

**Course Assessment Report**  
**Washtenaw Community College**

Discipline	Course Number	Title
Photography	231	PHO 231 12/08/2015-Portfolio Seminar
Division	Department	Faculty Preparer
Business and Computer Technologies	Digital Media Arts	Donald Werthmann
Date of Last Filed Assessment Report		

**I. Assessment Results per Student Learning Outcome**

Outcome 1: Produce a comprehensive portfolio of photographic work showcasing photographic skills commensurate with the student's stated goals for advancement in the field.

- Assessment Plan
  - Assessment Tool: Portfolio assessment using standardized rubric
  - Assessment Date: Winter
  - Course section(s)/other population:
  - Number students to be assessed: Up to 20 students per semester; all PHO 231 students
  - How the assessment will be scored:
  - Standard of success to be used for this assessment:
  - Who will score and analyze the data:

1. Indicate the Semester(s) and year(s) assessment data were collected for this report.

Fall (indicate years below)	Winter (indicate years below)	SP/SU (indicate years below)
	2015	

2. Provide assessment sample size data in the table below.

# of students enrolled	# of students assessed
17	15

3. If the number of students assessed differs from the number of students enrolled, please explain why all enrolled students were not assessed, e.g. absence, withdrawal, or did not complete activity.

15 out of 17 students assessed because one withdrew, and one failed. The student that failed struggled with time management [frequently absent] all semester, did not complete several of the required assignments, and did not appear for their final portfolio review.

4. Describe how students from all populations (day students on campus, DL, MM, evening, extension center sites, etc.) were included in the assessment based on your selection criteria.

All students in PHO 231 are required to attend and present final portfolios [15-20 images] and other branding collateral at the DMA Gala Review, a publicly attended, interdisciplinary event that features students graduating from most DMA departments [ANI, GDT, PHO, VID].

5. Describe the process used to assess this outcome. Include a brief description of this tool and how it was scored.

Each student is scheduled a minimum of four, 20-minute, individual meetings with regionally recognized, photography professionals. In addition to the conversation students generated with each reviewer, they are provided with written summaries from each evaluator's observations about their photographic works. The evaluation summary sheet has quantitative [scoring rubrics] and qualitative [written remarks] components.

Footnote: One evaluator failed to return evaluation forms from all their student assignments, which explains minor deficiencies in score totals noted below. In addition, some evaluators returned incomplete evaluation forms, leaving line items with no response. These were not counted as "incomplete" but instead disregarded entirely in counts, leaving discrepancies in the number of evaluation totals from one rubric to the next.

6. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected for this outcome and tool during the course assessment. Discuss the extent to which students achieved this learning outcome and indicate whether the standard of success was met for this outcome and tool.

Met Standard of Success: Yes

**Print Portfolio Quantitative Assessment** [data collected via 15 students x 4 reviewers each]

Scale used for evaluation [5] Superior [4] Excellent [3] Average [2] Below Avg [1] Incomplete. Scores of 5, 4 or 3 are considered "proficient".

**Rubric 1** Overall technical proficiency exhibited:

**Total that scored** [5] 19 [4] 31 [3] 4 [2] 1 [1] 3

*Rubric 1 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 2** These images are a unified body of work:

**Total that scored** [5] 26 [4] 19 [3] 7 [2] 2 [1] 3

*Rubric 2 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 3** Visual impact of the presentation method:

**Total that scored** [5] 18 [4] 26 [3] 8 [2] 4 [1] 2

*Rubric 3 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 4** Originality, innovation, or uniqueness:

**Total that scored** [5] 12 [4] 28 [3] 13 [2] 2 [1] 2

*Rubric 4 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 5** The work is applicable to the student's stated career objective:

**Total that scored** [5] 25 [4] 21 [3] 8 [2] 0 [1] 3

*Rubric 5 standard of success met: yes*

7. Based on your interpretation of the assessment results, describe the areas of strength in student achievement of this learning outcome.

Rubrics 1, 2, 3, & 5 offer data indicating "Superior" to "Excellent" results, whereas rubric 4 [originality/uniqueness] offers data trending more evenly across "Superior" to "Average". "Originality and uniqueness" in student work, resultant from participation in a two-year program, although strongly encouraged to pursue, is not a high expectation. Personal style and originality is more likely realized when the student-artist emerges from deeper practice and of their craft by attending a four-year institution, for example.

