

Program Review

Department of Communication

March 12, 2004

Submitted by faculty and staff of the
Department of Communication

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II. Proposed Actions by the Educational Policies Committee

A. Courses to be Added

COMM 305: Media Theory and Ethics, 3 cr hrs
COMM 432: Communication Law, 3 cr hrs
COMM 435: Media Programming and Management, 3 cr hrs

Each of these courses meets a need identified in our assessment. Communication law provides communication majors with a background in the legal issues that often confront their field. Radio/TV Programming and Management reflects a need to provide students with a background in the management issues of the field. The elimination of radio practicum, as a result of this course, better reflects a balance between skills and theory.

B. Courses to be Changed in Title/Course Number

Comm 205: History of Mass Communication to Comm 305: Media Theory and Ethics
Comm 230: Newswriting to Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 232: Mass Communication and Society to Comm 232: Media and Society
Comm 251: Writing for Public Relations to Comm 251: Public Relations Techniques
Comm 306: Group Decision Making to Comm 306: Group Communication and Decision Making
Comm 328: Argumentation and Debate to Comm 328: Argumentation and Advocacy
Comm 331: Feature Writing to Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing
Comm 353: Communication Research Methods to Comm 353: PR Cases and Research

The change in numbering for these courses is necessitated by our striving to be more accurate in the language choices of our titles.

C. Courses to be Deleted

Comm 205: History of Mass Communication
Comm 335: Radio Practicum
Comm 405: Senior Seminar

These courses are no longer needed when we introduce the radio programming and management course. Students are sufficiently exposed to production skills in the remaining courses within their major.

D. Courses to be Renumbered Only

None

E. Changes in Requirements for a Major

change **Radio/TV Major**

Old Requirements (34 cr hrs)

Core: (12 cr hrs)

COMM 205: Hist of Mass Comm

COMM 225: Intro to Desk Comm

COMM 232: Mass Comm & Soc

COMM 403: Seminar in Comm

Concentration: (22 cr hrs)

COMM 224: Radio/TV Prod

COMM 335: Radio Practicum

COMM 337: TV Practicum I

COMM 338: TV Practicum II

COMM 339: Broadcast Technologies

Any two of these:

COMM 233: Topics in Comm

COMM 323: Writing Commercial Copy

COMM 230: Newswriting

COMM 334: News Broadcasting

New Requirements (37 hours)

Core: (15 hours)

Comm 225: Introduction to Desktop Comm

Comm 230: Media Writing

Comm 232: Media and Society

Comm 305: Media Theory and Ethics

Comm 432: Communication Law

Concentrations (22 hours) Select one

Production Concentration:

Comm 224: Radio/TV Production

Comm 323: Writing Advertising Copy

Comm 334: News Broadcasting

Comm 337: TV Practicum I

Comm 338: TV Practicum II

Comm 435: Media Programming & Management

Management Concentration:

Comm 224: Radio/TV Production

Comm 337: TV Practicum I

Comm 339: Broadcast Technologies

Mgmt 310: Principles of Management

Mgmt 320: Human Resources Management

Mgmt 332: Organizational Theory and Behavior

Comm 435: Media Programming & Management

*Complete any minor outside of Dept. of Communication or complete any proposed sequence of 15 hours with a minimum of 6 hours at the 300 or above level and approval of advisor and department chair.

The primary change in this major is the addition of the management concentration and the requirement of a minor or individualized course sequence outside of the department of communication. The management concentration allows students who do not want to enter production work another choice. The requirement of courses outside of the department reflects our belief that these majors must be well balances in their knowledge. The media world is situated in many aspects of our world and additional coursework in these areas better prepares these students.

change **Journalism Major**

Old Requirements (34 cr hrs)

Core: (12 cr hrs)

COMM 205: Hist of Mass Comm
COMM 225: Intro to Desk Comm
COMM 232: Mass Comm & Soc
COMM 403: Seminar in Comm

Concentration: (15 cr hrs)

COMM 230: Newswriting
COMM 331: Feature Writ & Edit
COMM 332: Print News Pract
COMM 334: News Broadcasting
COMM 354: Adv Broadcast Report

Electives: (9 cr hrs)

ART 233: Photography I
COMM 224: Radio/TV Prod
COMM 233: Topics in Comm
COMM 240: Prin of PR
COMM 323: Writ Comm Copy
COMM 337: TV Pract. I
COMM 338: TV Pract II

New Requirements (37 hours)

Core: (15 hours)

