



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

February 24, 2010

Nancy Burroughs, Chair
Department of Communication Studies

Dear Professor Burroughs,

As a result of the self study for the BA in Communication Studies, I am accepting the recommendations of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences' Budget and Planning Committee and Dean Stefanco and am approving program continuation. The many strengths of your program were evidenced in your self study and the faculty's contributions to the University are most appreciated.

With regard to your final implementation plan, I commend you on the clarity of presentation and the priorities you have identified and encourage you to work closely with the faculty and dean for the achievement of this strategic plan.

This self study report is part of the University's official archive that documents the program's contributions to student learning, the university's offering of quality programs. A summary of the salient findings is submitted to the Board of Trustees of the California State University. Please submit an electronic copy of your final self study document and implementation plan to Randi Esau in Academic Programs at REsau@csustan.edu.

For your next Academic Program Review, scheduled for 2015/16, the following documents will be reviewed:

1. the previous self study and implementation plan;
2. the achievement of the priority action items as identified in the implementation plan during the previous self study;
3. the new self study and implementation plan; and
4. annual assessment update reports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herman D. Lujan".

Herman Lujan
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

cc: Vice Provost Demetrulias
Dean Stefanco

Department of Communication Studies Implementation Plan

June 10, 2009

Mission Statement

The Department of Communication Studies takes a leading role in sustaining the strongly student-centered, broadly accessible educational mission of California State University, Stanislaus. We do so through engaging students in traditional, on-line, and experience-based learning, all designed to foster

- a complex understanding of communication as the foundation of the ongoing human process of meaning-making and community-building,
- a profound respect for the diverse range of identities and messages within our local and global communities,
- a sophisticated grasp, as creators and users, of the wide range of information technologies that shape communication today and will evolve to shape it differently in the future, and
- a lifelong commitment to presenting and interpreting messages in an ethical, responsible manner.

Vision Statement

The Department of Communication Studies' commitment to quality undergraduate education centers on the creation and maintenance of strong relationships with our students, and in understanding the perspectives and needs of the populations we serve in order to help our graduates develop the communication resources needed to build the lives and the society in which they can flourish. We develop and sustain mutually enriching student–faculty relationships by

- requiring one–to–one advising each semester,
- maintaining persistent advisor–advisee connections that typically endure for each student's full tenure in the program,
- relying on pedagogical practices that reflect the demands of a diverse learning environment,
- providing experiential learning opportunities that engage students in collaborative relationships with one another, the local community, disciplinary scholars, and professional partners, and
- creating and utilizing feedback loops with students that enable faculty to modify curriculum as necessary.

Department of Communication Studies Core Values

The following core values are based in the shared philosophical perspectives of the faculty in the Department of Communication Studies and in the foundational tenets of our scholarly discipline.

Our curriculum and pedagogy reflect sustained efforts to embody these values and to help students to develop them as well:

- We work to identify and apply ethical frameworks within all communication interactions.
- We recognize our need to learn and to better understand the wide range of communication practices found in our multicultural and globalized society.
- We respect communicative diversity and the multiple communicative strengths that exist across cultures.
- We appreciate the interconnected nature of local and global communication acts.
- We see communication as a means for improving the lives and social conditions of students and the community.
- We take a process-centered view of learning and development.
- We are open to relevant learning experiences in and out of the classroom that nurture a lifelong commitment of learning and creativity.

Strategic Goals, Benchmarks, Objectives and Needs

Goal 1: Invest in People, Human Resources and Infrastructure

Benchmarks

- Promote access and diversity.
- Increase undergraduate enrollments.
- Achieve professional growth in administrative staff.
- Obtain recognition by students and colleagues as an innovative teaching department.

Objectives:

Objectives 1.1: Increase average annual numbers of undergraduate majors.

Strategies:

- Host Communication Studies events, such as a welcome back event each semester, graduation party, induction ceremony for Honor Society, tutoring sessions (through honor society-HS), mentoring (HS), and capstone research presentations as demand and interest exist.
- Update and post information on departmental web page.
- Advertise and promote our honor society, Lambda Pi Eta and Public Relations Society Student Association (PRSSA), including recruiting officers for each student organization.
- Recruit from our general education courses.
- Maintain a good presence at the Stockton campus to recruit new majors, minors and concentrations.
- Participate in University events, such as New Student Orientation, student research competition, and university honors program.

