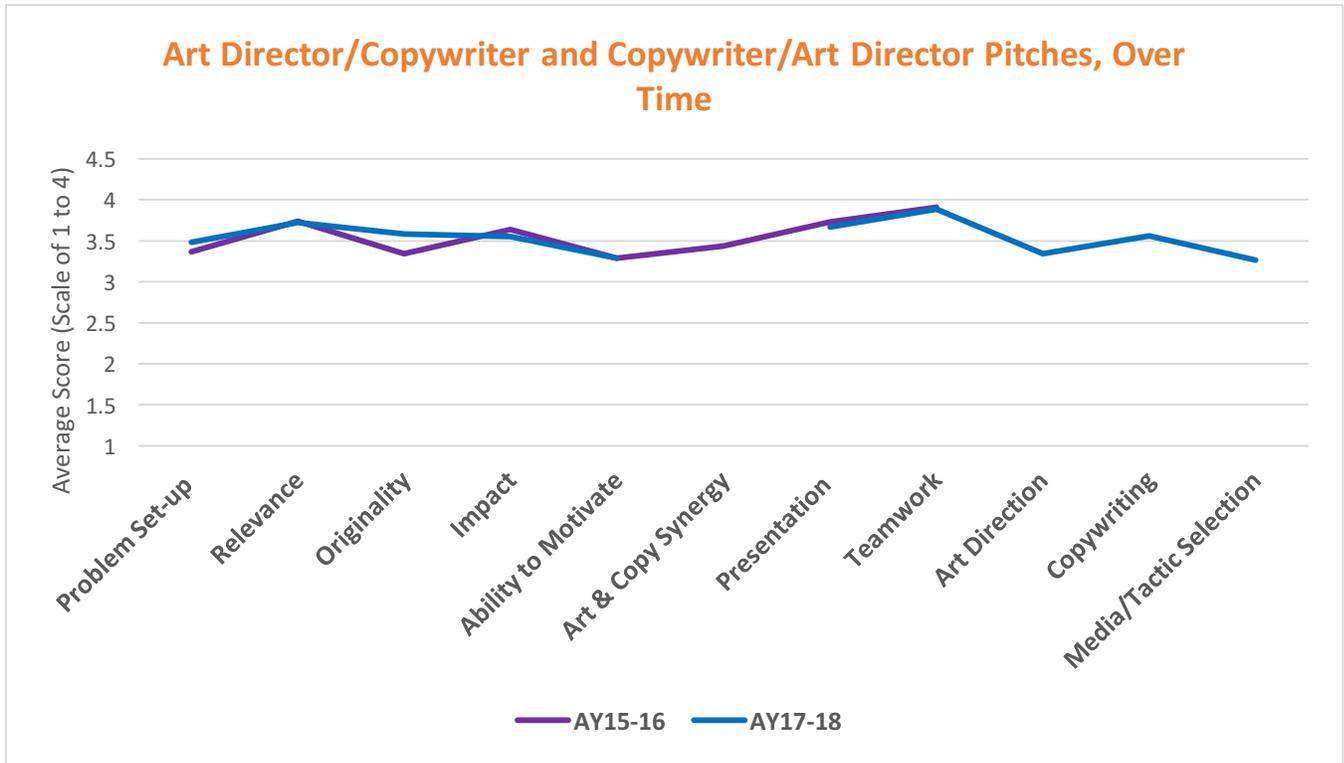


Figure 3. Art Director/Copywriter and Copywriter/Art Director Pitches, Over Time. AY15-16 N= 18, AY17-18 N= 18.

Select Reviewer Comments

- “Getting started is the toughest part”
- “Good Brand Voice. Disconnected with activation”
- “Slow it down! You raced through and it was over too fast. I wanted you to linger more on each one.”
- “Don’t rush the set-up. It’s the opportunity to get clients nodding their head.”
- “Slow down. Read the room and make sure your audience is tracking.”
- “Connect big idea through more.”

Moving Forward

- In qualitative comments, reviewers placed great emphasis on nailing the setup and presenters slowing down throughout presentations.

VI. Assessment 9: Portfolio Development (54-3604)

Method

Similar to previous semesters, during Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, an external panel of two industry professionals rated three advertising campaigns in student portfolios from the Portfolio Development course. Panelists scored the work on a scale of 1 to 4 (1= Poor, 2= Fair, 3= Good, 4= Excellent), using 13 criteria (see Appendix C for the full criteria). The work of 16 students was assessed. After rating the portfolio, panelists also rated students on their overall career-readiness, using a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Low and 5= High; see Appendix C for the full criteria).

Results



Figure 4: Portfolio Development: Campaigns, Averaged by Criteria. N= 16.

