



## **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Report for Non-Accredited Programs**

*(updated 9/19/23)*

Program Type:     **Non-Accredited Program**

Program Name:    BS in Health Communication

Submitted By:    Elizabeth Gill and Matthew Gill, School of Communication & Journalism

Email: [egill@eiu.edu](mailto:egill@eiu.edu); [migill@eiu.edu](mailto:migill@eiu.edu)

Submission Date:   October 13, 2023

Review Cycle:

- Even Year
- **Odd Year**

Review Round:

- **Round A** (Associate Dean review)
- **Round B** (Associate Dean + VPAA review)

All SLO reports are archived here: <https://www.eiu.edu/assess/majorassessment.php>

DUE: **October 15<sup>th</sup>** to your Associate Dean or designee

Each academic program is expected to prepare a Summary of the Assessment Data by Student Learning Outcome. This summary may take the form of a chart or other means of presentation that describes the annual data collected, when it is collected, in which course(s), through which assignment or activity, and by whom. This summary should clearly indicate what the program seeks to discover in its students' learning. The summary should correspond to the record-keeping documents maintained by the academic program.

Program Name: BS in Health Communication

**PART 1. OVERVIEW OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND MEASURES**

**Student Learning Outcome (SLO)**

**What measures and instruments are you using?**

How are you using this info to improve student learning? What are you hoping to learn from your data? Include **target score(s) and results**, and specify whether these were met, not met, or partially met for each instrument.

Does your SLO correspond to an **undergraduate learning goal (ULG)**: writing, speaking, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, responsible citizenship? Responsible citizenship

This could be an oral or written exam, a regularly assigned paper, a portfolio—administered early and later in coursework.

1. Students will cultivate ethical responsibility and cultural sensitivity in communicating with diverse populations.

A survey is administered to students in the HCM capstone course, HCM 4950. The survey includes demographic items, a social responsibility and professional ethics measure and multicultural sensitivity scale.

Expectations are that students will be able to understand the role of the individual in society, evaluate and develop constructive communication approaches to addressing ethical and diversity issues, demonstrate a sophisticated sense of responsibility and cultural sensitivity and be engaged in community activities. The goal is for the average student to reach the level of competent in both the Social Responsibility and Professional Ethics measure and Multicultural Sensitivity scale. For the Social Responsibility and Professional Ethics measure, the competency levels are (on a 5-point scale):

Minimally competent = 2.50-3.49  
Competent = 3.50-4.49  
Highly competent = 4.50-5.00

For the Multicultural Sensitivity scale, the competency levels are (on a 6-point scale):

Minimally competent 3.00 – 3.99  
Competent 4.00–4.99  
Highly competent 5.00-6.00

**The target for this instrument was met. The average score on the Social Responsibility and Professional Ethics measure was 3.93. The average score on the Multicultural Sensitivity scale was 4.77. Furthermore, the average on the Social Responsibility and Professional Ethics measure increases to 4.02 for students with at least 90 credit hours from 3.63 for students with less than 30 hours. This demonstrates an increase in social responsibility and ethical thinking as students progress through the program.**

2. Students will demonstrate critical thinking in their ability to analyze the impact of context on health-related interactions.

A. HCM 3910  
*Contemporary Issues Project* - Students choose a current case or issue related to health communication. They analyze the case using course concepts/theories,

The goal is for the average student to reach the level of competent on the critical thinking rubric for both projects. The competency levels are (on a 4-point scale)

Minimally competent = 1.51-2.49  
Competent = 2.50-3.49  
Highly competent = 3.50-4.00

Critical thinking

focusing on the effects of the healthcare context on communication and relationships as well as how to improve communication surrounding the issue. The Critical Thinking Rubric is used for assessment.

- B. HCM 4950 *Final Paper* - Students research a topic related to the overall theme of the class that semester. Their paper should demonstrate critical thought and analysis of how communication regarding a contemporary health issue is affected by current events and understood through foundational research and theory. The Critical Thinking Rubric is used for assessment.