- Maintain an up-to-date undergraduate brochure and recruiting materials as budget allows.
- Promote and encourage COMM students to apply for scholarships.
- Use information from exit surveys to make necessary improvements in our program.
- Develop a regular publication schedule for the departmental Newsletter *Connections*.
- Develop a stronger sense of community among students within the department.

Objective 1.2: Recruit and retain excellent department staff.

Strategies

- Provide opportunities for administrative staff to attend conferences or training workshops on topics relevant to their job descriptions.
- Engage staff in relevant areas of departmental decision-making.
- Encourage staff to formulate plans that will make departmental procedures run more efficiently.
- Continue to solicit input from staff on professional development needs.
- Ensure staff have current and necessary technology.

Priority Need:

There are several initiatives that are vital to future plans for this program that can be much more effectively pursued if we have increased support through added administrative staff. These include:

- Manage a complex department that includes approximately 200 students majoring in Communication Studies in addition to 100 students enrolled in the Journalism Minor, the Communication Studies Minor, and the Liberal Studies Concentration in Communication.
- Mandatory advising each semester for all majors, which enhances student success and faculty response to unique student needs, and which involves significant administrative work in maintaining accurate student records.
- Maintaining the program at the Stockton Center, which enhances student access to both the program and the university as a whole, and which involves additional administrative responsibilities ranging from student records and advising coordination to a more challenging burden in terms of facilities and scheduling.
- Maintaining the two major media outlets, KCSS and The Signal, neither of which currently have a full-time, dedicated professional administrator, and both of which require more administrative support and expertise than student managers/editors alone can provide—and both of which, therefore, currently siphon time resources from other department administrative responsibilities.

For these reasons, we consider it a high priority to secure additional staff support in the near future.

Objective 1.3: Recruit and retain excellent tenure track faculty.

Strategies

- Advertise faculty vacancies per university policies, including discipline associations and publications.
- Network with doctoral programs that produce excellent teacher-scholars to recruit faculty for the department.
- Maintain and encourage more faculty participation in Faculty Development Center development opportunities.
- Support opportunities for faculty development in teaching and research.
- Encourage senior faculty to counsel and guide junior faculty in pre tenure teaching and research activities.
- Maintain bulletin boards posting of faculty publications.
- Ensure that faculty have the technology (software and hardware) for teaching and research endeavors, as budget allows.
- Within budget constraints, seek to secure financial support for faculty travel to make presentations at research conferences, consultations, etc.

Priority Need:

At the undergraduate level we currently serve 230 majors as well as more than 100 students with minors or concentrations in departmental fields; therefore we require funding for one additional faculty position to serve this large population effectively. In Spring 2011, Dr. Hilpert will complete his FERP program, creating a critical need for an additional tenure-track position to support the area Organizational Communication. In addition, as we restructure our curriculum, reorganize the Signal and explore plans to use the TV studio, we also need this tenure-track hire to provide instructional support in the secondary area of Public Relations/Journalism. Finally, maintaining the current number of 10 tenure-track faculty members is necessary to maintain an acceptable tenure-track to part-time instructor ratio and provide sufficient tenure-track faculty support the one-to-one advising program in the Department.

For these reasons, we consider it a high priority to secure an additional tenure-track faculty position in the near future.

Goal 2: Enrich the Educational Experience

Benchmarks

- Achieve high ratings of instruction in COMM classes.
- Serve students through our courses that fulfill lower and upper division general education requirements at California State University, Stanislaus.

- Maintain teaching of cross-listed courses with Gender Studies and Liberal Studies.
- Maintain student-centered approach to teaching and advising.
- Foster creativity in curriculum and teaching approaches.

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Promote high standards of teaching excellence in the department.