Highest Student Performance

1. Tag Line
2. Strategic Positioning Rationale

Lowest Student Performance

1. Typography
2. Diversity Awareness

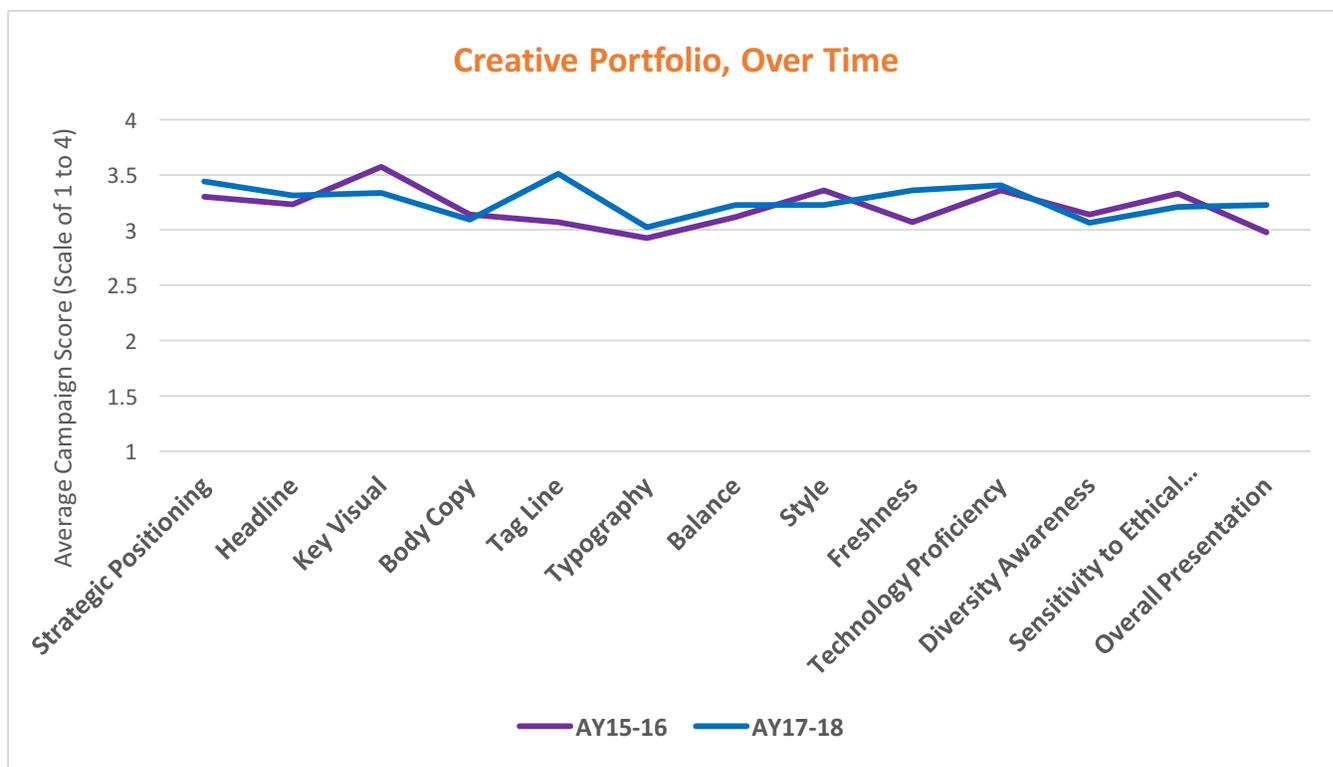


Figure 5: Portfolio Development: Campaigns, Averaged by Criteria. AY15-15 N= 32, AY17-18 N= 16.

Select Written Comments

- “You’ve got a little of everything. Try and focus your presentation on whatever you end up applying for. Definitely pump up your social expo and take credit for things.”
- “Need to work on typography. Make it more connected to the visual. Push it to be more fun. Integrate it with the image”
- “Photography work is awesome- I’d love to see her use some photos in her ads”
- “Excellent research on the product and company and create ads and a guerilla marketing bus campaign that matched the natural/ sustainable mission/ look of the company.”
- “Highly employable! Strategy is very hot right now.”

Employability Rating	Number of Students
5 (Highest)	3 (19%)
4	6 (38%)
3	6 (38%)
2	1 (6%)
1 (Lowest)	0

VII. Assessment 3: Public Relations Writing (54-1701): Public Relations BA

Method

From Public Relations Writing, final drafts of students’ press releases from three sections in FA17 and four sections SP18 were assessed by a panel of four faculty. The faculty utilized a

rubric with five criteria and a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= Poor, 3= Adequate, and 5= Best (see Appendix D). A norming session was held, and reviewers were contacted for follow-up comments. The work of 29 students was assessed.