8. Based on your analysis of student performance, discuss the areas in which student achievement of this learning outcome could be improved. If student met standard of success, you may wish to identify your plans for continuous improvement.

Uniqueness, originality, and vision displayed in student work is a very subjective thing. It is however something that is realized after a spending a minimum of two to three years immersed in the tools and techniques of any given discipline's craft [the duration of the degree program]. Students typically are in a process of emulation in this phase of their photographic life, trying to figure out what it is that they like but then eventually how to make photography "in their own way." To improve this learning outcome more lab time is required class-to-class for students to practice their craft so that originality has a better chance of emerging.

The department could implement a strategy to encourage all faculty to integrate assignments for students to critically analyze photographs. The identification of craft, tools, and techniques help to illuminate the ways in which originality emerges in existing artist works.

Outcome 2: Produce self-promotional materials appropriate to the student's stated goals in the field.

- Assessment Plan
  - Assessment Tool: Assessment of self-promotional pieces using a standardized rubric.
  - Assessment Date: Winter
  - Course section(s)/other population:
  - Number students to be assessed: Up to 20 students per semester; all PHO 231 students
  - How the assessment will be scored:
  - Standard of success to be used for this assessment:
  - Who will score and analyze the data:

1. Indicate the Semester(s) and year(s) assessment data were collected for this report.

Fall (indicate years below)	Winter (indicate years below)	SP/SU (indicate years below)
	2015	

2. Provide assessment sample size data in the table below.

# of students enrolled	# of students assessed
17	15

3. If the number of students assessed differs from the number of students enrolled, please explain why all enrolled students were not assessed, e.g. absence, withdrawal, or did not complete activity.

15 out of 17 students assessed because one withdrew, and one failed. The student that failed struggled with time management [frequently absent] all semester, did not complete several of the required assignments, and did not appear for their final portfolio review.

4. Describe how students from all populations (day students on campus, DL, MM, evening, extension center sites, etc.) were included in the assessment based on your selection criteria.

All students in PHO 231 are required to attend and present final portfolios [15-20 images] and other branding collateral at the DMA Gala Review, a publicly attended, interdisciplinary event that features students graduating from most DMA departments [ANI, GDT, PHO, VID].

5. Describe the process used to assess this outcome. Include a brief description of this tool and how it was scored.

Each student is scheduled a minimum of four, 20-minute, individual meetings with regionally recognized, photography professionals. In addition to the conversation students generated with each reviewer, they are provided with written summaries from each evaluator's observations about their marketing components. The evaluation summary sheet has quantitative [scoring rubrics] and qualitative [written remarks] components.

Footnote: One evaluator failed to return evaluation forms from all their student assignments, which explains minor deficiencies in score totals noted below. In addition, some evaluators returned incomplete evaluation forms, leaving line items with no response. These were not counted as "incomplete" but instead disregarded entirely in counts, leaving discrepancies in the number of evaluation totals from one rubric to the next.

6. Briefly describe assessment results based on data collected for this outcome and tool during the course assessment. Discuss the extent to which students achieved this learning outcome and indicate whether the standard of success was met for this outcome and tool.

Met Standard of Success: Yes

**Marketing Components Quantitative Assessment** [data collected via 15 students x 4 reviewers each]

Evaluation Scale [5] Superior [4] Excellent [3] Average [2] Below Avg [1] Incomplete N/A Not Available for viewing/evaluation. Scores of 5, 4 or 3 are considered "proficient".

**Rubric 1** Business Card | Branding | Letterhead:

**Total that scored** [5] 15 [4] 28 [3] 11 [2] 0 [1] 0 [N/A] 2

*Rubric 1 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 2** Resume | Positioning or Artist Statement:

**Total that scored** [5] 10 [4] 26 [3] 15 [2] 0 [1] 0 [N/A] 3

*Rubric 2 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 3** Self-promotional piece:

**Total that scored** [5] 16 [4] 24 [3] 9 [2] 1 [1] 0 [N/A] 2

*Rubric 3 standard of success met: yes*

**Rubric 4** Website | Blog:

**Total that scored** [5] 15 [4] 21 [3] 4 [2] 0 [1] 0 [N/A] 11

*Rubric 4 standard of success met: yes*

7. Based on your interpretation of the assessment results, describe the areas of strength in student achievement of this learning outcome.

