

COMMUNICATION ARTS • ASSESSMENT PLAN

Fall 2004

I. IDENTIFIED MEASURABLE EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Area Mission Statement and Goals

Unlike other departments at Indiana University South Bend, Communication Arts is considered an Area of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts. As such, the Area Coordinator is the equivalent position to Department Chair, reporting to the Dean of the School, Dr. Thomas Miller.

Mission Statement

The mission of Communication Arts is to prepare students to be effective, culturally literate, ethical communicators. To this end, our programs emphasize the mastery of theoretical and applied communication and critical thinking skills pursued within a framework of both traditional liberal arts and communication studies.

Goals

The following are the goals for students majoring in both Speech and Mass Communication. By the end of a student's final year, Communication Arts majors will be able to:

1. Recall the history of Communication as a social scientific discipline.
2. Explain the basic assumptions and techniques of research methodology in the study of Communication.
3. Define the components involved in a standard Communication model.
4. List a variety of different functions Communication serves in society.
5. Demonstrate application of training, skills and knowledge of Communication processes and functions to the student's career and intellectual interests.
6. Understand and appreciate the importance of Communication in both personal and professional realms of the student's life.
7. Demonstrate the principles of Communication in a speaking environment.

In addition, Speech Communication students will be able to:

1. Apply communication skills appropriate to the interpersonal, organizational and public advocacy realm of communication.
2. Identify and demonstrate awareness of major theoretical and rhetorical concepts associated with human communication.

In addition, Mass Communication students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to produce written or visual communication pieces which reflect concepts learned in journalism, public relations or electronic media.
2. Apply both theoretical and practical skills toward the critical evaluation of mass-mediated culture.

These goals are designed to allow Communication Arts majors the ability to have a mutual foundation in basic principles, as well as a specialization in either Speech or Mass Communication. This ensures both a theoretical and practical knowledge of communication, as well as area-specific experience in their chosen track.

School Mission Statement and Goals

The Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts manifests the fundamental role of the fine, performing, and communication arts in our diverse and global community. We commit ourselves to educate our students artistically and intellectually in order to facilitate personal and professional development. We value excellence in visual, spoken, written, kinetic, electronic, and musical expression. We seek to graduate creative individuals who think critically, communicate effectively, and act responsibly in society.

The following statements (goals) inform our mission:

1. Students are the focus of our endeavors.
2. We are a diverse body of faculty and staff who motivate, lead, and instruct students at the highest possible level and whose active professional lives model the standards we expect of our students.
3. We serve students with diverse educational and professional goals.
4. We pursue significant intellectual achievement and excellence through performance.
5. We create partnerships with our community that provide artistic development and reach audiences that we might not otherwise serve.

Campus Mission Statement and Goals

Indiana University South Bend provides a learning and working environment that attracts and retains students, faculty, and staff; fully develops and challenges individual talents throughout the community; encourages free and spirited collaboration; and maintains a commitment to quality, integrity, and academic freedom.

II. METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING THE ATTAINMENT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Techniques

Pre-Arts Codes

Upon entering the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts, students are assigned a specific code: Pre-Mass or Pre-Speech major. This code identifies them as designated majors within Communication Arts until such time that they pass their upper divisional process, making them either full majors either in Mass or Speech Communication.

Upper Divisional Process

A Pre-Mass or Pre-Speech student may apply for an Upper Divisional review when the following criteria have been met:

1. Completing a minimum of 56 credit hours.
2. All Pre-Speech and Pre-Mass students must pass S121 Public Speaking and W131 Principles of Composition with a C – or above.