Results

During the norming session, and in follow-up comments after reviewers had scored the student work, much conversation focused on revising the rubric. Faculty had significant debate about some of the foundational elements of a successful press release. Participating faculty noted that further follow-up conversation would be beneficial to establish common understanding of the principles of contemporary press releases and to determine how to utilize the new Public Relations Writing textbook to support these efforts.

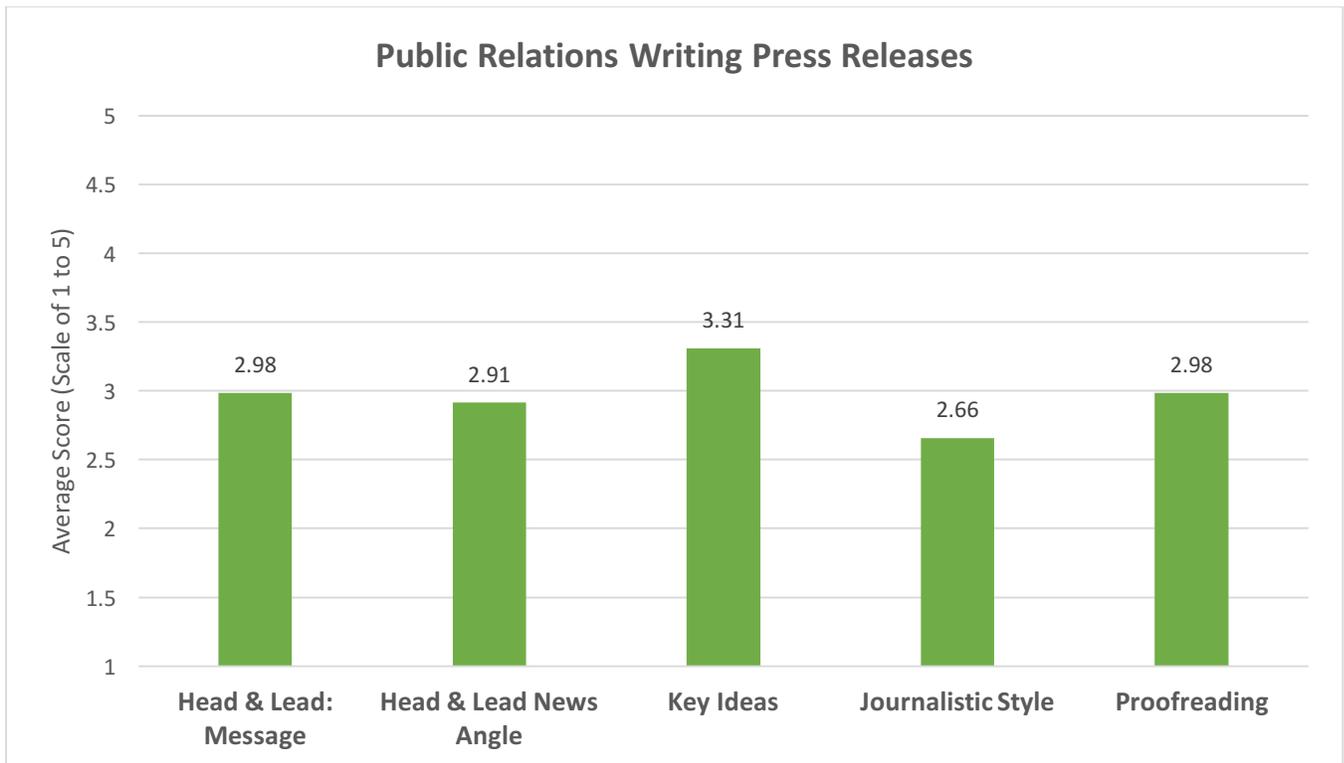


Figure 6. Public Relations Writing Press Releases, N= 29.

Comments on Revising the Rubric

- “‘Message’ and ‘News Angle’ should be combined”
- “One scale should be for headline, and one should be for the lede”

Moving Forward

- The department has adopted a new course text for Public Relations Writing and is working to ensure that instructors utilize consistent standards, derived from the course text.

VIII. Assessment 4: Strategic Media Relations (54-3713): Public Relations BA

Method

Students in Strategic Media Relations, a 3000-level course, during SP18, worked in four teams to present media plans to a client, SparkShop. The client provided feedback and scores, via a rubric with six criteria and a three-point scale (see Appendix E). Additionally, the client was asked whether or not they would hire the group to deliver their proposed media plan. The four teams were comprised of 22 students.

