

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: Criminology and Criminal Justice	Department: School of Social Work
Degree or Certificate Level: Master of Arts in Criminology & Criminal Justice (MACCJ)	College/School: College for Public Health and Social Justice
Date (Month/Year): December 21, 2020	Primary Assessment Contact: Joseph Schafer
In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? AY 2019-2020	
In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? AY 2017-2018	

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

We identified three SLOs for the MACCJ program that were assessed during this annual assessment cycle (SLOs #1, #2, and #3).

- 1) Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions.
- 2) Students will apply CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies.
- 3) Students will apply knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader contexts.

We also assessed students' perceptions of learning across three MACCJ learning outcomes (LOs 1-3) through self-report via our MACCJ Exit Survey in May 2020. Four of our seven graduating MACCJ students (57%) completed the online survey.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved this outcome? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

Individual student data was collected from two CCJ courses: CCJ 5000 (Criminological Theory) and CCJ5200 (Research Methods in CCJ). We also gathered data from students graduating the MACCJ degree program.

No online, off-campus, or Madrid student artifacts were included in our assessment activities.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

Individual student data was collected from our foundational theory course CCJ 5000 (Criminological Theory) and our research design course CCJ5200 (Research Methods in CCJ). Terminal writing assignments in both courses were used as the basis for the assessment data provided by Drs. Vaught (CCJ5000) and Schafer (CCJ5200), who evaluated each student's submission using the approved rubrics indicated in our current assessment plan.

A total of four graduating MACCJ students completed our MACCJ Exit Survey wherein they self-reported on a variety of Program-related areas, including our MACCJ program learning outcomes.

Rubric are included with this report.

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcomes? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

The MACCJ Program Director reviewed the rubric scores submitted for CCJ5000 and the Program Director was the instructor of record for CCJ5200. The latter provided the PD direct knowledge of each student's performance in CCJ5200. This summary findings and a draft copy of this report were presented to the MACCJ committee for discussion regarding how to improve student performance for these specific learning objectives.

Core courses in the MACCJ program are only offered as face to face, on-ground STL courses.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

SLO #1 Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions.

Direct Measures

- Two of the six students (33%) performed at “graduate level” on their final course paper in terms of assessing relevant CCJ literature/scholarly contributions in CCJ5000. Two of the seven students (28.6%) performed at “graduate level” on this measure on their final course paper in CCJ5200.
- Three of the six students (50%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) on assessing literature in CCJ5000. Five of seven students (71.4%) performed at “graduate level” on this measure on their final course paper in CCJ5200.
- One student performed at benchmark level in CCJ5000.

SLO #2 Students will apply CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies.

Direct Measures

- Two of the six students (33%) performed at “graduate level” on their final course paper in applying theories in CCJ5000. Six of the seven students (85.7%) performed at “graduate level” in applying research methodologies on their final course paper in CCJ5200.
- Three of the six students (50%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) in applying CCJ knowledge to address problems in broader contexts in CCJ5000. One of seven students (13.3%) performed at “graduate level” on this measure on their final course paper in CCJ5200.
- One student performed at benchmark level in CCJ5000.

SLO #3 Students will apply knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader contexts.

Direct Measures

- Two of the six students (33%) performed at “graduate level” on their final course paper in apply knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader context in CCJ5000. Three of the seven students (42.9%) performed at “graduate level” on this measure on their final course paper in CCJ5200.

- Three of the six students (50%) performed at level three (two levels above the benchmark) in applying CCJ knowledge to address problems in broader contexts in CCJ5000. Four of seven students (57.1%) performed at “graduate level” on this measure on their final course paper in CCJ5200.
- One student performed at benchmark level in CCJ5000.

Overall Results from MACCJ Exit Survey

Indirect Measures (self-reported)

Four graduating MACCJ students self-reported their comfort level in their ability to do the following/being competent at each of the Programs five LOs:

- Assessing relevant CCJ literature/scholarly contributions (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)
- Applying CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)
- Applying knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader context (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)

Respondents were very positive about and confident in their abilities to be competent in areas identified as critical in the CCJ discipline and by the MACCJ Program. “Very comfortable” was, by far, the most common response in all three areas (followed by “somewhat comfortable”); **none** of the respondents reported being anything less than “somewhat comfortable” in their abilities to meet/exceed our Program’s learning outcomes (LOs).

