

JMC MAJ Assessment Program December 2011

Direct Measures

Comprehensive Exams: JMC requires all graduating candidates to complete a written comprehensive examination on five core areas: proseminar, media history, media ethics and law, JMC research, and mass communications theory. During the annual assessment review, graduate faculty members other than the original comprehensive exam reviewer read and assess answers.

Portfolio Review: Graduate students must submit a graduation portfolio consisting of a copy of either the thesis proposal or another formal research project from the JMC-602 research course and the comprehensive assessment. If the student completes a graduate level internship, the evaluation from the immediate supervisor is included in the portfolio. All papers are reviewed within a rubric by graduate faculty.

Entrance and Exit Exam: Just added in the December 2011 meeting, a cognitive recall entrance and exit exam for all students. Students are to be given the test in JMC 600, Pro-Seminar, a required course taken early in the plan of study. Students are to be administered the same test during their comprehensive exams. The should be implemented by the fall of 2012.

Indirect measures

Awards: JMC enters award competitions at the graduate and undergraduate level. Graduate students won eleven awards for production in the last year.

Research Presentation: Each graduate student involved in a research project presents his or her finding to the members of the graduate faculty during the afternoon of assessment day.

Objectives

1. Can articulate ethical responsibilities and implications of decisions faced by professional communicators. Measure: comprehensive exam.
2. Can articulate principles of relevant media law and freedoms of expression. Measure: Comprehensive exam.
3. Can articulate the historical context of mass communications. Measure: comprehensive exams.

4. Can articulate the theoretical framework of normative mass communication function. Measure: Comprehensive exams and portfolio review.
5. Can synthesize information from primary and secondary sources. Measure: Portfolio review.
6. Demonstrate the basic methods of research, carry out a valid survey. Measure: Standardized learning objectives in JMC 600-Pro-Seminar and JMC 602-Media Research, comprehensive exams and portfolio review.

Analysis/ Planned Action

JMC graduate faculty met four times in 2011 and significant actions were taken based on assessment review and general discussion of the curriculum: JMC 500 was created as a course for students with no journalism or mass communications background. A new emphasis was created in health communication public relations and new certificate programs were approved for digital communications, media management and strategic communications.

Portfolio reviews and comprehensive exam reviews from 2010 determined that MAJ graduate students were not prepared to do graduate level research. Furthermore, MAJ students were basically rehashing undergraduate learning objectives for law and ethics. Data was collected throughout 2011 from course changes introduced in 2010. Those changes were creation in JMC 600-Pro Seminar, a required introductory course, of a new segment designed to help students obtain basic fluency in social science and provide a general survey of methods communication researchers use to investigate human and mediated communication activities.

JMC 604-Media Law and Ethics separated graduate students from the cross-listed undergraduate courses and allowed for the deeper exploration of issues more appropriate to graduate education. Comprehensive exams were adjusted because of the creation of JMC 604-Media Law and Ethics and were reviewed with rubric in December of 2011.

MAJ Assessment Data

2011 Comprehensive Assessments

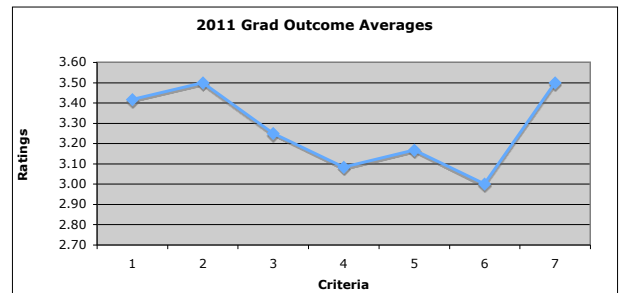
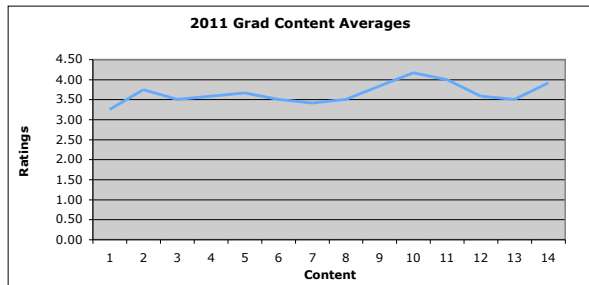
Fifteen SOJMC master's candidates, all who attempted, successfully completed the comprehensive assessment, passing with at least a minimum score of 70. A "pass with excellence" rating given in 15% of possible incidences.