Results

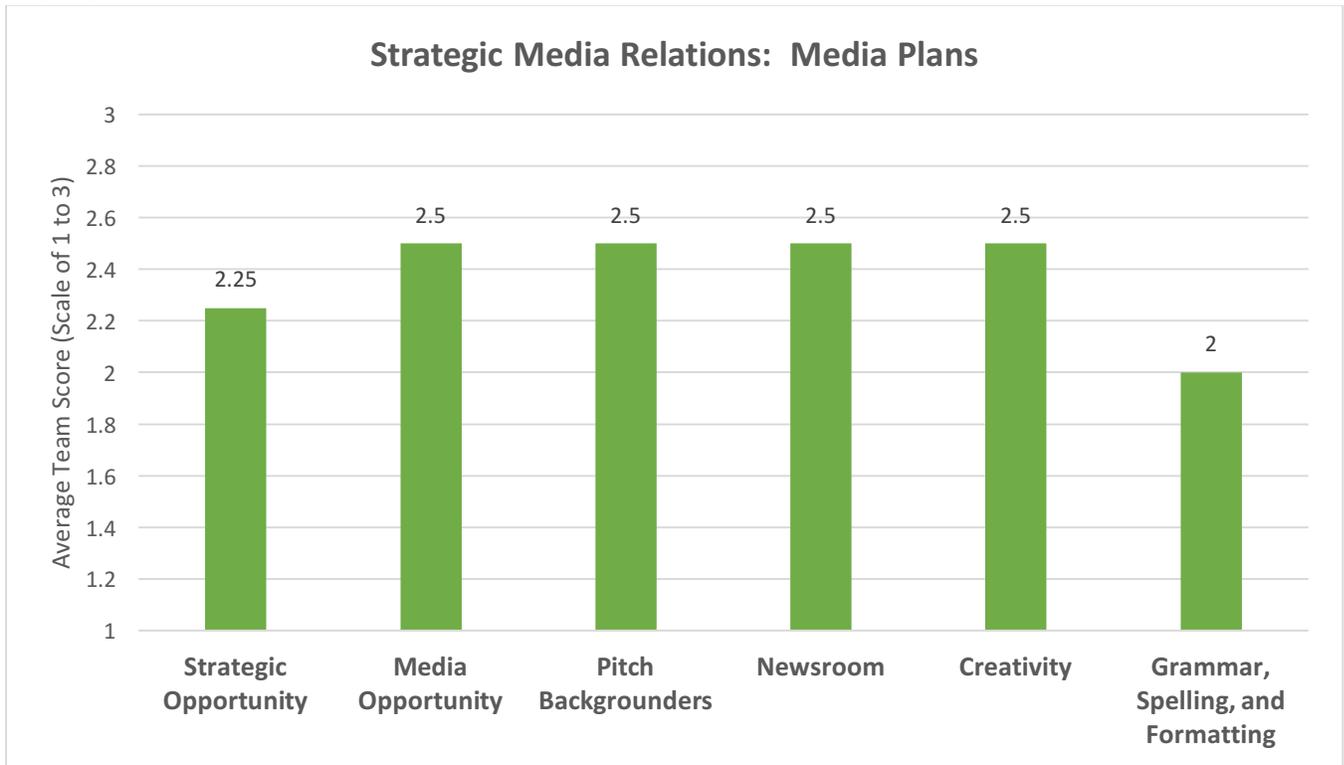


Figure 7. Strategic Media Relations Media Plan Scores. N= 4.

Question: We would hire this group to deliver their proposed media plan:

Yes (3) No (1)*

*The single “No” group received its lowest scores in “Strategic Opportunity” and “Grammar, Spelling, and Formatting”

Select Qualitative Comments

- “Liked the diversity in people, media types.”
- “Appreciated the social media tips.”
- “Great research into our social media.”
- “Very professional!”
- “Great SWOT, very accurate”
- “Appreciated calendar and goals”
- “Newsroom- liked content but would have appreciated a more visual presentation of ideas”

- “I’d like to see more of what our story becomes after the origin part; how do we pitch ongoing activities?”

IX. Assessment 5: WCRX Practicum (41-3300): Radio BA

Method

In the WCRX Practicum, during SP18, the instructor assessed student work on a recorded “Show Promo,” a recording used as a demo for future work. The instructor assessed all students at both the midterm and end of the semester, using the same rubric, which includes six criteria and a scale of one to six, converted to one for data below (see Appendix F) and also provided qualitative comments. The work and progress of seven of students was assessed.