3. Students will apply the appropriate theories and perform the research and audience analysis necessary for health intervention.

- A. HCM 3910 *Communication in Health Professions Provider Communication Workshop and Reflection* - Students work through a real case of patient-provider interaction, critiquing the problems in

**The target for this instrument was met. The average overall student score on the critical thinking rubric used for both courses was 3.52 (Highly Competent). Breaking this down by course level, we see an increase in critical thinking from competent (3.40 in the junior-level course) to highly competent (3.70 in the senior-level capstone course) as students progress in the program.**

- A. This assignment was constructed specifically to measure students' application of theory and audience analysis for professional health provider intervention. Written reflection grades are utilized for assessment. We

Critical thinking, writing, quantitative reasoning

the interaction and assessing ways the provider could have improved his/her communication with the patient. Reflections written after the workshop assess barriers to a successful interaction and means for overcoming those barriers. Assignment grades are used for assessment.

- B. CMN 3000/ PUBH2800 *Research Paper* – Students write a research paper in their methods class. Papers must develop a central claim, rationale, and literature review as well as present research methodology, data analysis, and conclusions. The research paper writing rubric is used for assessment.
- C. HCM 4910 *Project Evaluation Papers* - Students chose a topic, define the topic/ problem through research, analyze the audience, create messages, and

expect 80% of students will earn a score of 80% or higher.

**The target for this instrument was met. 93% of students earned an 80% or better on the assignment, with an average score of 92 percent.**

- B. When assessing the student's final research paper, we expect students to be at least competent in their ability to complete research and construct a research paper. We expect students to reach an average score of 72 out of 90 (80%) on the research paper writing rubric.

**The target for this instrument was met. The average score on the research paper writing rubric was 80 out of 90 (88%).**

- C. Because a student's quantitative reasoning and critical thinking skills are related to audience analysis and intervention planning, we have directly assessed these through the HCM 4910 project evaluation paper. We use assignment grades to

evaluate the messages upon completion of the project. Assignment grades are used for assessment.

determine competence in this area. We expect 80% of students will earn an 80% or better on the HCM 4910 project evaluation papers assignment.

**The target for this instrument was met. Ninety-five percent of students earned an 80 percent or better on the project evaluation paper, with the average score on the paper being a 94 percent.**

4. Students will create and implement appropriate message strategies in written and spoken formats emphasizing campaign/program development and professional health-related settings.

A. HCM 2910 *Health Advocacy Project* - Students create public awareness pieces based upon course content and outside research of a chosen health topic. Projects are presented in written or spoken formats based upon student choice. The Writing Rubric or Speaking Rubric is used for assessment, depending on the student's choice of project.

B. PUBH 3910 *Health Professional Shadow*

A. Given that messages strategies are critical skills, we expect our students to be at least competent in these skills when assessing their written and spoken advocacy pieces. We expect an average score of at least 3 out of 4 - competent - on the Writing and Speaking Rubrics.

**Targets were met for this instrument. The average score was 3.53/ 4.00 on the Speaking Rubric and 3.27/4.00 on the Writing Rubric.**

B. When assessing Health Professional Shadow

Writing, Speaking

*Experience and Paper* – Students shadow and/or interview healthcare professions in their chosen fields, writing a paper about what they learned from their experiences with those individuals regarding communication in professional health-related settings. The Writing Rubric is used for assessment.

- C. HCM 4910 *Social Media Messages* - Students develop a series of social media messages related to a health topic of their choice that is appropriate for a chosen audience and follows the rubric and instructions for creating messages with originality and creativity as well as participation in discussions for peer evaluation within the assignment timeframe. Assignment grades are used for assessment.

