

**Assurance of Student Learning  
2019-2020**

Potter College

School of Media

Photojournalism 750

Professor James Kenney

*Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages.*

**Student Learning Outcome 1: Demonstrate a mastery of technical and aesthetic skills.**

**Instrument 1** Direct: Professional Advisory Committee review of PJ 436 Capstone Project

**Instrument 2**

**Instrument 3**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.

**Met**

**Not Met**

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Produce portfolios meeting the criteria for employment in the documentary photojournalism profession. Analyze student feedback data to assess student satisfaction with the program.**

**Instrument 1** Direct: Professional Advisory Committee review of graduating senior portfolios

**Instrument 2** Indirect: Student Exit Survey

**Instrument 3**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.

**Met**

**Not Met**

**Student Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate the students' ability to compete with peer groups nationwide.**

**Instrument 1** Direct: Juried Contests and Scholarships

**Instrument 2** Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.

**Instrument 3**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.

**Met**

**Not Met**

**Program Summary (Briefly summarize the action and follow up items from your detailed responses on subsequent pages.)**

For Direct Measures in SLOs 1 and 2, since 2010, the Photojournalism program has been inviting members in the photojournalism profession, who make up the program's Professional Advisory Committee, to come to WKU for a day of assessment and critiques of senior capstone projects and portfolios. For SLO 1, 70% of graduating seniors had to score at least 75 on a 100-point scale, based on three criteria. The results are: Idea: 100% (15 students) Execution and Presentation: 100% (15 students) Content Quality: 100% (15 students).

For SLO 2, PAC team members had to rate at least 75% of students capable of obtaining employment in the photojournalism field upon graduation. 100% of the students were deemed qualified by the committee.

The Indirect Measure for SLO 2 comes from an exit survey question given to all graduating seniors involving overall satisfaction with the program. 100% of the seniors answered yes, completely or yes, with reservations (comments on how the program could have better served them).

For the third learning outcome, the program has kept a record of student success in juried competitions, which are listed here: <https://wkupj.com/recognition/>, and here: <https://wkupj.com/recipients/>

For Indirect measures in Student Learning Outcome 3, the program has kept a record of student internships in the profession, which are listed online here: <https://wkupj.com/internships/>. Though the program has extensive qualitative evidence of student success with these internships, a more formal assessment form is being developed to gather quantitative results.

Given the successful implementation and results of the SLO measures in this report, future goals to improve the program include adjustments in the Photojournalism curriculum (and a staffing plan) to accommodate new technologies, especially in the area of web-based interactive design; streamlining the curriculum and make it more flexible in order to more effectively accommodate both incoming freshman and transfer students with previous journalism experience; conduct a more formal “one-year-out” survey of program graduates to further assess and improve the curriculum in preparing students for the profession; continue developing alumni outreach to help support program goals, including curriculum improvement; and formalizing a survey to send out to internship employers to more effectively assess student performance during these internships.

