Communication Studies

Date: 06/28/2018

Strategic Initiative Type: PPA Instructional

Department Information

Overview - Directions

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<th>Program/Discipline</th>
<th>Date Submitted to Dean (Deadline by 4/27/18)*</th>
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List of Contributors

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<th>Name</th>
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Signature of Area Dean/Director

Please type the name of the area Dean/Director and the date they reviewed the rest of the document. They may also use this space to provide optional comments.

Communication Studies faculty have reflected on how the AAT degree in Communication Studies has positively impacted their program. They have analyzed curriculum and enrollment and made adjustments in course offerings to best meet the needs of students in the program while still providing an adequate number of sections of courses needed for students transferring in other majors. Faculty encourage the use of academic support and provide leadership to students participating in the award-winning Speech Team. Enrollments in COM courses are steady, and faculty promote COM classes in a variety of ways. Faculty have proposed a Communication Education Center to support faculty and students.

Kathy Mendelsohn, 6.1.18
Questions Regarding Degree and Certificate Programs

A.1 Core Outcome I - Completion

Observing the number of students who got Awards in your program(s) using the Program Award Tool, compared to the College historical trends what insights can you share?

Notes: Is your program an awards producer or a “feeder” program? If you have multiple degrees and/or certificates, please analyze and compare the trends among them.

Only a few short years ago, the number of Communication Studies (formerly Speech) degrees awarded was in the single digits. As a discipline, we embraced the new AA-T degree, promoted the degree at new student events such as Panther Prep, and also used the Hartnell Speech Team to generate awareness of the Communication Studies degree.

Per the most recent data, last year the Communication Studies discipline graduated 34 students with the degree.

Of particular note is the fact that these Communication Studies students not only finished their program of study quickly (median time of only 2.9 years), but these students also had some of the lowest numbers of attempted units to reach the degree (72.5).

How do you inform potential students about your program? How do students know which courses they should take for your program and in what sequence?

Potential students learn about the Communication Studies program through targeted marketing campaigns at Panther Prep, as well as two public showcases by the Hartnell Speech Team that promoted the Communication Studies major. Faculty in our discipline let students know they are available to assist with course sequence guidance and serve as a de facto support role to Hartnell counselors.

A.2 Core Outcome II - Time and Units to Completion

Observing the Time & Units data, what insights do you get from the data in general?

Communication Studies is a leader on campus. We have one of the lowest time to degree averages (only 2.9 years) and one of the lowest attempted units to degree averages (72.5). This is an indicator
that current strategies in Communication Studies toward this end are working.

Observing the Subject Analysis tool, and focusing on the percentage of capacity of your program, is the college offering enough sections or too many sections of the courses in your program?
As a discipline, we have worked with the dean, full-time and part-time faculty to have a balanced enrollment management approach. Running data for the past five years, the Communication Studies discipline has a very high fill rate of capacity of 85.82%. This is a strong indicator that we are in the "sweet spot" of enrollment management, and offering just the right amount of sections across the curriculum.

Does the way the courses in your degree and certificate program are scheduled enable students to take courses when they need them, plan their lives around their classes from one term to the next, and complete their program on time? If it does not, are there any obvious fixes?
Part of the success of Communication Studies in regards to student time to completion is a coordinated effort by the full-time Communication Studies faculty to schedule all courses in the degree sequence in such a way that students can get in and get out of the program with no barriers in place due to class scheduling.

How do you work with underprepared students? How do you share the educational resources that are available on campus with all your students? Please give examples of when these resources have worked well and when they have not.
Communication Studies faculty have a noted track record of directing underprepared students to tutorial services. As faculty, we also do not shy away from encouraging underprepared students to pause their course advancement in Communication Studies and taking supplemental courses, first, before continuing the Communication Studies track. Furthermore, the discipline also utilizes library resources, such as guided research classes by library faculty, to help give students tools they need for class success. We also have created a proposal to create a Communication Studies Center to assist underprepared students in our courses. Please see A.5 for the complete proposal.

A.3 Core Outcome III - Transfer

Observing the number of transfer students from the transfer volume data, what insights do you get from the data in general?
Of note is the spike in students transferring to CSU after the implementation of the AA-T and AS-T degrees on our campus several years ago. In Communication Studies, we will ONLY be offering the AA-T, so most of our students will continue to transfer to CSU.

What interactions do you have with students about transfer options? Please give examples.
As full-time faculty in the discipline, we regularly talk to our graduating students about transfer options. We try to find out what area of Communication Studies a student is interested in pursuing, and recommend an appropriate program for continued studies.
How are program learning outcomes aligned with the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in transferring to baccalaureate degree programs?
Our program level outcomes are:

- Conceive, develop and deliver a focused, cogent, and clear oral presentation.
- Explain the transactional and transformative nature of human communication.
- Research, organize, and write a paper concerning the development, implementation, and effective use of various communication theories.