Strategies:

- Observe, evaluate, and provide feedback for the teaching performance of tenure track faculty, full-time lecturers, and part-timers consistent with our CBA and/or recommend assistance from the FDC Director.
- Maintain the departmental expectation of above average scores on student evaluations of instructor and course.
- Provide multiple teaching training opportunities for department faculty, especially for those faculty whose teaching evaluations fall below departmental expectations.
- Use feedback from exit surveys to identify needs for improvement in teaching.
- Incorporate ongoing research by department faculty and other contemporary scholars in curriculum redevelopment and pedagogical practice.
- Encourage Course Directors to mentor and work to develop consistency on teaching in multi-section courses.
- Explore new ways to incorporate innovative teaching methods into our courses.
- Refine and enhance curriculum to remain professionally current and relevant.
- Encourage innovative teaching approaches to existing courses, as well as development of new courses, such as *Relational Caffeine* magazine, scripts written and performed by students, radio plays, communication careers learning modules, creating documentaries, technology projects, oral history projects, etc.
- Promote and sustain faculty-student research collaborations in and out of the classrooms.

Objective 2.2: Advance study of Communication at California State University general education courses.

Strategies:

- Expand the availability and flexibility of our general education courses, as the budget allows.
- Continuously monitor how COMM general education courses correspond to transfer courses from community colleges and other universities, such as identifying and preparing a program faculty member to attend regional and statewide articulation meetings.

Continuing Needs:

- Secure travel support for articulation meetings.
- Concurrent support for dedicated faculty attention to General Education assessment, such as PAC.

Objective 2.3: Enhance undergraduate student academic development.*Strategies:*

- Provide mentoring for undergraduate students in teaching and research.
- Provide opportunities for service learning projects as appropriate.
- Assist students in seeking financial resources for travel to conferences.
- Identify and assess student achievement of expected learning outcomes.

Objective 2.4: Enhance undergraduate student professional development.*Strategies:*

- Provide career mentoring for undergraduate students.
- Encourage students to run and/or serve as officer positions within department clubs and ASI.
- Maintain an active faculty involvement in the Faculty-mentor program.

Objective 2.5: Enhance undergraduate student advising*Strategies*

- Maintain regular advising by all Tenured/Tenured Track faculty to majors as assigned.
- Provide training and mentoring for new faculty to advise COMM majors, including GE and graduation requirements.
- Assign a Director of Advising to maintain consistency for new majors, minors and liberal studies concentration students. This person would also confer with department faculty about changes in requirements, scheduling issues and other advising issues, as well as review exit surveys.

Priority Need:

Traditionally the department has mandated one-to-one advising sessions for each student in the program each semester. These sessions form the building blocks of sustained relationships between advisees and (typically) the same advisor throughout the student's career in the major. They have been very successful, as indicated in students' positive survey feedback regarding advising, as well as opportunities for academic continuation and professional development. However, the large number of majors in our program has made this dedicated, interpersonal orientation advising practice increasingly time-consuming and complicated. We believe that a

dedicated COMM Director of Advising would help the department accomplish these goals more effectively in several ways:

- Coordinating training and informational sessions regarding scheduling as well as department and university coursework, testing and administrative requirements.
- Providing a consistently high level of support across advising for majors, minors, concentrations in Liberal Studies and Social Sciences.
- Analyzing results from the graduate exit survey, which is currently an unfunded task within the department and which would be a logical role for a Director of Advising given the impact of quality advising on student survey responses.

Accordingly, we consider the securing of 3 units of assigned time for a tenure-track faculty Director of Advising to be a significant priority in the near future.

Objective 2.6: Enhance the Curriculum program

- Continue to monitor our curriculum to provide necessary improvements in our program.
- Review the content and frequency of offering service courses, in consultation with those departments requiring COMM courses as part of their major.
- Reestablish a course rotation and schedule template.
- Review COMM staffing and curricular commitment to other interdisciplinary programs.
- Enhance Internship, and Practicum Opportunities.
- Maintain an active and current radio station in KCSS.
- Enhance the Signal newspaper program to increase readership and enhance its contribution to students and campus.
- Explore ways to use the TV laboratory.
- Maintain a presence at the Stockton Center, including a review of course offerings on ITV/Codec, and online and on the Stockton Campus.

Priority Needs:

- Obtain a stable funding source for the Signal newspaper.
- Seek under-writing for a journalism scholarship to draw local high schools students to our campus.
- In order to maintain and increase our student outreach efforts at the Stockton campus, we consider the securing of 3 units of assigned time for a tenure-track faculty Stockton Coordinator to be a significant priority. The Stockton campus remains a viable site to attract COMM majors, but it requires the presence of a faculty member to engage in academic advising, local outreach to schools and organizations, scheduling coordination and program marketing. In general, we believe that programs with an active on-site Coordinator are better able to sustain and grow academic programs.