Rubrics 1 [Business Card & Branding] and 3 [Self-Promotional Piece], offer data indicating "Superior" to mostly "Excellent" results.

The reviewers collective opinion falls decisively on "Excellent" in regard to student's production of branding collateral. The wide demographic of age range and life experience is an unspoken aspect of this data. Adult learners in the class who have experience with work experience and branding from previous employment most certainly have the advantage to produce a superior product [business card & resume] compared to that of a traditional student. With that said, students overall understand the importance of producing visually compelling and useful marketing components.

8. Based on your analysis of student performance, discuss the areas in which student achievement of this learning outcome could be improved. If student met standard of success, you may wish to identify your plans for continuous improvement.

Rubric 2 [Resume & Positioning (Artist) Statement] offers data trending mostly "Excellent" to "Average". In regard to content, adult learners have an advantage over traditional students to compose a comprehensive resume. The writing quality found in an Positioning or Artist Statement is case by case. Although students are held accountable to well-written documents and encouraged to use the WCC Writing Center for support, there is a need to enhance their ability to write and articulate ideas well.

Rubric 4 [Website/Blog] trends mostly "Excellent" to "Superior" but there is an unusually high number of "N/A" — Not Available for viewing [11]. Technical issues were cited by a few reviewers in that the portable computer was inoperable, which explains a minor portion of the data. Emphasis must be placed however on this media choice for students to keep pace with current trends in technology and professional expectations. Advising students to integrate a WEB design course as one of their restricted electives is a viable option.

## II. Course Summary and Action Plans Based on Assessment Results

1. Describe your overall impression of how this course is meeting the needs of students. Did the assessment process bring to light anything about student achievement of learning outcomes that surprised you?

This capstone course offers significant benefits to students, many of which are not realized until after they have graduated from WCC. The comprehensiveness of the course supports their efforts to form a professional photographic identity and releasing/publishing these components. Networking person-to-person, in addition of course to social media, is emphasized. High expectations in image quality and presentation materials & techniques are set to prepare students for what they might encounter with sophisticated viewing audiences, in real world situations. The final portfolio gala review format mirrors what they would encounter at a portfolio review event at a professional photography conference/convention.

The data collected indicates that students are for the most part successful upon completion, and ready to take the next step of their identified career path. One of the concerns the data shows is a minor, collective deficiency in originality and uniqueness. As mentioned previously, this is normal for students exiting a two-year program since this factor of an artist's development doesn't truly emerge unless several more years of practice are undertaken.

Other data indicates a need to encourage the number of students displaying a Web-based portfolio [in addition to the print version] at the final review. Although this is a requirement for the course, some students still find the task a bit overwhelming to undertake because of their lack of proficiencies to create and maintain a Website. A possible action item is to create a stronger Web-publishing component [course] that students must take as a pre-requisite or concurrently, to offer adequate preparation for this marketing component.

The surprise here is that even with the innumerable resources available on the Internet for students to "easily" develop a web-based portfolio, some still do not want to spend the time or effort to construct such an entity. For a photographer, a Website is one of the most logical and natural extensions to self-publish and market their work.

- Describe when and how this information, including the action plan, was or will be shared with Departmental Faculty.

The information will be shared and discussed with my colleagues at the earliest possible convenience via eMail and in person during department meeting times.

- Intended Change(s)

Intended Change	Description of the change	Rationale	Implementation Date
No changes intended.			

- Is there anything that you would like to mention that was not already captured?

5.

### III. Attached Files

[pho231 Portfolio Seminar Assessment Form](#)

**Faculty/Preparer:** Donald Werthmann **Date:** 12/18/2015  
**Department Chair:** Jason Withrow **Date:** 12/27/2015  
**Dean:** Kimberly Hurns **Date:** 12/30/2015  
**Assessment Committee Chair:** Michelle Garey **Date:** 01/20/2016