

Department of Communication Arts
Program Assessment

Cornerstone: Seven goals common to all Communication Arts graduates

The Model:

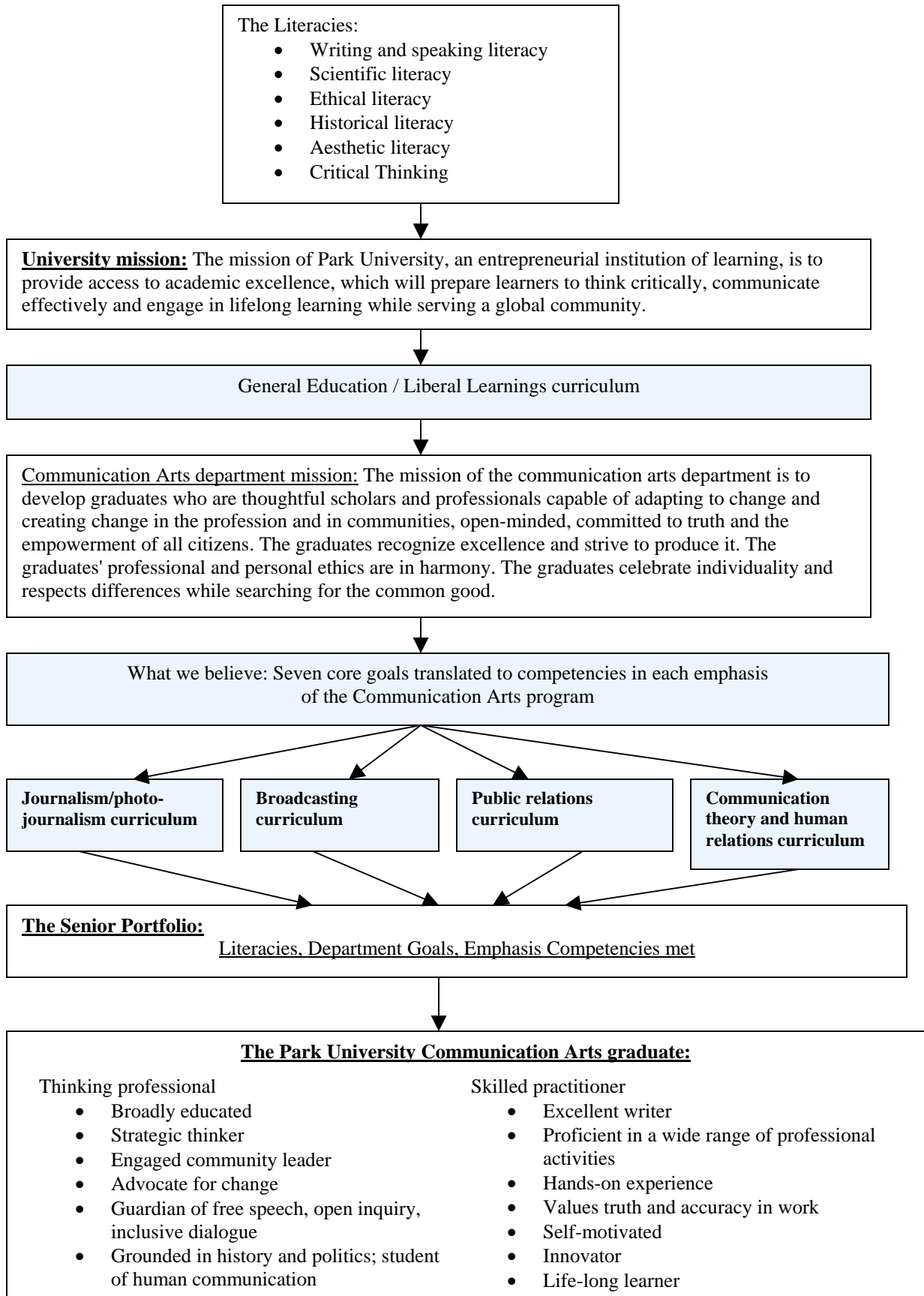
The Park University Communication Arts curriculum is divided into five interlocking tracks: 1) Journalism, 2) Photojournalism, 3) Broadcasting, 4) Public Relations, 5) Communication Theory and Human Relations. These areas of emphasis share seven goals and their related competencies which, together, describe the Communication Arts graduate in all five paths of study.

The seven goals closely resemble the Park University Literacies, elements of a liberal arts education which have long guided curricular decisions at the institution.

The Communication Arts curricular model completes translation of the Literacies into elements of professional practice and academic exploration.