## Student Learning Outcome 1

<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Demonstrate a mastery of technical and aesthetic skills.</b>		
<b>Measurement Instrument 1</b>	<p><b>Direct:</b> Senior students in the PJ 436 Projects capstone course produce a semester-long documentary project that consists of visuals, writing and design that demonstrate their ability to produce a storytelling narrative that could be published in a photojournalism platform. The Photojournalism program’s Professional Advisory Committee members assess the quality of the student projects, determining if these projects reflect the goals and expected outcomes the Photojournalism program has established to reflect its national reputation. The added challenge in the Spring 2020 capstone course was that due to COVID-19 many of the students’ projects were shuttered. As a result, a majority of the class worked on a group project that is currently one of two projects being considered for a prestigious national honor from the Online Journalism Award competition.</p>		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>	<p>Three evaluation questions were asked in the report the PAC team filled out after viewing the students’ final documentary projects and discussing the projects each individual student. The rubric is as follows:</p> <p>IDEA – Is the idea of this project worthwhile? Does it have news value and relevance to a potential audience? Is the idea developed clearly and logically? Is it a strong visual story?</p> <p>EXECUTION AND PRESENTATION – The student was given the choice to select the most effective method of documenting their story. Video, audio, stills (including graphics), or a combination of the three could be used. Did the student use the appropriate media in the most effective places in the project? Given the idea and the presentation, did the student execute the project well overall? Specifically assess the quality of the video, audio, and stills (including graphics, if they were used). The words, though not included in the "big three," are nevertheless critical. Please assess the quality of the headlines, captions, story, etc. If there is a video/audio storyline, is the edit clean, logical and concise? For stills, is it a tight edit, with each image contributing to the story in a unique way?</p> <p>CONTENT QUALITY Are the characters and the story engaging? Is there emotion/feeling; does it make you care about the issue and the characters involved in the story? Did your first 30 seconds with the project make you want to find out more about the issue/characters? Is there a clear introduction, conflict, resulting action, resolution, and reflection? Are you shown the story (unfolding action, takes you on a journey) rather than just told a story? Does the story address/reveal universal themes that the audience can relate to and apply beyond this particular story?</p> <p>Student success is defined as at least 70% of the students in the class score a 75% or higher on each of the three criteria above.</p>		
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>	At least 70% of the students had to score a 75 or above( on a 100-point scale) in each of the three criteria above.	<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	Idea: 100% (15 out of 15 students) Execution and Presentation: 100% (15 out of 15 students) Content Quality:100% (15 out of 15 students)

<b>Methods</b>	Three professionals, Justin Fowler, a photographer from the State-Journal Register in Illinois, Cara Owsley, the director of visuals at the Cincinnati Inquirer, and Leslye Davis, a photographer and documentarian at The New York Times, viewed documentary projects produced by the 15 students in the class. During the day-long documentary screening (which was conducted via Zoom due to COVID-19), the PAC team asked questions and gave feedback to the students. The PAC team then filled out a Google Form consisting of the rubric in the Criteria section above, where they put in numerical score (based on a 100-point scale) and provided written comments to the students and faculty to help gauge the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.		
<b>Measurement Instrument 2</b>	Do you have other measures of assessment for SLO 1? If so, please add that here along with all the information below. If not, you may delete this section and move on to “... whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.”		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>			
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>		<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	
<b>Methods</b>			
<b>Measurement Instrument 3</b>	Do you have other measures of assessment for SLO 1? If so, please add that here along with all the information below. If not, you may delete this section and move on to “... whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.”		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>			
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>		<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	
<b>Methods</b>			
<b>Based on your results, highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.</b>		<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Actions</b> (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)			
For the 2019-2020 capstone course, the faculty member teaching the course began talking with students in Fall 2019 semester about their Spring 2020 capstone course. All of these students are enrolled in the Advanced Short Form Documentary class in the fall, so they are encouraged to turn one of the projects they do in this class into a long-term project for the capstone course. This enables students to use the entirety of the spring semester to produce their projects and spend more time on post-production, which has been a weakness in projects in past years. Positive comments from PAC team members about production quality in this year’s projects reflect a marked improvement over past evaluations in this area.			
<b>Follow-Up</b> (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.)			
In analyzing the data from 2019-2020 and comparing it to the previous year’s results, in the Idea section, results increased from 89% to 100%, the Execution and Presentation stayed at 100%, and the Content Quality section results rose from 89% to 100%. The PAC team members were extremely impressed by the professionalism the students displayed by pivoting to a group project once COVID-19 shuttered their personal projects. There was a suggestion for improvement with the group project to adjust the edit for publishability on multiple platforms. The other projects were received with equal praise in terms of the ideas, content and execution, with suggestions on how to enhance them centered around implementing strategies to publish stories on multiple platforms.			
<b>Next Assessment Cycle Plan</b> (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome)			

The next assessment will administered at the end of the Spring 2021 semester in the Capstone PJ 436 Photojournalism Projects. The PAC team will be invited again to either visit campus or Zoom (pending the outcome of COVID-19). Results of the Assessment will be collected immediately following the PAC team visit and the information tabulated and submitted to the assessment sharepoint on the server by weekend following the end of the spring semester.