Results

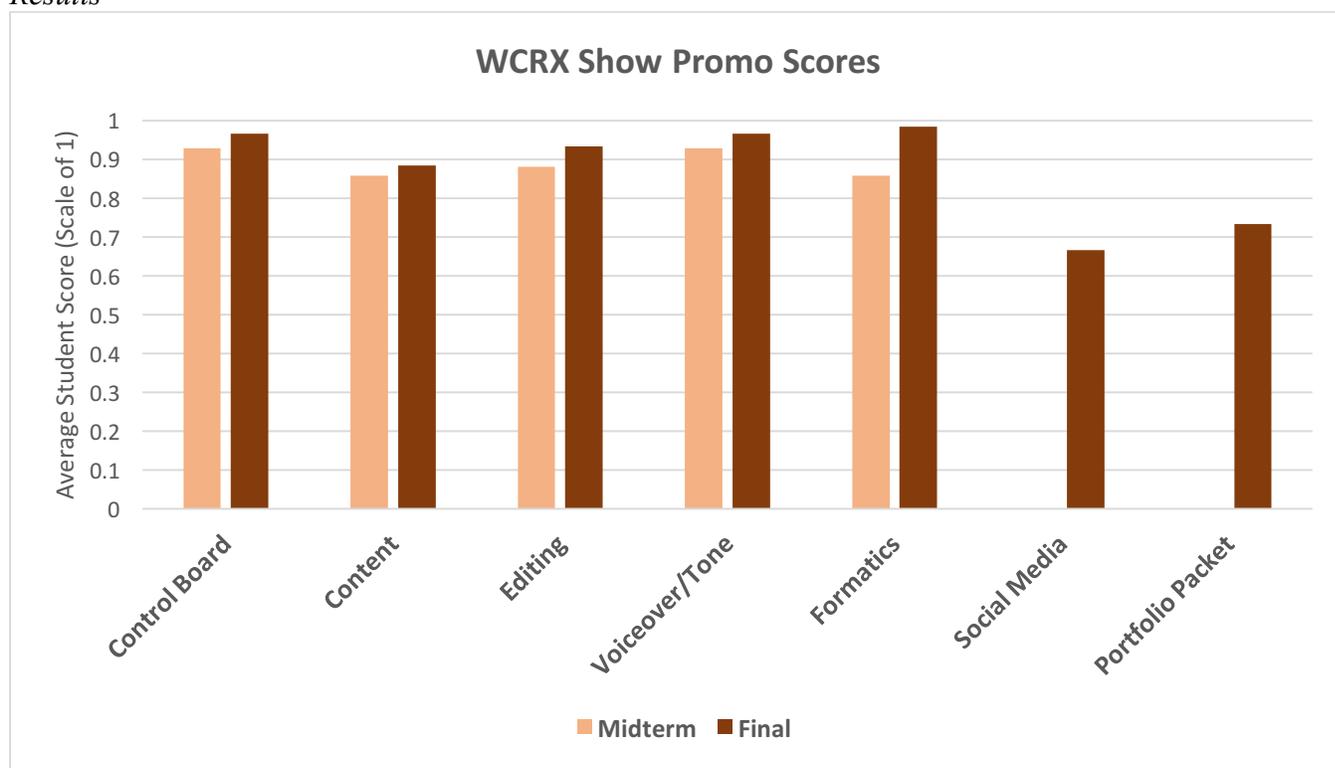


Figure 8. Average Midterm and Final Scores. N= 7

Most Notable Improvement

- 1) Formatics
- 2) Editing

Select Qualitative Comments

Midterm

- “Great start with your promo.”
- “You have a great presence.”
- “You don’t want any mistakes on your Demo.”
- “You have such presence on the microphone.”

End of Semester

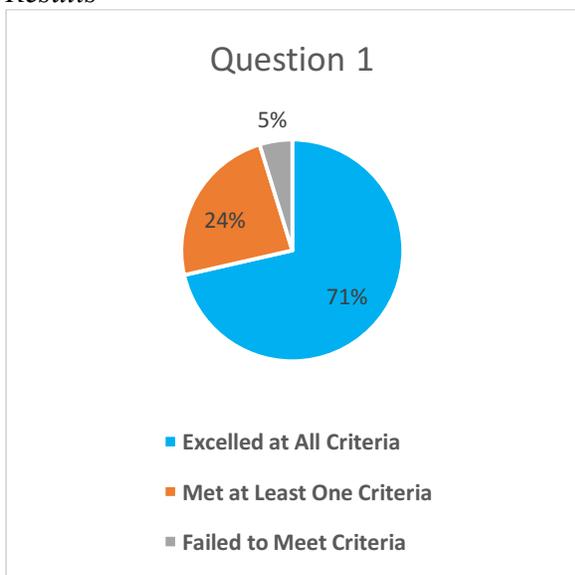
“Missing social media pushes”