Goal 3: Advance Research

Benchmarks

- Achieve national standards of research productivity.
- Pursue research grants.

Objectives:**Objectives: 3.1: Enhance regional and national presence in research.***Strategies:*

- Support faculty active in presenting research at state, regional, national and international conferences.
- Encourage faculty publishing in peer reviewed discipline journals.
- Work with Research and Sponsored Programs to help faculty pursue external funding for research.
- Seek funding for faculty travel to scholarly conventions as the budget allows.

Continuing Needs:

- Secure funding for faculty travel to scholarly conventions as the budget allows.
- Secure assigned time for research for faculty.

Objective 3.2: Encourage undergraduate student participation in research.*Strategies:*

- Mentor students to engage in research projects that can be shared with the campus community, including collaborating with faculty.
- Encourage students to actively participate in scholarly conferences at the state, regional, national and international levels.

Goal 4: Engagement and Partnerships**Benchmarks**

- Foster community involvement activities.
- Foster contact with businesses and agencies.
- Foster independent collaborations.
- Foster partnerships with off campus organizations.

Objectives:

Objectives 4.1: Facilitate department engagement with community*Strategies:*

- Provide guest lecturers in the community and on campus.
- Invite alumni involvement in departmental activities and course work.
- Include service learning components in courses when appropriate.
- Enhance our internship program to build bridges with the community and assist our students in developing competitive career related skills.
- Enhance our communication practicum program with community agencies.

Objective 4.2: Maintain and grow our centrality and connection with the college, the university, other educational institutions, discipline organizations and businesses and agencies.*Strategies:*

- Deliver guest lectures for other campus entities/disciplines.
- Explore possible avenues of course/degree collaboration with other units on campus.
- Pursue interdisciplinary grant funding with faculty from other units.
- Monitor the number of faculty who participate in interdisciplinary opportunities, such as Summit, First-Year Experience and MDIS.
- Increase visibility of our program across campus.
- Encourage faculty participation in leadership activities in discipline organizations, such as Western States Communication Association, National Communication Association, and International Communication Association.

Goal 5: Recognition**Benchmarks**

- Increase departmental involvement in university events.
- Maintain chapter of Lambda Pi Eta in our department.
- Increase visibility of faculty in peer-reviewed research journals.
- Place undergraduates in Master's and doctoral programs.
- Seek support from department alumni.

Objectives:**Objective 5.1: Achieve greater participation in university sponsored events.***Strategies:*

- Foster faculty awareness of and participation in university sponsored events such as RSCA week, and interdisciplinary programs such as the Digital Documentary Program, the Empire Conference, the partnership with Phranakhon Rajabhat University and the CHSS Asian Studies initiative.
- Celebrate and post extra-curricular achievements of our majors.
- Promote honor recognition for our Lambda Pi Eta Honor society members.
- Encourage faculty participation in commencement exercises.

Objectives 5.2: Foster greater visibility for our department, college and university

Strategies:

- Distribute departmental information at university recruiting events and new student orientations.
- Highlight activities of our Communication Studies Honor society chapter, Lambda Pi Eta., as well as other active student clubs.
- Maintain and update regularly a departmental web page.
- Publish departmental news on web page and appropriate CSU Stan news outlets.

Objective 5.3: Promote and market our department, college and university.

Strategies:

- Distribute a departmental newsletter, such as *Connections*.
- Maintain contact with alumni.
- Seek college and university scholarship funds for Communication Studies majors.
- Continue to seek university support for funding of marketing initiatives, such as up-to-date brochures to be shared with appropriate recruiting centers and events.

Summary of Priority Needs, Rank Ordered

- 1. Additional administrative staff**
- 2. Secure funding for faculty travel to present research at conferences**
- 2. Secure independent funding for The Signal**
- 3. Assigned time for COMM Director of Advising**
- 4. Assigned time for COMM Stockton Program Coordinator**
- 4. Additional tenure-track Faculty position**