<b>Student Learning Outcome 2</b>			
<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Produce portfolios meeting the criteria for employment in the documentary photojournalism profession. Analyze student feedback data to assess student satisfaction with the program.</b>		
<b>Measurement Instrument 1</b>	<b>Direct:</b> Senior students submit a portfolio of their photographs, video, writing, and design to the Photojournalism program’s Professional Advisory Committee members, who assess the portfolios to determine whether these students are prepared for the photojournalism/visual profession and are employable once they graduate.		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>	The question given to the PAC team after they review graduating student portfolios, resumes and other work is as follows:  After reviewing examples of photojournalism seniors' work, do at least 75 percent of the students show overall work that would make them employable in the photojournalism/visual industry?		
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>	75% of graduating students need to show overall work that would make them employable in the photojournalism/visual field.	<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Methods</b>	The three PAC team members were sent the student portfolios and resumes ahead of their Zoom-day meeting with the students at the end of the capstone semester so they were be prepared to give direct individual feedback during the meeting. The PAC team then filled out a Google Form that included answering the survey question above and providing qualitative written comments about the 15 students in the class.		
<b>Measurement Instrument 2</b>	<b>Indirect:</b> Graduating students complete an exit survey on a Google Form about their experience in the Photojournalism program. The question used for this Indirect Measure is in the section below.		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>	One of the questions on the survey asks students if they are satisfied with how the Photojournalism program helped to prepare them to work in their chosen profession. The three answer choices are: 1. Yes, completely; 2. Yes, with reservation 3. No, the program did not prepare me to work in the industry.		
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>	Collectively, 100% of students answered yes (either 1 or 2 in the section above).	<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Methods</b>	At the end of the capstone semester, 15 students filled out a Google Form asking 44 questions about their experience in the program. These questions were then collated and tabulated by the capstone teacher. Each year, the Photojournalism faculty decides on whether changes or additions need to be made to the questionnaire.		
<b>Measurement Instrument 3</b>			
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>			
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>		<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	

<b>Methods</b>			
<b>Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.</b>		<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Actions</b> (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)			
<p>Concerning the Direct SLO, of the 15 students in the 2020 graduating class, the quantitative analysis showed that 100% were rated employable by the PAC team. Strengths listed in the qualitative analysis based on PAC team responses included superior technical skills in photography, video, composition, and capturing storytelling moments. In addition, the PAC team noted the students' strong leadership qualities, adaptiveness to challenging situations, as well as exceptional documentary skills that exceeded expectations of students graduating from college. Also, the team noted that the students' diversity of skills would make them highly employable in the competitive journalism field. One PAC team member noted that the current lack of opportunities for students to do professional internships during their college careers could potentially hinder their further development outside of school experience. He also noted that students needed to be better versed in marketing their stories on various social media platforms; this is currently being addressed in the Photojournalism faculty curriculum revision meetings taking place in the Fall 2020 semester. Also being addressed in these meetings is another PAC team member's comment that cover letter writing needs to be improved. In addition to the resume and cover letter assignments currently being implemented (as of Spring 2018) in the second-semester freshman photojournalism class, a new module that involves cover letter writing and portfolio development has been added to the Fall 2020 curriculum in the junior-level PJ 334 Picture Stories class.</p> <p>Concerning the Indirect SLO, students expressed overall satisfaction with the program, including their appreciation for the passion of the faculty and their willingness to spend so much time outside of the classroom to assist students. Some responded yes with reservations, which included a desire for more portfolio building modules within the program and more flexibility in the Photojournalism major requirements. As noted above, a portfolio module has been added to the junior-level photojournalism class to reinforce the foundational exercises that are already in place. In response to the major requirements, the Photojournalism faculty is in weekly curriculum meetings in Fall 2020 to, in part, to create a six-semester program plan instead the current seven-semester plan, as well as add more flexibility as to the sequence in which the classes can be taken. In addition, plans are in place to create a two-year fast-track plan for transfer students who come in with extensive photojournalism experience. These plans should be implemented by Fall 2021.</p>			
<b>Follow-Up</b> (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.)			
<p>Given that the PAC team had noted in previous years that the technical quality of the capstone projects were lacking, its praise of technical quality in the Spring 2020 report shows evidence that measures implemented in the fall PJ 433 Advanced Short Documentary class, as well as the capstone course, have been successful.</p> <p>When seniors are assessed by the PAC team in the capstone course in May 2021, cover letter and other portfolio building progress will be measured, and if necessary further changes will be made and implemented in Fall 2021. When seniors take the Exit Survey in May 2021, the results will also indicate the degree of their satisfaction with the additional portfolio building measures being implemented, as well as suggestions as to how to improve them further.</p> <p>Given that the Photojournalism program changes will be in place in Fall 2021, the effects of increasing flexibility in the curriculum (as well as any additional changes that need to be made) should begin to be apparent by Spring 2022.</p>			
<b>Next Assessment Cycle Plan</b> (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome)			