X. Assessment 6: Introduction to Social Media and Digital Strategy (53/54-1200): Social Media and Digital Strategy BA

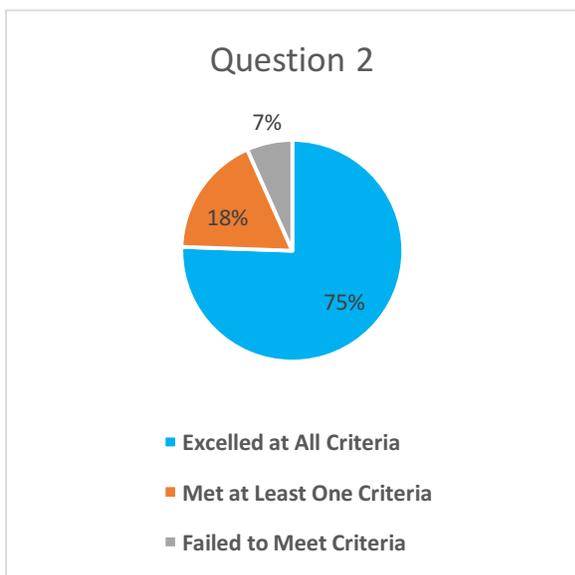
Method

To assess students' abilities to discuss best practices and to identify and apply terminology and fundamentals, the department sought to learn from performance in the Introduction to Social Media and Digital Strategy course, particularly a midterm exam with four essay questions. The instructor used a rubric (see Appendix G) he created to assign points that designated student's performance on the course outcomes listed below. The below graphs illustrate the percent of students falling three categories of exceeding, meeting, and not meeting expectations. In FA17, the work of 21 students was assessed and 24 students in SP18.

Results

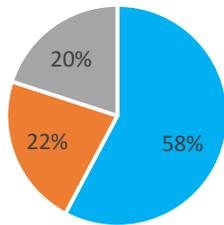


- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of online audience behavior.
- Demonstrates understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 7 profiles of the social technographics profile ladder and how it applies to the sharing of information and content on the web.



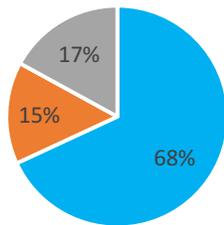
- Demonstrates an understanding of the basic structure to strategic thinking on social media and digital channels
- Demonstrates understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 5 key social media objectives.

Question 3



- Exceeded at All Criteria
- Met at Least One Criteria
- Failed to Meet Criteria

Question 4



- Exceeded at All Criteria
- Met at Least One Criteria
- Failed to Meet Criteria

- Demonstrates the ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking.
- Demonstrates the ability to identify that a brand may use social media channels to listen and monitor activities to gain intelligence and insight to help make informed decisions about how to engage with audiences in the future.
- Student will discuss some of the best social media and digital strategy practices in business, media and nonprofits, assessing brand building ideas, audience engagement approaches and emerging trends.
- Demonstrates the ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking.
- Demonstrates the ability to properly identify the key objective and supporting objectives by assessing a brand's the business goal.
- Demonstrates strategy practices in business, media and nonprofits, assessing brand building ideas, audience engagement approaches and emerging trends.

XI. Assessment 7: Introduction to Journalism (53-1011): Journalism BA and Multimedia Journalism BA

Method

The initial plan was to gather student work on the Interview with a News Consumer story from several FA17 sections of Introduction to Journalism and have a panel of faculty assess based on a rubric. Materials were collected, but the panel review didn't come to fruition during SP18, so the plan likely be to again collect student work from the assignment FA18 and have a faculty panel review work from both years.

Appendix A. Ad Agency Team Performance Assessment Rubric

	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Did Not Meet Expectations
1) Agency/PR team demonstrated a clear understanding of the client's business			
2) Agency/PR team understood the consumer to deliver inventive, unique, effective insights and strategy			
3) Agency/PR team created ideas that were on strategy, engaging, memorable, true to brand and work cohesively			
4) Agency/PR team met the objectives set by client			
5) Agency/PR delivered work on time and budget			
6) Agency/PR team worked well together			
7) I felt like I had a connection with the Agency/PR team and they responded efficiently			
8) Overall I'm happy with the work product and plan on utilizing it			

Please provide any other comments, observations or suggestions pertaining to the Agency/PR Team performance

Appendix B. Art Director/Copywriter Rubric

Teams Assessment Rubric

1 (Weak) 2 3 4 5 (Strong)

1) Problem Set-up

Concept

- 2) Relevant (To Brand & Problem)
- 3) Original
- 4) Impactful (Gets Noticed/Memorable)
- 5) Motivating (Drives Behavior)