- The Literacies form the core academic values of the university.
- The university Mission Statement translates the Literacies into a statement of purpose for the University.
- The General Education program translates the university Mission Statement and the Literacies into essential elements of liberal arts education.
- The Communication Arts curriculum translates the Literacies into seven goals for the education of all graduates of the program.
- The competencies developed for each Communication Arts emphasis translate those seven goals into the key elements of each professional and academic path of study.

Communication Arts: Translating the Literacies to practice



What we believe:

1. Excellence in craft improves individuals, professions, and communities.
2. Communication is a skill necessary to people and society; understanding the nature of communication prepares graduates to participate on a high level in community and professional affairs.
3. Curious, open-minded professionals utilize a broad education, sound principles, reason and human empathy to make good decisions
4. Professions and communities desperately need citizens and practitioners who understand the connectedness of society and place the well-being of others before personal achievement. Those with less power in society need advocates for change.
5. Free-speech, open inquiry, and a responsible, unfettered press require strong guardians, both journalists and citizens, willing to shoulder democratic responsibility.
6. The history and cannon of a profession inform practitioners and scholars and provide solid grounding for innovation and creation.
7. Awareness of the nature of communication and the symbolic environment; its potential effects on people, culture, political entities, and global societies, is essential knowledge for engaged citizens, scholars, and practitioners.

Here are the seven goals for the education of all Communication Arts graduates:

Communication Arts Program Goal #1 -- The student recognizes excellence in professional activities and demonstrates the ability to create high-level professional work. The graduate demonstrates professional dispositions in all activities.

Communication Arts Program Goal #2 -- The graduate demonstrates effective communication across cultures and audiences in personal and professional life. The graduate recognizes the centrality of effective communication in societies and among peoples.

Communication Arts Program Goal #3 -- The graduate engages in critical and strategic thinking in personal and professional decision-making.

Communication Arts Program Goal #4 -- The graduate applies ethical principles in resolving professional questions always recognizing the connection between professional communicators and their communities. The graduate's personal and professional ethics are in harmony. The graduate expresses the desire to utilize the profession for the good of the community.

Communication Arts Program Goal #5 -- The graduate demonstrates appreciation of the First Amendment, freedom of speech, a free press, open inquiry and open government in the United States and honors the value of free and open discourse in all societies. The

graduate also recognizes and applies the corresponding responsibilities inherent in such an open society in personal and professional conduct.

Communication Arts Program Goal #6 -- The graduate demonstrates familiarity with the history and cannon of the profession.

Communication Arts Program Goal #7 -- The graduate demonstrates awareness of the modern symbolic environment, discerns the implicit and explicit messages contained in a variety of texts, then applies that understanding of symbols and effects to personal and professional life.

Translation of the seven goals into program competencies for each emphasis:

Goal #1 -- *The graduate recognizes excellence in professional activities and demonstrates the ability to create high level professional work. The graduate demonstrates professional dispositions in all activities.*

Journalism Program Competency:

The journalism graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of work meeting high professional standards in four areas: writing, editing, design and photography.

Photojournalism Program Competency:

The photojournalism graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of images and designs meeting the highest standards of the profession for technique and production in a deadline-based environment. The graduate also presents a portfolio containing examples of editing and writing to professional standards.

Broadcast program competency:

The broadcast graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of work meeting high professional standards for broadcasting and online communications including conceptualizing, writing, audio-video editing, and videotaping.

Public Relations competency:

The public relations graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of work meeting high professional standards in a wide range of activities – writing, photography, design, and broadcasting, evidenced by production and execution of professional quality public information strategies.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

The graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of work meeting high professional standards in various communication contexts including examples of business-appropriate communication, independent and thoughtful research, thoughtful analysis of research, and engagement with the community.

Goal #2 -- The graduate demonstrates effective communication across cultures and audiences in personal and professional life. The graduate recognizes the centrality of effective communication in societies and among peoples.

Journalism Program Competency:

The journalism graduate presents a portfolio containing examples of journalistic activity demonstrating respect across cultures in professional work and associations, evidenced by the scope of the subject matter and the treatment provided for subjects from a variety of cultures. The graduate utilizes theoretical understanding of the relationship between media and culture to produce material which honors difference and seeks commonality, evidenced by the work he or she has done and by the portfolio essay.

Photojournalism program competency:

The photojournalism graduate communicates effectively with photographic subjects, co-workers in the profession and others in the community, as observed by teachers and co-workers in the senior portfolio. The graduate identifies work in the portfolio showing respect for others without regard to culture or race and elaborates on those choices in the portfolio essay.

Broadcast program competency:

The broadcast graduate produces audio and video projects, including the senior project, which reflect and serve a diverse society, as evaluated by teachers, co-workers, and the graduate.

Public Relations competency:

The graduate articulates strategic methods for reaching diverse audiences identifying cross-cultural concepts in projects and senior portfolio.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

The graduate demonstrates culturally-sensitive communication in interpersonal communication, public speaking, and written communication.