The next assessment will administered at the end of the Spring 2021 semester in the Capstone PJ 436 Photojournalism Projects. The PAC team will be invited again to either visit campus or Zoom (pending the outcome of COVID-19). Results of the Assessment will be collected immediately following the PAC team visit and the information tabulated and submitted to the assessment sharepoint on the server by weekend following the end of the spring semester.

<b>Student Learning Outcome 3</b>			
<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Demonstrate the students' ability to compete with peer groups nationwide.</b>		
<b>Measurement Instrument 1</b>	<b>Direct:</b> Though not required to do so, students are encouraged to enter photography competitions and apply for scholarships throughout the year. Faculty members are required to participate in determining student entries for the Hearst Journalism Awards competition (see details below) and are actively involved in assisting students in entering other competitions and applying for national scholarships.		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>	With the required faculty involvement, a limited number of students enter the Hearst Journalism awards each year, which is a national contest that is often referred to as the Pulitzer Prizes of college journalism. The other major contest, College Photographer of the Year, is an international contest that any students can enter. In addition, students enter the contests such as the White House News Photographer Student Contest, Atlanta Photojournalism Seminar, National Press Photographers Association's Best of Photojournalism contest (an international contest), Kentucky News Photographers Association's Pictures of the Year competition, and the Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence awards. Beyond the Photojournalism program scholarships, students also enter the National Press Photographers Foundation national scholarship competition.		
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>	See below (Actions section)	<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	See below (Actions section)
<b>Methods</b>	For the Hearst Journalism Awards competition, two students are chosen by the Photojournalism faculty to enter each of the two rounds of in the Photojournalism division. In the Multimedia division of the contest, two students are chosen for each of the first three rounds and two teams of students are chosen for the fourth round. Students who qualify for the semifinal round of the Photojournalism division then submit a portfolio to compete for the national championship competition. Students who win first place in the each of the first three rounds of the Multimedia division qualify for the national championship round. In addition, the university program with the most overall points in the first round of the Photojournalism and Multimedia divisions wins the Intercollegiate competition and a \$10,000 prize in addition to the student earnings. The other contests require a submission of a portfolio and/or individual entries. The NPPF scholarships require a written essay, a portfolio submission, and letters of recommendation.		
<b>Measurement Instrument 2</b>	<b>Indirect:</b> Photojournalism students compete with students from other universities for internships at publications nationwide.		
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>	Though they are not required to do so, students are strongly encouraged to obtain internships in the photojournalism field to practice technical and storytelling skills learned in the classroom.		
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>	See below (Follow-up section)	<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	See below (Follow-up section)
<b>Methods</b>	In addition to encouraging students to apply for internships, students are required to create an online portfolio, resume and cover letter in PJ233 Intermediate Photojournalism, a class taken in their second-semester freshman year. For the 16 <sup>th</sup> year, the		