Execution

- 6) Art Direction/Design
- 7) Copywriting
- 8) Media/Tactic Selection

9) Presentation

10) Teamwork

Overall Feedback/General Observations

Appendix C. Portfolio Development Rubric

Student:
 Major/Career Track:
 Online Portfolio Address:
 Campaign #:

4 (Excellent) 3 (Good) 2 (Fair) 1 (Poor) N/A

1. Strategic Positioning Rationale

- Creative Idea
- 2. Headline
- 3. Key Visual
- 4. Body Copy
- 5. Tag Line

Layout Execution

- 6. Typography
- 7. Balance
- 8. Style

9. Non-Predictability or “Freshness”

10. Technology Proficiency

11. Diversity Awareness

12. Sensitivity to Ethical Implications

13. Overall Presentation

Student’s Current Employability Rating (Based on this presentation)

5 (High) 4 3 2 1 (Low)

Appendix D. Public Relations Writing Press Release Rubric

	Best= 5	Adequate= 3	Poor= 1
Head & Lead (message)	The PR message is clear and compelling. It's not simply informative, but charged with interest and a sense of importance that involves the reader. A great lead will make the reader say, "I didn't know that!"	The PR message is identifiable. A reader already interested in the subject will keep reading. The essential 5 W's are there. It's informative rather than compelling. "Good enough for government work."	The PR message is absent. The lead does not convey the 5 W's. There is no reason to expect a reader to keep on reading.
Head & Lead (news angle)	News angle is sharp, irresistible. Clearly a story	Technically, this is a news story, not just PR	The basic information may be in place but the story

	of real news value, written with editor's needs in mind. He or she might well spike another news story to make room for this one.	puffery, but the news angle is merely identifiable, not dominant -- an editor might well say "So what?" The writer has not fully exploited the news potential in the material.	has no news value. It's written not for an editor but for a teacher who doesn't have the option enjoyed by the editor -- to simply toss it.
Key Ideas	The story's best 5 W's have been exploited, and the other key ideas have been assigned their place in the marshalling of points to support the message and validate the news angle. Paragraphs methodically develop the argument, in descending order, with effective use of quotes.	The story's 5 W's can be identified. Other key ideas are present but could be arranged more effectively in support of the message. No (inverted) pyramid of argument in the paragraph order. No quotes, or they're bland, or poorly identified, or don't move the story forward.	The writer does not seem to have definitely decided on all 5 W's, or has otherwise left out key information. Poor organization. Repetitiveness. No quotes. Release too short.
Journalistic Style	Release is written in cool, crisp journalistic style. The tone is ostensibly dispassionate and objective, even when enthusiasm is evident. No way it could be confused with advertising copy.	Release attempts journalistic style, but other influences invade, including newsletter chattiness, or promotional puffery, or Comp I narrative. Likely the writer doesn't read newspapers, but is at least making an effort to imitate a formalistic style.	The writer apparently does not understand what journalistic style is.
Basics	Spelling, punctuation & grammar consistently good. Sentences effectively and pleasantly varied, with few subordinate clauses -- rarely more than three typewritten lines. Paragraphs are each based on one dominant idea, and rarely exceed three sentences.	Occasional spelling errors. Unclear on punctuation rules. Minor difficulties with grammar amounting to awkward structure or poor choices, not glaring errors. Sentences too long or too choppy. Paragraph structure does not reflect organized thoughts.	Poor spelling AND poor punctuation AND poor grammar. Run-on sentences, fragmented sentences. Poor understanding of principles of paragraphing.

Appendix E. Strategic Media Relations Media Plan Rubric

SparkShop Media Plan Rubric (Total Point Value: 18)			
Criteria	Excellent (3 pts)	Satisfactory (2 pts)	Needs Improvement (1 pt)
Strategic Opportunity	Students demonstrated understanding of our organization's strategic needs.	Students demonstrated moderate understanding of our organization's strategic needs.	Students need to demonstrate they understand our organization's strategic needs.
Media Opportunity	The team thoroughly explained their vision for how SparkShop should be positioned to the media and the story they would like to help us tell.	The team somewhat explained their vision for how SparkShop should be positioned to the media, but the story was not entirely accurate or seemed out of sync with who we are.	The team explained their vision, but there were numerous errors or it was off point with who we are as an organization.
Pitch Backgrounders	Each student seemed to understand thoroughly the reporter/outlet being recommended. I am confident they would pitch appropriately.	Each student seemed to understand somewhat the reporter/outlet being recommended, however, I am not entirely confident the students would pitch appropriately.	The students have some work to do to ensure me they are prepared to pitch these reporters on our behalf.
Newsroom	Students presented a research-based content outline that gave us a clear picture of what our newsroom should look like and how it should be populated.	Students presented a content outline that gave us a picture of what our newsroom should look like and how it should be populated, but I would like more details.	The students need to add more detail to help me understand the value of this newsroom.
Creativity	Students were highly creative in demonstrating how to introduce client to the media.	Creativity was moderately applied in the media outreach ideas.	Creativity was limited.
Grammar, Spelling, and Formatting	The plan has been thoroughly spell-checked and proofread. There are no grammatical or spelling errors. There are no formatting errors.	There are a few spelling and/or grammatical errors. There are one to three formatting errors.	There are a number of spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors. No evidence of proofreading.