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

- A.** When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

Our CCJ faculty meet monthly during the regular academic year to discuss issues and make oversight decisions regarding the BA and MA degree programs. As part of our ongoing assessment work we have added “assessment tasks” as a standing item on our monthly meeting agenda to ensure routine and timely discussion of program assessment tasks and findings. All MACCJ Program areas are appropriate foci for our assessment activities and we make a concerted ongoing effort to discuss assessment, including our plan, its implementation, and the tools (e.g., assignments, rubrics, etc.) used to engage in this important endeavor. This report was reviewed and discussed by the CCJ faculty. A discussion regarding recommendations for change/revision in any program area (or in our assessment activities), took place. The faculty determined the findings contained in this report are largely favorable indicators that learning experiences in graduate courses align with student learning outcomes on direct and indirect measures. One student achieved only benchmark performance on the rubrics in CCJ5000. This same student struggled in CCJ5200, although their performance was stronger. Importantly, the indirect data provided by the graduating students indicate they all feel “very comfortable” or “somewhat comfortable” with their ability to assess relevant literature (SLO #1), apply theories/methodologies (SLO #2), and apply CCJ knowledge (SLO #3).

- B.** How specifically have you decided to use findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you’ve initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites
- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the
Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Student artifacts collected
- Evaluation process
- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of the findings.

Faculty will continue to explore and discuss ways to improve some of the performance indicators in CCJ5000 (Criminological Theory). The results of this assessment, while not poor, demonstrate that changes in assigned readings or course approaches might be needed to enhance student performance in this class.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

The MACCJ program assessment plan is being revised for resubmission in spring 2021. We have introduced a new required course that will necessitate future changes to our learning outcomes and indicators.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

Once the learning objectives are re-evaluated, the committee will determine whether a comprehensive measure might be used to assess graduating MACCJ students. This would require determining the timing the methodology for administering that measure. The exit survey has not been reviewed in several years, so we will also be discussing whether changes are needed to that instrument, as well.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

The program was able to identify the specific needs of the students and the program and implement programmatic and curricular changes to address areas of growth.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We will continue to utilize the results of our assessment to inform our curricula and program offerings. The assessment has also helped the program to identify faculty needs for future hires.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.

MACCJ Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubrics

MACCJ Rubric 1 (Effective Messaging)

Graduate (4)	Milestones (3)		Benchmark (1)
	(2)		
Demonstrates a masterful understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses quality, relevant and compelling content, including rigorous, credible sources to illustrate mastery of the subject. Uses graceful and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates a highly competent understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate, relevant and compelling content, including the use of quality, credible sources to illustrate in-depth understanding of the subject. Uses graceful and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate and relevant content and credible sources to illustrate a proficient understanding of the subject. Demonstrates the use of fluent and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.	Demonstrates consideration of context, audience and purpose. Uses appropriate, relevant and compelling content to explore ideas. Consistently uses relevant sources to support ideas and uses clear and concise language that conveys meaning to the reader/viewer/listener.

MACCJ Rubric 2 (Conducting/Evaluating CCJ Research)

Graduate (4)	Milestones (3)		Benchmark (1)
	(2)		
Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes sophisticated decisions about methods of inquiry that expertly address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates an expert understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a sophisticated explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a skillful understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes knowledgeable decisions about methods of inquiry that skillfully address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates a knowledgeable understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a knowledgeable explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a more than basic understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes decisions about methods of inquiry that address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis, with some skill. Demonstrates a more than basic understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a more than basic explanation of ethics associated with research practice.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the relationship between research paradigm and methodological choices. Makes decisions about methods of inquiry that address a particular research purpose/question/hypothesis. Demonstrates a basic understanding of the appropriate criteria for evaluating CCJ research. Provides a basic explanation of ethics associated with research practice.

MACCJ Rubric 3 (Applying CCJ Theories to Address Problems in Broader Context)

<p align="center">Graduate (4)</p>	<p align="center">Milestones (3)</p>		<p align="center">Benchmark (1)</p>
<p>Gives a sophisticated summarization of a theory that displays a nuanced understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Applies a theory to broader contexts in unique ways that yield new knowledge and contributions. Shows expert understanding of a theory's implications and limitations and possibilities for expanding or enriching the field.</p>	<p>Gives a thoughtful summarization of a theory that displays an understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Recognizes implications of theory in a way that articulates possibilities for differing contexts and applications of the theory.</p>	<p>Gives an adequate summarization of a theory that displays a basic understanding of the concepts and assumptions of the theory and its connection to research in the field. Chooses appropriate, relevant examples to demonstrate a theory's applicability and explains the relationship between theory and examples, with more analysis.</p>	<p>Gives a summarization of a theory with some understanding of how it relates to research in the field. Locates and explains relationships between theory and relevant examples.</p>