

Department of Communication: Strategic Plan 2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Mission Statement

The Communication Department advances unique forms of human expression through the performing arts, media, and public/organizational and interpersonal interaction to prepare students to think critically, develop a multicultural understanding, enrich society and select appropriate career paths. The Department provides students with quality graduate and undergraduate programs. The Communication Department will continue to strive for excellence by pursuing a multi-pronged approach to enhance the areas of teaching, professional achievement and service in a student-centered, intellectually stimulating environment.

In pursuit of our mission we will work on the following goal-specific objectives and strategies:

Goal 1: Instruction; Student Learning; Curriculum

The Communication Department will continue to provide quality undergraduate and graduate programs that cultivate active learning, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary perspectives and meet the mission statement of the Department and of the College of Arts & Humanities.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Left blank to align with the College.
2. Implement program learning outcomes assessment in the majors in the department by 2004-2005

Strategies:

- ◆ Establish learning outcomes for all department undergraduate and graduate programs.
- ◆ Develop and implement learning outcomes assessment plans for the majors.
- ◆ Use the results of assessments to improve the curriculum.

3. Increase enrollment of Communication majors in the Honors Studies Program by 10% by 2004-2005

Strategies:

- ◆ Work with the Honors Studies Program in recruitment.
- ◆ Revitalize the Communication Department Courses that are classified as honors classes.

4. Develop and implement critical thinking in all Communication Department courses by 2004-2005

Strategies:

- ◆ Encourage faculty to refer students to the University Writing Center to support critical thinking.
- ◆ Require the integration of critical thinking approaches in the curriculum of all Communication courses.

5. Develop and implement a K-16 curriculum alignment initiative by 2007-2008

Strategies:

- ◆ Assess curriculum alignment needs.
- ◆ Recommend curricular changes. Coordinate with the Curriculum Committee and the Teacher Education Committee to revise Communication Certification plans.
- ◆ Hire one tenure-track faculty member specializing in teacher preparation.
- ◆ Implement workshops to help students' performance on the certification exams.

6. Participate in the proposal for a COAH doctoral program

Strategies:

- ◆ Join the COAH committee set up to explore the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program.
- ◆ Explore the role of the Communication Department in the doctoral program.

7. Support the ongoing efforts of the externally accredited theatre program to maintain its accredited status

Strategies:

- ◆ Provide administrative oversight for theatre program to maintain its accredited status.
- ◆ Review and forward requests for additional resources for accredited programs.

8. Help revise current interdisciplinary degree programs and provide input for new interdisciplinary programs by 2005-2006

Strategies:

- ◆ Determine the role of the Communication Department in COAH interdisciplinary programs.
- ◆ Work with the Center for International Studies in developing a degree in International Relations.
- ◆ Explore the development of a joint major in Communication and Spanish.

9. Assess department needs for new faculty to support academic programs in two years

Strategies:

- ◆ Assess the needs of all programs in the department.
- ◆ Hire a creative drama/children's theatre specialist.

Goal 2: Faculty

The Communication Department will recruit and retain highly qualified faculty by providing an environment that promotes and rewards excellence in teaching, research, service, and student success.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of applicants from doctoral/research-extensive universities by 25% by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Each division in the Communication Department will develop a line of communication with similar departments/divisions at research universities.
- ◆ Encourage faculty in the Communication Department to seek collaborative research efforts with faculty at doctoral/research-extensive universities to facilitate networking with them.
- ◆ Encourage faculty engaged in creative activities to seek collaborative creative efforts with faculty at other institutes.

2. Increase the number of qualified faculty applicants per academic vacancy in the Communication Department by 25% by 2005-06

Strategies:

- ◆ Improve advertising strategy by advertising in specialized publications.
- ◆ Request competitive salaries to attract qualified faculty.
- ◆ Start the search process as early as possible.
- ◆ Conduct a thorough reference check on eligible candidates.

3. Retain 30% of the newly hired faculty in the Department of Communication by 2006-07

Strategies:

- ◆ Develop a mentorship program for new faculty.
- ◆ Implement a departmental orientation for new faculty.
- ◆ Guide new Communication Dept. faculty to utilize the Office of Sponsored Projects for support of research/scholarship efforts.
- ◆ Guide new Comm. Dept. faculty to seek support from the Faculty Development Council and Faculty Research Council.
- ◆ Encourage new Comm. Dept. faculty to utilize the Center for Distance Learning and Teaching Excellence in order to promote technology-based delivery of instruction.
- ◆ Publish the contributions in campus and public periodicals of outstanding Communication Dept. faculty for their teaching effectiveness, professional achievement/scholarship and professional service, and reward these efforts in the annual faculty evaluation/merit cycle.

4. Support the ongoing professional development of the faculty as classroom teachers

Strategies:

- ◆ Inform faculty on funding opportunities to attend conferences/workshops on issues related to teaching.
- ◆ Implement peer review evaluations of teaching effectiveness.