Comments:

Appendix F. WCRX Practicum Show Promo Rubric

Show Promo Rubric

/50

Category	6	5	4	3	2	1
<u>Control Board:</u> Control of audio levels, no competing of voice with music.						
<u>Content:</u> The content clearly establishes the tone of the show, highlighting personality.						
<u>Social Media:</u> Finding various ways to push listeners to social media platforms						
<u>Edit:</u> The mix is clean of edits with volume consistent						
<u>Voiceover/Tone:</u> Your tone matches the subject matter, clearly speaking in a confident manner						
<u>Formatics:</u> Stating call letters, station slogan correctly						

Control Board: /5

Social Media: /5

Content: /10

Edit: /10

Voiceover/Tone: /5

Formatics: /5

Portfolio Packet: /10

Notes:

Portfolio Packet: /10

Appendix G. Introduction to Social Media & Digital Strategies Midterm Exam Rubric

Midterm Exam Rubric, Introduction to Social Media & Digital Strategies, 100 points total

4 question essay response exam covering concepts and terminology introduced in the course as well as measuring the student's ability to think critically about data and information by developing their own analysis.

Criteria	Exceeds Standard, 100%	Meets Standard, 80%	Below Standard, 60%
<p>Question 1: Identify the 7 profiles on the social technographics ladder. Provide a brief description for each profile and explain how they are grouped and relate to each other on the ladder.</p> <p>Weight: 25% 25 points max Points: 25/20/15/10-0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates extensive knowledge and understanding of online audience behavior. • Demonstrates understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 7 profiles of the social technographics profile ladder and how it applies to the sharing of information and content on the web. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates basic understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 7 profiles of the social technographics profile ladder and how it applies to the sharing of information and content on the web. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 7 profiles of the social technographics profile ladder and how it applies to the sharing of information and content on the web.
<p>Question 2: Identify and explain the 5 key social media objectives you can pursue in your social media analysis and strategy</p> <p>Weight: 25% 25 points max Points: 25/20/15/10-0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of the basic structure to strategic thinking on social media and digital channels • Demonstrates understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 5 key social media objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates basic understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 5 key social media objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding of terminology and fundamentals of social media and digital platforms by clearly defining the 5 key social media objectives.
<p>Question 3: If you observed and analyzed that a brand on Twitter was following more than 1,000 other Twitter accounts, had 5 Twitter lists (a group list of people organized by topic and profile type) they've created, had been around for about 3 months, but have only posted 5 tweets, what is the brand's objective was for using Twitter based on this evidence, what was its purpose and explain why?</p> <p>Weight: 25% 25 points max Points: 25/20/15/10-0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates the ability to identify that a brand may use social media channels to listen and monitor activities to gain intelligence and insight to help make informed decisions about how to engage with audiences in the future. • Student will discuss some of the best social media and digital strategy practices in business, media and non profits, assessing brand building ideas, audience engagement approaches and emerging trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the basic ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates the basic ability to identify that a brand may use social media channels to listen and monitor activities to gain intelligence and insight to help make informed decisions about how to engage with audiences in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the some ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates the some ability to identify that a brand may use social media channels to listen and monitor activities to gain intelligence and insight to help make informed decisions about how to engage with audiences in the future.

<p>Question 4: If my business goal was to increase registrations sales for an upcoming event activity, what should my key social media objective be on Social Media platforms and what are other objectives I should focus on to support that main objective? What would be a good example of a digital or social media platform to achieve this key objective and why?</p> <p>Weight: 25% 25 points max Points: 25/20/15/10-0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates the ability to properly identify the key objective and supporting objectives by assessing a brand's the business goal. • Demonstrates strategy practices in business, media and non profits, assessing brand building ideas, audience engagement approaches and emerging trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to apply terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates the ability to properly identify the key objective and supporting objectives by assessing a brand's the business goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some a terminology to develop and express analytical and strategic thinking. • Demonstrates some a properly identify the key objective and supporting objectives by assessing a brand's the business goal.
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