2011 Graduate Portfolio Assessments

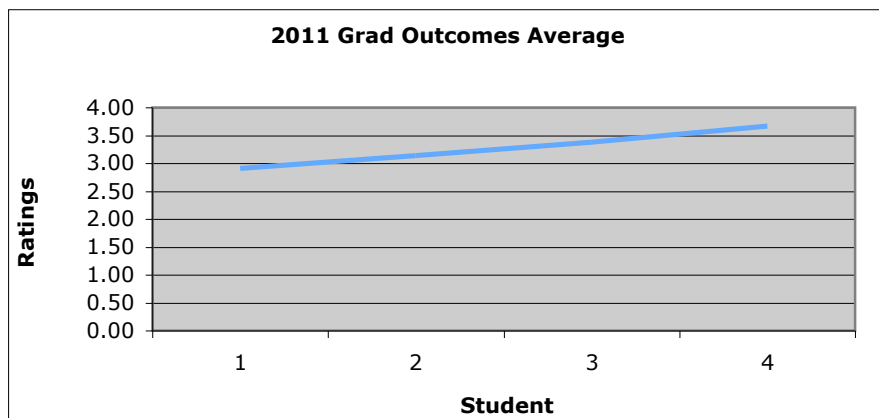
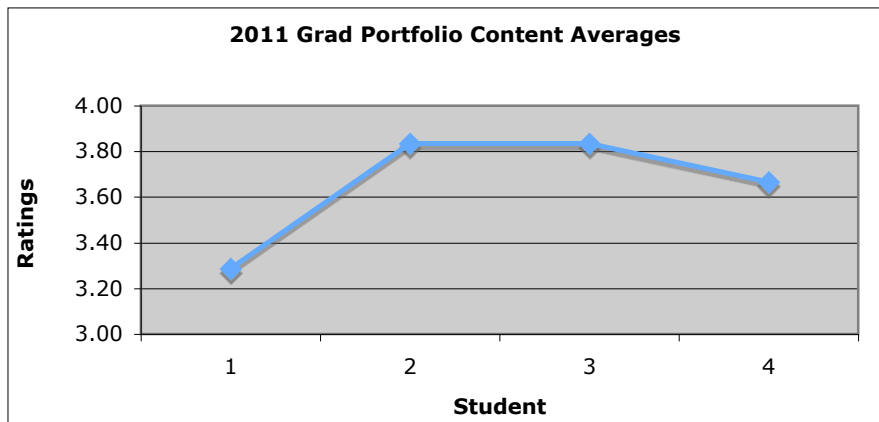
Graduate portfolios were assessed using a 5-point scale rubric on 14 criteria. Criteria were Written mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation), Writing content (coherence, organization, thesis/thought quality), Comprehensives (subject competency, thorough

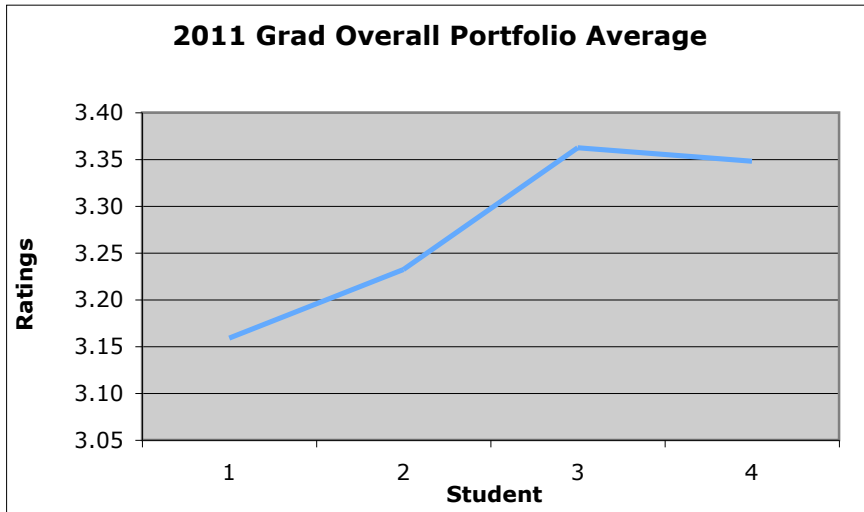
within the time frame) and Research paper (subject competency, topic significance, appropriate method, appropriate language, appropriate writing style) and Appearance. Reviewers indicated whether candidates were accomplished (5), proficient (4), developing (3), novice (2) or unacceptable (1) on each criteria.

The content ratings ranged from 3.25 to 4.7. The program outcome averages ranged from 3.0 to 3.5 with the weakest areas in critical thinking and ability to evaluate their own work.



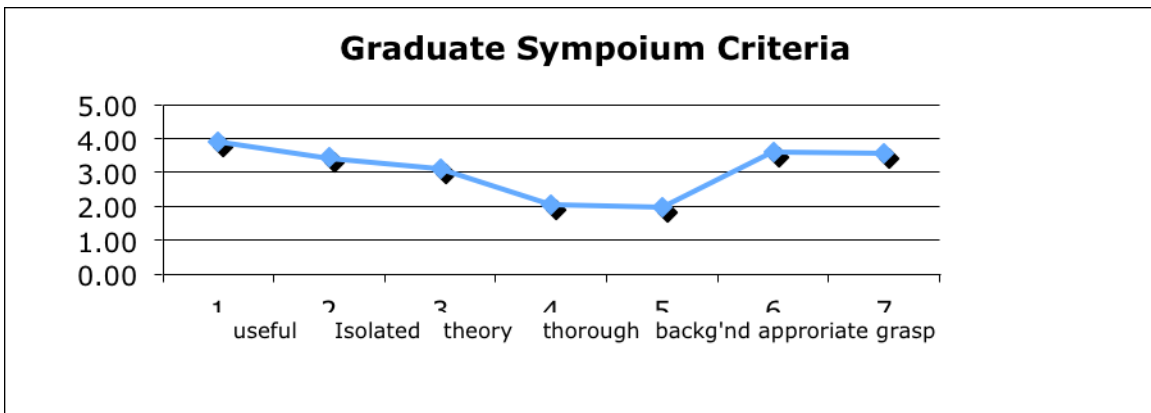
The range of averages was 3.16 to 3.36, an acceptable result. Comprehensive assessments reflected some of the lowest scores overall, possibly because of the extended time frame of the process and the pressure to compose and think quickly.





2011 Graduate Research Project Presentations

Five master's candidates presented their "in progress" theses. Their averages over seven criteria equaled 3.04, an acceptable score, but in need of improvement. An examination of the criteria assessed indicated the lowest performances were in the area of being thorough and in establishing an adequate background. The "in progress" nature of the projects contributed in part to the critiques, but a greater emphasis on literature reviews will be added to proseminar and to research. It may also be possible to present more research methodology earlier in the semester so projects can be more fully developed by assessment day.



2011 Graduate Symposium Student Averages