These outcomes are achieved by any student graduating with a Communication Studies degree, and provide a solid foundation for continuing advanced study in the discipline at the four year level.

A.4 Core Outcome IV - Employment

Observing the Employment data, what insights do you get from the data in general?
There is no data available for Communication Studies graduates.

How and when do you inform students about prospective employment opportunities?
The focus we have for our graduates is solely encouraging transfer, with an employment focus only on the minimum of a bachelor's earned.

How are program learning outcomes aligned with the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in their future employment?
Our program level outcomes are:

- Conceive, develop and deliver a focused, cogent, and clear oral presentation.
- Explain the transactional and transformative nature of human communication.
- Research, organize, and write a paper concerning the development, implementation, and effective use of various communication theories.

These outcomes are achieved by any student graduating with a Communication Studies degree, and provide a solid foundation for continuing advanced study in the discipline at the four year level with a focus on employment after the bachelor's degree.

A.5 - Recommendations

Reflecting on your observations and analysis from A.1 through A.4, what recommendations do you have for your program?
A deeper dive into the data shows we are in need of a third full-time faculty hire, as we are approaching the 70% mark of classes taught by part-time faculty members. Furthermore, we are encouraging the implementation of a Communication Studies Education Center. This will provide educational assistance for students in public speaking and other Communication Studies courses.
Communication Education Center

Purpose: The Communication Education Center will be a free, on-campus consultation and tutoring center staffed by faculty and student tutors. The CEC will assist faculty with their presentations for events on campus and for any conferences they might attend, and help students with their public speaking assignments in Communication Studies and other courses. The center can provide assistance with delivery, message construction, and improving visual aids used.

Rationale: Every student is required to take a Communication Studies course in order to transfer. Currently, there are no tutoring services to assist them in passing that core requirement. Public Speech tutoring requires organized space so multiple students can perform speeches for tutors without being distracting to each other. Having a dedicated space solves that problem, and allows students to receive more in depth tutoring than would otherwise be possible. Additionally, the center should house the offices of full-time communication faculty, allowing other faculty to seek Communication Studies faculty’s expertise and advice on any presentations they might be preparing for conferences or the campus community. Finally, having a controlled environment with stabilized recording technology would allow faculty to share their FLEX presentations with other faculty who might otherwise be unable to attend the live presentation. The ability to record speeches in a controlled environment with a live audience present would allow the discipline to explore the feasibility of on-line only public speaking courses. FURTHERMORE, THIS WILL ALLOW HARTNELL COLLEGE TO OFFER A FULLY ONLINE DEGREE, PENDING THE FUNDING AND COMPLETION OF THE CENTER TO ALLOW FULLY ELECTRONIC PRESENTATIONS.

Requirements:

- Office space for 3 Full-Time Communication Studies faculty
- Having Full-Time faculty present is key to maintaining the professionalism of the space and providing access to the services for other faculty members
- Faculty should be responsible for locking and unlocking the rooms, especially any with expensive equipment.
- At least 3 small rooms for the tutors to watch speeches
  - These rooms should be small and near each other with windows in the doors to observe the tutors interacting with the students.
  - There should be multiple rooms to serve as many students as possible
  - Rooms may be small, 6 ft. x 8 ft.
  - Sound proofing recommended.
- Tutors
  - These will be students who have taken and passed basic Communication Studies courses and been vetted by Hartnell College
  - A soundproof recording room
  - The recording room must be soundproof to prevent outside noise from distracting or drowning out students who would be submitting speeches for grades
  - The recording room must be soundproof to help maintain the professional quality of any presentation recorded by Hartnell faculty to be distributed to other faculty or by Hartnell College

Reflecting on your observations and analysis from A.1 through A.4, what commendations do you have for your program?

The Communication Studies program is stable, and growing. We have had success in enrollment management, establishing a clear and timely path for students toward graduation, and solid success
Questions About Previous Activities

B - Questions About Previous Activities

Evaluate the success of each completed activity in Section D.1 (Previously Scheduled Activities) from your Spring 2017 PPA. What measurable outcomes were achieved? Did the activities and subsequent dialog lead to significant change in student learning or program success?

A key focus was to obtain an increase in funding for the Hartnell Speech Team to a sustained 35k per year. As the only academic team representing Hartnell regionally and nationally, the Speech Team is not just a recruiting tool for the Communication Studies program, but it is also a recruiting tool for the college as a whole. Our current budget from the school is $5,000 per year, with additional monies for the national tournament. The team has increased its success and elevated the college’s prestige, earning history making ranks at the 2018 national tournament with the team captain earning a Gold medal out of 98 competitors from around the country.