3. Students wishing to be Speech Communication majors must pass C200 Introduction to Mass Communication and S205 Introduction to Speech Communication with a C – or above.
4. In addition, Pre-Speech students must pass one of the following courses (depending on their chosen track):
 - a. Public Advocacy track majors must complete S324 Persuasion
 - b. Organizational track majors must complete S223 Business and Professional Communication
 - c. Interpersonal track majors must complete S322 Advanced Interpersonal Communication or S380 Nonverbal Communication
5. Students wishing to be Mass Communication majors must pass C200 Introduction to Mass Communication and J200 Reporting, Writing and Editing with a C – or above.
6. In addition, Pre-Mass students must pass one of the following courses (depending on their chosen tracks):
 - a. Public Relations track majors must complete J219 (formerly 319) Introduction to Public Relations
 - b. Electronic Media track majors must complete T336 Digital Video Production
 - c. Journalism track majors must complete J341 Newspaper Reporting

After the initial criteria have been met, students will present a portfolio of work to the faculty for review. In preparing this portfolio, the student will work with his/her academic advisor to determine the appropriate contents. Because each track within the degree programs is unique, any additional requirements must be track-specific and will be determined in consultation with the student's advisor.

Encounter Questionnaires

Information regarding student interests, success, and overall program quality will be assessed at three points in a student's academic career:

Pre-Encounter Questionnaire

In Freshman Orientation, Transfer Orientation, or in a student's first academic advising session, they will be surveyed for the following information:

1. Their reason(s) for majoring in communication.
2. Expectations of the discipline / faculty.
3. How they heard about the major.
4. Future career goals the degree will provide them the opportunity to pursue.
5. What area students came from (if transferring).

Encounter Questionnaire

Mid-way through a student's academic career, they will be surveyed by their academic advisor for the following information:

1. Strengths of the program (to date).
2. Areas of difficulty they have encountered.

3. Whether the program is meeting their initial expectations, and if not, what can be done to improve it.

Post-Encounter Questionnaire

Once a student has graduated from the program, they will be surveyed for the following information:

1. Overall general experience in Communication Arts
2. Strengths of the program.
3. Areas for improvement.
4. Field they will be pursuing upon graduation.
5. Future goals.

Capstone Course

Speech Communication majors are required to take S400 Senior Seminar in Speech Communication prior to graduation. The capstone course synthesizes material discussed throughout the student's upper level years. In addition, the capstone course is designed as a way to practically apply theory to practical experiences. As such, S400 has the following goals:

1. Review and expand a student's knowledge of different theoretical approaches to human communication.
2. Apply a variety of communication-related, theoretical approaches to a student's personal and professional life.
3. Develop, research and produce high quality research assignments.
4. Help prepare students for either a graduate education or a professional career in a communication-related discipline.

Course Surveys

All courses in the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts require faculty members to administer instructor / course evaluation forms to their classes at the end of the semester. These forms include both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data comes in the form of constructive comments about the class or instructor. Quantitative data comes in the form of 47 questions which provide student demographics (e.g., year, g.p.a., expected grade, preparation time, and attendance record), course content, readings / text, instructor qualities (teaching style, preparation, organization, etc.), examinations / assignments, and overall course experience.

Alumni Survey

Every two years, Communication Arts will conduct a survey of new program alumni to note their professional engagements, how their degree has helped or hindered in manifesting their career, and suggestions for developing the program further in order to better serve the student population. Questions will elicit both quantitative data (e.g., demographics, closed-ended questions) and qualitative data (open-ended questions). Future dates: Spring 2006, Spring 2008, and Spring 2010.

In addition, every five years, an overall alumni survey will be distributed which provides alumni to update their information and provide new demographic data or comments to Communication Arts. Faculty will be able to track and maintain more accurate records of alumni for a variety of purposes. Future dates: Spring 2006, Spring 2011, Spring 2017.

III. PROCESS FOR USING ASSESSMENT INFORMATION TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS

Faculty Collection, Collation, and Analysis

Currently, assessment activities are being performed by both individually and as a faculty. Assessment techniques and strategies for classes are constructed by the individual faculty members, while decisions regarding program changes/additions, creation of program assessment strategies (e.g., upper divisional process, portfolio review, etc.) are voted on, and implemented (with a majority vote), in faculty meetings. Minutes from these meetings are kept electronically on the Arts drive (H). Reports, reviews and other materials are filed with the Area Coordinator, kept with the Communication Arts liaison to the IUSB Senate Assessment Committee, and are provided upon request from a faculty member.