Goal #3 -- The graduate engages in critical and strategic thinking in personal and professional decision making.

Journalism Program Competency:

The graduate presents examples of work in the portfolio demonstrating journalism she approached with an open mind guided by tools of rationality and demonstrating a spirit of open inquiry. The graduate also presents academic coursework and evidence in the portfolio essay of thinking critically about the profession; she expresses willingness to seek change in the profession for the good of communities and peoples.

Photojournalism program competency:

The graduate presents examples of work in the portfolio demonstrating strategic approaches to photographic problems in terms of techniques and materials

necessary to create appropriate images. The graduate not only analyzes photographic problems critically but is also critical of professional practice in appropriate coursework and in the portfolio essay. The graduate demonstrates willingness to seek change in the profession – particularly in the ways it produces and presents images -- for the good of communities and peoples in the portfolio essay.

Broadcast program competency:

The graduate presents audio and video news stories in the portfolio reflecting understanding and synthesis of the subject matter, and understanding of the audience to which the news is being delivered. The graduate identifies these elements in the portfolio work, the senior project and the portfolio essay. The graduate critiques the processes used to create his or her own work and the work of professionals.

Public Relations competency:

The graduate articulates elements of strategy building in the design and execution of public relations materials and information plans included in the portfolio. In coursework artifacts and the portfolio essay the graduate analyzes the ethics and practice of public relations in regard to its role in the health of communities and desires change in those practices, where necessary,.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

The graduate identifies elements of the portfolio which demonstrate critical and strategic thinking during decision-making; the graduate identifies faulty reasoning in his/her own work and the discourse of others. The graduate demonstrates engagement with the ethical and societal issues involved and applies communication theories to contexts to create effective messages.

Goal #4 -- The graduate applies ethical principles in resolving professional questions always recognizing the connection between professional communicators and their communities. The graduate's personal and professional ethics are in harmony. The graduate expresses the desire to utilize the profession for the good of the community.

Journalism Program Competency:

The graduate presents evidence in the portfolio of work demonstrating ethical dilemmas and subsequent ethical decision-making, identifying the ethical principles and human empathy used to clarify and guide those professional decisions.

Photojournalism program competency:

The graduate presents evidence in the portfolio of images, designs, special projects or writing identifying ethical dilemmas and subsequent ethical decision-making, specifically identifying issues related to the nature of the photographic image.

Broadcast program competency:

In the portfolio essay, the senior project, and coursework artifacts, the broadcast graduate analyzes the ethical decision making (or lack thereof) engaged in by other graduates and broadcasting professionals, and evaluates decisions vis-à-vis professional codes of ethics.

Public Relations competency:

In the portfolio essay, the senior project and coursework artifacts, the public relations graduate analyzes the role of the public relations professional in serving both the client and the public, using the PRSA's ethical guidelines as a benchmark.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

The graduate presents artifacts in the portfolio demonstrating civic engagement, articulating communication ethics, identifying maxims from professional organizations, and developing a personal philosophy of communication

Goal #5 -- The graduate demonstrates appreciation of the First Amendment, freedom of speech, a free press, open inquiry and open government in the United States and honors the value of free and open discourse in all societies. The graduate also recognizes and applies the corresponding responsibilities inherent in such an open society in personal and professional conduct.

Journalism Program Competency:

The graduate presents evidence in the portfolio of journalistic research utilizing open records, public information, and public discourse in open meetings and of work providing voice to others in the spirit of free speech. In the portfolio essay, the graduate expresses respect for the rights of others to free speech and honors the rights of everyone -- journalistic professionals and others -- to open inquiry.

Photojournalism program competency:

The graduate presents evidence in the portfolio essay of familiarity -- particularly in the visual context -- with laws and ethics of privacy, the need for balance between privacy and the public's right to know, respect for the rights of others to free speech and ways she honors the rights of everyone -- journalistic professionals and others -- to open inquiry.

Broadcast program competency:

In the portfolio essay, the senior project, or coursework artifacts, the graduate discusses, analyzes, and critiques the role of the FCC; analyzes and critiques the role of governments worldwide in regulating and controlling media; and analyzes and critiques regulations applying specifically to broadcast media and the Internet.

Public Relations competency:

In the portfolio essay and coursework artifacts the graduate articulates the role of public relations in the dissemination of information in free societies and expresses respect for the rights of others to inquire legally about the organizations they may represent.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

The portfolio provides evidence that the graduate understands and honors the rights of others to open inquiry. The portfolio identifies examples of the graduate's advocacy for free speech in coursework and other artifacts. The portfolio illustrates the graduate's ability to listen to alternative points of view, critically analyze them, and to express his or her own perspectives in a spirit of open discourse.