Goal 3: Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activities

The Communication department will facilitate excellence in scholarship, research, and/or creative activities for the enhancement of knowledge that can be shared with the public through presentation, publication, or performance.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Support the ongoing professional development of the faculty as scholars in the department.
2. Increase the number of Communication Department faculty who have developed a 3-year plan/proposal for scholarship by 50% by 2007-08.
3. Increase the number of Communication Department faculty designated as research/creative activity faculty to 80% by AY 2006-07.
4. Increase the number of Communication Department applications for sponsored grants by 20% per year 2006-07.
5. Increase the number of funded sponsored grants to Communication Department faculty by 10% per year 2006-07
6. Increase the number of students involved in faculty research/creative activity by 50% by AY 2006-07.

Strategies:

- ◆ Clarify and promote the research agenda of the College to the Communication Department faculty.
- ◆ Continue to seek increased funding to acquire larger numbers of research assistants.
- ◆ Increase Communication Department submissions to the Faculty Research Council.
- ◆ Continue to recognize and reward Communication Department faculty members for scholarship/research/creative activities in terms of merit and tenure/promotion.
- ◆ Seek additional travel funds to assist faculty in presenting research at professional conferences.
- ◆ Encourage Communication Department faculty to utilize the services offered by the Office of Sponsored Research.
- ◆ Arrange faculty tours of the library to increase level of awareness of available resources.
- ◆ Assist Communication Department faculty in seeking grants and creative activities outlets outside regular university sources.
- ◆ Establish AY 2001-02 data as the baseline for comparison

Goal 4: Development and Service

The Communication Department will encourage and support ongoing professional and academic development activities by faculty and students within a multi-cultural environment.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Support the ongoing professional development of the faculty as practitioners

Strategies:

- ◆ Seek funding for faculty to attend conferences/workshops on issues such as assessment, fundraising and service learning.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to utilize the Faculty Development Council.

2. Participate in University and COAH-sponsored multicultural activities on campus by an increase of 25% by 2005-06

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue to work with the Center for International Studies on the undergraduate and graduate degrees in International Relations.
- ◆ Encourage faculty and students to participate in various multi-cultural events held on campus.
- ◆ Work with the Center for International Studies on exchange programs with other countries.
- ◆ Develop cooperative programs with Mexican theatre artists.
- ◆ Explore the feasibility of a Latino Center for Theatre/TV/Film.

3. Increase service-learning opportunities for Communication Department faculty and students by 50% by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Encourage the development of community projects and volunteerism for classes within the Communication Department.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to engage in speaking/creative activities on and off campus in the United States, in Mexico and Internationally.
- ◆ Increase opportunities for pre-college students to participate in departmental activities and classes through continuing and cooperative education classes.

Goal 5: Student Recruitment, Development, Retention, Placement

The Communication Department will provide effective student recruitment, development, retention, and placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

[Recruitment aspect]

1. Increase the number of Communication majors and minors by 10% by 2004

Strategies:

- ◆ The department will develop more pamphlets for majors and minors.
- ◆ The department will send the information to all campus advisors and the community.
- ◆ Continue publishing the departmental newsletter.
- ◆ Continue with theatre publicity.
- ◆ Promote the new Masters Program in Communication.
- ◆ Increase the number of faculty who visit high schools.
- ◆ Encourage high school teachers to bring their students for tours of the department.
- ◆ Producing recruiting videos for department and for each area within the department.

2. Increase the number of Communication Department faculty who are engaged in ongoing recruiting activities by 25% 2006-07

Strategies:

- ◆ Complete articulation agreements with community and technical colleges in two years.
- ◆ Increase the participation of the Communication Department at University recruitment events.
- ◆ Increase the participation of the Communication Department at regional professional meetings with student recruitment components.

3. Increase faculty involvement in student development activities by 25% in two (2) years

Strategies:

- ◆ Inform the Communication Department faculty about the COAH URAP representative's involvement and availability for student development.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to participate in student development.
- ◆ Develop incentives for faculty to participate in student development.

4. Increase the pass rate in the Communication Department for each teacher certification area to 90% by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Provide more extensive ExCET workshops for teacher preparation students in all Communication fields.
- ◆ Hire an educator to coordinate ExCET preparation.
- ◆ Align course content with TEKS standards.

5. Left blank to align with the COAH. There are no gate keeper courses in the Communication Department.

6. Increase the full-time, first-time freshman retention rate in the Department by 10% by AY 2007-08.

- ◆ Continue to expand the role of the University Retention Advisement Program in various retention activities.
- ◆ Improve the orientation and advisement efforts of the faculty.
- ◆ Continue to develop and expand learning communities and freshman interest groups to provide a sense of community and support for beginning students.
- ◆ Establish AY 2001-02 data as the baseline for comparison.

7. Increase the six-year graduation rate of Communication majors by 5% by 2006-07

Strategies:

- ◆ Improve the orientation and advisement efforts of the Communication Department.
- ◆ Increase the cooperation between URAP and the Communication Department to identify students with low GPA's to get them counseling.
- ◆ Schedule classes with minimal conflict for students.
- ◆ Rotate classes as often as possible to ensure availability of required classes for graduation.
- ◆ Encourage and assist students in seeking financial aid resources.