	Photojournalism faculty hosted WKU PJ Career Day, a program that brought in 13 professional visual journalists from across the region to interview students, critique their portfolios, and give them advice on how to obtain an internship/job in the photojournalism field.		
<b>Measurement Instrument 3</b>			
<b>Criteria for Student Success</b>			
<b>Program Success Target for this Measurement</b>		<b>Percent of Program Achieving Target</b>	
<b>Methods</b>			
<b>Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.</b>		<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Actions</b> (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)			
<p>In 2019-2020, the Photojournalism program won first place in the Intercollegiate Photojournalism competition (its 26<sup>th</sup> national championship in 31 years of the competition) and first place in the Intercollegiate Multimedia competition (its eighth win in the nine years of the competition). In addition, one student competed in the national championship (held virtually due to COVID-19), along with a single image national award. In the College Photographer of the Year international competition, the Photojournalism program garnered six awards. In the White House News Photographer of the Year Student Contest, a Photojournalism program student won First Place in the Student Still Photographer of the Year competition and Second Place Long Term Story. In the Atlanta Photojournalism Seminar competition, a Photojournalism program student won First Place in the Rich Mahan Best Student Portfolio competition. In the National Press Photographers Best of Photojournalism contest, a Photojournalism program student won First Place in the Emerging Vision Portfolio competition. In the Kentucky News Photographers Association's state contest, Photojournalism program students won 23 awards, including Best Portfolio award in the Student Pictures of the Year division, as well as a Judge's Award and Best in Show (professional and student divisions combined). In the National Press Photographers Foundation scholarships, Photojournalism program students won two awards out of the 10 scholarships available to them. A student won the \$10,000 Getty Inclusion scholarship, and another student won the Native American Journalists Association's \$10,000 award. Awards are recorded online here: <a href="https://wkupj.com/recognition/">https://wkupj.com/recognition/</a>. Scholarships are recorded online here: <a href="https://wkupj.com/recipients/">https://wkupj.com/recipients/</a>.</p> <p>Internship results for 2019-2020: 10 students obtained internships in at these publications: St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The Marshall Project (New York), Lexington Herald-Leader, Friends of Acadia National Park (Maine), Cincinnati Enquirer, Boyd Station, Tampa Bay Times, Owensboro Messenger Inquirer, Creative Residence (Boyd's Station) and the Deseret News. Internships are recorded online here: <a href="https://wkupj.com/internships/">https://wkupj.com/internships/</a> The number of student internships decreased significantly from previous years; some of this is due to fewer internships being offered overall, as well as fewer internships being offered in the summer, with publications instead opting for spring and fall semester-long internships. Fewer students can apply for these internships because obtaining an internship during the fall and spring semesters often delays their graduation. In addition, COVID-19 caused the cancelation of internships, including one student who was supposed to intern The Washington Post in the summer of 2020.</p>			
<b>Follow-Up</b> (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.)			
<p>The Photojournalism faculty continue to assist students with contests, scholarships, and internships using the methods detailed above. In addition a Google Form is being developed to gather quantitative information, as well as more formal, recorded qualitative feedback about student performance during their internships. This form is being developed in Fall 2020 and sent to the internship supervisors of students who obtain internships during the spring and summer of 2021. During this same time frame, Photojournalism faculty will also survey prospective employers to determine what can be done on the academic end to increase the numbers of internships that are available to students. This issue will also be addressed to the professionals participating in the WKU Photojournalism Career Day event, which will be scheduled for February 2021 (subject to change due to COVID-19).</p>			



**Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome)

The Photojournalism faculty will begin to adjudicate the Hearst competition entries in Fall 2020 and work with students with other contests and scholarships during this same time period, as well as the Spring 2021 semester. Internship announcements begin in October 2020, so Photojournalism faculty will be helping students (both inside and outside of the classroom) apply for these employment opportunities. WKU PJ Career Day (scheduled for February 2021, as noted above) provides a foundational experience for students to practice interviewing with prospective employers during this event and to prepare them for future interviews.