Goal #6 -- The graduate demonstrates familiarity with the history and cannon of the profession.

Journalism Program Competency:

In the portfolio essay, the graduate discusses great journalism and compares current journalistic work, his or her work and other professional examples, to the cannon of the profession.

Photojournalism program competency:

In the portfolio essay, the graduate discusses great photographs and photographers in the fields of journalism, advertising and fine arts. The graduate discusses the influence those artists created in his or her development and current work.

Broadcast program competency:

In the portfolio essay, the senior project and in coursework artifacts the graduate critically analyzes the history of broadcasting and the Internet, and discusses and evaluates how the historical role of broadcasters is changing to accommodate (or reflect) the changes in technology and in the greater society.

Public Relations competency:

The graduate identifies elements of the portfolio which show utilizations of a professional model (like Cutlip's 3-step process) in the planning and design of public relations products and campaign projects. In the portfolio essay, coursework artifacts or a senior project the graduate applies the historical development of public relations to contemporary cases and problems.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

In the portfolio the graduate summarizes the history of the communication field, recognizes the influence of Western thought on the field, and articulates the process of research-based theory development.

Goal #7 -- The graduate demonstrates awareness of the modern symbolic environment, discerns the implicit and explicit messages contained in a variety of texts, then applies that understanding of symbols and effects to personal and professional life.

Journalism Program Competency:

In the portfolio essay and coursework artifacts, the graduate identifies major research and ideas about the power and scope of the media. The graduate identifies examples in his or his or her professional work of using this understanding to produce effective and helpful journalistic materials.

Photojournalism program competency:

In the portfolio essay and coursework artifacts, the graduate identifies major research and ideas about the power and scope of the media. The graduate identifies examples in his or her professional and artistic work of using this understanding to produce effective and helpful photographic images and journalistic packages.

Broadcast program competency:

In the portfolio, the graduate lists, evaluates, and analyzes sub contextual content in television, radio and print news and entertainment, and differentiates between news and promotional content.

Public Relations competency:

In the portfolio the graduate identifies examples of public relations materials and campaigns she developed which target specific demographics, utilizes mass media, communication, and learning theory to create messages which may be expected to produce desired effects.

Communication Theory and Human Relations Competency:

In the portfolio the graduate identifies examples demonstrating skills in multiple symbolic environments, analyzes media and interpersonal messages for meaning on several levels, and develops audience-centered messages using communication theory for various contexts which may be expected to produce the desired effects.

How the evidence is assessed:

Assessment of student progress toward mastery occurs on many levels across the academic career. Faculty members are dedicated to monitoring graduate progress consistently across time on a student-by-student and semester-by-semester basis. Students are more than “majors” or occupants of seats in a classroom; they are members of a *program* -- a curriculum and a process – and their matriculation toward mastery is always being monitored by faculty members. Naturally, each student is evaluated in each course. Moreover, each student’s progress across the program is monitored each semester and faculty members, as advisors, are dedicated to discussing progress with each student at every advising session and during several impromptu associations between sessions.

Formal assessment culminates with the student’s senior portfolio. Criteria for evaluation vary by emphasis but share six key elements:

1. The portfolio, in its developmental stage, is reviewed briefly prior to the senior year by the student's advisor as a diagnostic tool to provide direction for development before graduation.
2. The portfolio includes evidence from courses the student has taken in the department, professional work, and a written essay designed to provide evidence of academic maturity and professional dispositions. The portfolio may also include results of an oral conversation with the student to determine levels of mastery. The portfolio may include a senior project required by the emphasis. In addition, the individual emphasis may require evaluation of professional work in the portfolio by persons outside the university.
3. The portfolio is examined by more than one person. A rubric specific to each emphasis is used to focus evaluation of the portfolio. The rubric will include mastery of each of the goals and competencies of the department and evaluation of the student's mastery of the Literacies. Each evaluation will include analysis of the student's engagement with the academic material, professional work, and the community during the academic career at the university.
4. A professional in the field may be required as the additional portfolio reader, if the emphasis desires. The emphasis may also seek readers from other areas of the university or from other universities.
5. The student discusses the outcome of the portfolio evaluation with the advisor. The student may attach an amendment to the portfolio discussing any element of the academic experience or disputing any element of the evaluation.
6. The first department meeting of each fall semester will be devoted to discussion and analysis of the previous portfolios. Quantitative and qualitative evaluations of aggregate portfolios will be provided and discussion of changes in the curriculum indicated by all evaluations will be encouraged and documented. The portfolio process will also be reviewed at this meeting.
7. Professional follow-up of graduates will survey their readiness for the careers they have chosen, their employability, their satisfaction with those careers, and their desire for life-long learning. The department will also consider those results at the first department meeting of each fall semester.