8. Increase the number of Communication Department activities that promote the placement of graduates entering graduate school or employment related to their degree by 20% by 2007-2008

Strategies:

- ◆ Coordinate with the Office of Career Placement Services to develop or expand placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.
- ◆ Work with the Alumni Office to develop strategies for tracking the number of students in each discipline who are successfully placed in jobs or accepted in graduate or doctoral programs after graduation.
- ◆ Review and revise graduate curriculum to challenge and prepare our graduate students to enroll in doctoral programs.
- ◆ Develop a system by which employers and students can connect through the department.
- ◆ Encourage and assist students in attending appropriate professional organization meetings with placement service.
- ◆ Establish 2001-02 data as the baseline for comparison.

Goal 6: Planning, Assessment

The Communication Department will develop and coordinate an ongoing planning, evaluation, and dissemination process designed to ensure academic excellence.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a comprehensive planning and evaluation process by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Establish learning outcomes for each Communication Department Division.
- ◆ Develop a planning and evaluation process for general education classes within the Communication Department.
- ◆ Review the current methods of assessing teaching effectiveness in the Communication Department.
- ◆ Investigate the feasibility of accreditation for the different programs within the Communication Department.
- ◆ Maintain the accreditation status of the theatre division of the Communication Department.

2. Engage in systematic planning and evaluation process annually

Strategies:

- ◆ Conduct the annual strategic planning and evaluation process for the department.
- ◆ Coordinate the annual academic program review process for the department.
- ◆ Assess general education classes in the department.
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty and staff.
- ◆ Review the curriculum.
- ◆ Assess the performance of graduating or former students.

3. Implement a systematic cycle of reporting the results of academic assessment by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Produce progress report for the Dean.

Goal 7: Resources

The Communication Department will identify, increase availability, and ensure appropriate utilization of resources that support academic programs, faculty, students and staff.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

[Identify resources]

1. Increase the number of applications for external funding by 25% by 2005-06

Strategies:

- ◆ Disseminate information about the Office of Sponsored Projects and other sources of funding to Communication Department faculty.
- ◆ Encourage the faculty to apply for external funding to support academic programs, research efforts, creative activities, and student involvement.
- ◆ Establish 2001-2002 data as the baseline for comparison.

2. Increase library support for faculty scholarship by 10% by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Develop a liaison with library representative.
- ◆ Assign a faculty member to serve as library coordinator.

3. Decrease the number of small classes by 25% in two (2) years

Strategies:

- ◆ Review faculty workload and class-scheduling options to reduce the use of small classes.
- ◆ Establish 2001-02 data as the baseline for comparison.

[Ensure appropriate utilization of resources]

4. Improve the classroom space utilization rate by 10% by 2005-06

Strategy:

- ◆ Develop and implement a system of coordinated scheduling of classes in the three divisions of the Communication Dept.

5. Improve the instructional laboratory utilization rate by 20% by 2005-06

Strategy:

- ◆ Conduct a needs assessment and develop a utilization plan for the department.

6. Increase research space square footage by 50% by AY 2004-05.

Strategy

- ◆ Conduct a needs assessment of the department, establish priorities, and develop a long-term research space plan for the department that includes funding alternatives.
- ◆ Establish AY 2001-02 data as the baseline for comparison.

Goal 8: Leadership

The Communication Department will provide academic leadership for its students, faculty and for the community.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Support the ongoing professional development of department administrators and support staff.

Strategies

- ◆ Seek opportunities for the professional development of the department chair.
- ◆ Encourage the professional development of the support staff in the department.

2. Enhance the productivity of the Communication Department Office on a continuous basis

Strategies:

- ◆ Revise departmental policies and procedures.
- ◆ Keep faculty and staff current with university and departmental procedures.
- ◆ Increase faculty and staff accountability.
- ◆ Maintain effective administrative procedures.

3. Upgrade the level of communication in the department by 2004-05

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue producing the departmental newsletter.

- ◆ Meet with faculty in meetings and on individual basis.
- ◆ Provide a comprehensive Web site as a resource for the Communication Department faculty, students and staff.
- ◆ Continue utilizing a listserv for all Communication faculty and staff to facilitate communication.
- ◆ Disseminate departmental meeting minutes to all Communication Department faculty.
- ◆ Continue with open-door policy established by the Communication Department.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to participate in areas of the department not directly related to the individual's discipline.

Goal 9: Instructional Technology

Promote and support the use of technology and pursue the adoption of emerging academic and research platforms.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the integration of instructional technology in Communication classes by 25% in 2007-08

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue to encourage the use of the Center for Distance Learning and Teaching Excellence to integrate technology.
- ◆ Recognize faculty efforts to integrate instructional technology in tenure, promotion and merit decisions.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to use mediated classrooms.
- ◆ Seek funds through Heaf to increase the number of mediated classrooms.
- ◆ Encourage faculty to teach on-line classes and to get involved in distance learning.