Experience papers, we expect students to be at least competent in their writing about communication in professional settings (a score of at least 3 out of 4 on the Writing Rubric)

**This assessment tool has not been utilized yet due to the COVID pandemic. The health professional shadow experience was temporarily suspended due to the safety protocols in place surrounding most healthcare facilities and the inability of most students to gain access to health professionals for a shadow experience. This assignment will be used for the first time this semester. Data will be incorporated into our next assessment report.**

- C. Because the HCM 4910 Social Media Messages assignment directly and specifically assesses message creation and implementation, we use the assignment grades to assess competency in message

strategies. We expect 80% of students will earn a score of 80% or higher on the project.

**The target for this instrument was met. One hundred percent of students scored an 80% or better on the social media messages assignment with an average score of 91 percent.**

## **PART 2. IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES BASED ON ASSESSMENT**

- A. Provide a short summary (1-2 paragraphs) or bulleted list of any **curricular actions** (revisions or additions) that were approved over the past two years as a result of reflecting on the student learning outcomes data. Are there any additional future changes, revisions, or interventions proposed or still pending?

The assessment plan for the Health Communication major was revised in 2020-2021 in response to the university's new undergraduate assessment process. As a part of this revision, SLOs were updated to better address the goals of the major and the professional needs of our students. This is our first cycle with a full set of baseline data. No curricular actions have been taken at this point. However, we have started to discuss future curricular and pedagogical changes to increase our focus on ethics, professional responsibility, and multicultural sensitivity. For instance, we are considering requiring CMN 2650, Introduction to Organizational Communication, a course which addresses all of these topic areas. Our students would also benefit from greater content knowledge in the area of organizational communication based upon the most common career paths for Health Communication graduates.

- B. Provide a brief description or bulleted list of **any improvements (or declines)** observed/measured in student learning. Be sure to mention any intervention made that has not yet resulted in student improvement (if applicable).

This is our first assessment report to include data, which will provide a baseline for future assessment. No significant changes have been observed in comparison to the early data collected for our initial report in 2021.



### C. HISTORY OF DATA REVIEW OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS

Please document annual faculty and committee engagement with the assessment process (such as the review of outcomes data, revisions/updates to assessment plan, and reaffirmation of SLOs).

Date of annual (or periodic) review	Individuals or groups who reviewed the assessment plan	Results of the review (i.e., reference proposed changes from any revised SLOs or from point 2.A. curricular actions)
Fall 2022	Health Communication coordinator and faculty, SCJ chair	First set of baseline data discussed
Fall 2023	Health Communication coordinator and faculty, SCJ chair	The data in this report will be the focus of our conversations as we look to make curricular changes over the next two years. As mentioned above, we have discussed curricular and pedagogical revisions related to multicultural sensitivity, ethics, and social responsibility with a goal of further increasing student competencies in those areas. We have also discussed finding additional instruments to measure these areas for future data collection.

**Dean Review and Feedback**

The Health Communication program's report at the 2-year mark past the reimagining of assessment strongly indicates that the measures associated with the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are generating useful data for the program. In 2021 we observed that the SLOs were well-formulated, clear, and measurable, with a solid application of Bloom's Taxonomy. In this dataset, targets set for all SLOs save one have been met or exceeded; the one that did not involves a measure that was severely hampered by the COVID pandemic (professional shadowing). The program's faculty's stated intent is to use the data to inform its curricular update discussions over the next couple of years, which of course is one of the primary goals of the assessment process. We look forward to seeing the progress at the four-year mark (2025).


Dean or designee 

Date 11/15/2023

**VPAA Office Review and Feedback (for "Round B" SLO report only)**

**B.S. Health Communication**

The B.S. in Health Communication program has laid out a thorough, reflective, and highly descriptive set of student learning outcomes, each tied to a specific instrument. The program's assessment practices serve the aim of improving students' learning. Thus the program carefully considers the implications and benefits of requiring or reconfiguring any course, such as Introduction to Organizational Communication. Curricular decisions stem from a very targeted consideration of benefits to the students' acquisition of skills: "Because the HCM 4910 Social Media Messages assignment directly and specifically assesses message creation and implementation, we use the assignment grades to assess competency in message strategies."

Dr. Suzie Park, Interim Asst VPAA 

2/26/24

VPAA or designee

Date