Area (Departmental) Resource Allocations

Although there is no budgetary line item available for Communication Arts assessment, a permanent assessment topic has been added to faculty meetings. This on-going discussion will cover various topics, including assessment reports, problems / concerns, and future activities which will impact the Area and faculty.

Reporting of Changes in Curriculum, Scheduling, Advising, Etc. Resulting from Assessment

All changes that occur because of assessment are discussed during monthly faculty meetings or via e-mail. Changes can include (but not limited to):

- Discussion of program strengths and weaknesses from course evaluations
- Developing new courses based on student need (request)
- Changes to the curriculum for either the BA in Mass or BA in Speech Communication
- Changes to the tracks in either the BA in Mass or BA in Speech Communication
- Scheduling courses (rotation, frequency, and offerings) at various times / days
- Long-term scheduling (4 – 6 years out)
- Academic advising procedures and policies
- General academic policies regarding Communication Arts majors

Revision / Updating of Assessment Plan

Any changes, updates, or additions to the Communication Arts Assessment Plan are done with full faculty involvement and must have the majority vote of the faculty in order for it to be implemented. Once the faculty have agreed upon said changes, any revisions and updates are

done by the liaison to the IUSB Senate Assessment Committee. As such, the liaison compiles the changes / additions, provides them to the faculty for discussion, integrates additional edits or changes which might occur from the discussion, and distributes them to the respective faculty members in Communication Arts, the Dean of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts, and the Senate Assessment Committee.

IV. PARTICIPATION OF ALL CONSTITUENCIES

Faculty

All full- and part-time Communication Arts contracted faculty members have the ability to provide suggestions or comments on assessment strategies, have input on assessment procedures, or do assessment.

In terms of voting, all full-time, contracted faculty members are eligible to vote on changes, additions, or deletions to assessment strategies, tools, or the overall plan. If an element of either the Annual Report, Third Year Report, or the Assessment Plan pertains to associate faculty, then they will be added to the voting procedures.

Students

Communication Arts' Club. Established in 2000, the Club offers students the chance to interact with faculty, host public discussions and forums, and have a direct liaison to the faculty via a faculty representative.

Academic Advising. In Communication Arts, the faculty act as academic advisors to declared majors in the program. Working one-on-one with a student allows faculty to guide students through their program and overcome any obstacles.

Hiring of New Faculty. When interviewing for new faculty members during the academic year, candidates are required to give a 30 minute presentation in a class. As such, the faculty member will elicit comments regarding the candidate's teaching style, content and other areas and provide it to the hiring committee as student feedback.

Informal Student Commentary. On many occasions, students will provide faculty members with comments and suggestions regarding either curriculum changes, course suggestions, academic issues, or other items pertaining to the overall assessment strategies of Communication Arts.

Alumni, Employers and Community

To keep up to date with our alumni, a survey will be administered within the first year that the student graduates. Subsequent alumni surveys will be done every five years.

V. RECORD KEEPING ACTIVITIES

Area (Departmental) Procedures

All assessment-related documents, materials, and communiqués are forwarded to, and through, the Communication Arts liaison to the IUSB Senate Assessment Committee.

In addition, the liaison compiles, writes and files the Annual Reports; compiles, coordinates, writes, and submits the Third Year Reports; and presents any assessment-related material or reports to the assessment committee.

Area (Departmental) Liaison

Currently, Alec R. Hosterman is the Area liaison to the Indiana University South Bend Senate Assessment Committee. The liaison position can change to a different person if another faculty member accepts the duties, the Area Coordinator and Dean of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts agree to the change, and all full-time faculty agree on the change.

Website

At this time, a Communication Arts area web site is under construction, therefore no assessment materials are available to the general public, students, or other faculty via the Internet. However, electronic and hard copy documentation are available through the Area liaison.

Report Submission

The Communication Arts liaison submits all Annual Reports to the Senate Assessment Committee by the required deadlines. Copies are filed with the Area Coordinator of Communication Arts and in the central assessment area within the liaison's office.