Comm 225: Introduction to Desktop Comm
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 232: Media and Society
Comm 305: Media Theory and Ethics
Comm 432: Communication Law

Concentration:

Comm 224: Radio/TV Production
Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing
Comm 332: Print Media Practicum (3 hrs)
Comm 334: News Broadcasting
Comm 337: TV Practicum I

Electives:

Engl 216: Persuasive Writing
Engl 320:
Engl 321: Memoir Writing
Comm 338: TV Practicum II
Comm 360: Special Topics in Communication
Comm 323: Writing Advertising Copy

*Complete any minor outside of Dept. of Communication or complete any proposed sequence of 15 hours with a minimum of 6 hours at the 300 or above level and approval of advisor and department chair.

The primary change in this major is the requirement of courses outside of the department of communication. The requirement of courses outside of the department reflects our belief that these majors must be well balanced in their knowledge. The mediated world is situated in many aspects of our world and additional coursework in these areas better prepares these students.

change **Mass Communication Major** (43 cr hrs) to **Media Studies** (48 hours)

Core: (15 cr hrs)

COMM 205: History of Mass Communication
COMM 225: Introduction to Desktop Communication
COMM 232: Mass Communications and Society
COMM 240: Principles of Public Relations
COMM 403: Seminar in Communication

Concentration: (16 cr hrs)

COMM 224: Radio/TV Production
COMM 230: Newswriting
COMM 251: Writing for Public Relations
COMM 323: Writing Commercial Copy
COMM 329: Business & Professional Speaking

Core: (15 hrs)

Comm 225: Intro to Desktop Comm
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 232: Media and Society
Comm 305: Media Theory and Ethics
Comm 432: Communication Law

Theory and Research Methods (21 hrs)

Comm 240: Principles of Public Relations
Comm 306: Group Comm and Dec Making
Comm 326: Communication & Technology
Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing
Stat 213: Applied Stats for Social Sciences

Electives: (12 cr hrs)

Choose at least 12 credit hours from following:

COMM 203: Interpersonal Communication
COMM 233: Topics in Communication
COMM 306: Group Decision-Making
COMM 326: Communication and Technology
COMM 327: Organizational Communication
COMM 328: Argumentation & Debate
COMM 394: Independent Study
COMM 395: Independent Study

Soc 314: Research Methods in the Social Sciences OR

Soc #XX: Qualitative & Ethnographic Research Methods

Interdisciplinary Theory/Criticism (9 hrs)

One of the following:

Psci 103: Politics in Film
Thtr 210: Survey of American Film
Engl 240: Fiction into Film

Two of the following:

Art 231: Survey of Advertising Principles
Psy 306: Social Psychology
Psy 314: Human Motivation
Psy 331: Learning and Memory
Psci 325: Public Opinion and Propaganda

change **Public Relations and Marketing Communication Major** (45 cr hrs)

Core Theory: (12 cr hrs)

COMM 232: Mass Communication & Society
COMM 240: Principles of Public Relations
BUS 309: Principles of Marketing
BUS 311: Advertising

Core Theory: (15 hrs)

Comm 240: Principles of Public Relations
Comm 232: Media and Society
Comm 305: Media Theory & Ethics
Mktg 309: Principles of Marketing
Mktg 311: Advertising and Promotions Mgt

Core Research, Writing & Skills: (15 cr hrs)

COMM 225: Introduction to Desktop Communication
COMM 230: Newswriting
COMM 251: Writing for Public Relations
COMM 329: Business and Professional Speaking
COMM 353: Communication Research Methodologies

Core Research, Writing and Skills: (18 hrs)

Comm 225: Intro to Desktop Comm
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 251: Public Relations Techniques
Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing
Comm 353: PR Cases and Research
Comm 329: Business and Prof. Speaking

Core Capstone: (6 cr hrs)

BUS 348: Marketing Management
COMM 405: Communication Campaigns

Core Capstone Course:

Comm 405: Communication Campaigns

Electives: (12 cr hrs)

12 hours from the courses listed below.
Courses must be chosen from at least 2 areas with at least 6 hours from courses in the Department of Comm.

Electives: 12 hours from one of the following areas.

Visual/Graphic Production Area

COMM 224: Radio/TV Production
COMM 335: Radio Practicum
COMM 337: TV Practicum I
ART 205: Studio Fundamental: Computers in Art
ART 210: Graphic Design
ART 231: Survey of Advertising Principles
ART 233: Photography I

Visual/Graphic Production

Comm 224: Radio/TV Production
Comm 337: TV Practicum I
Art 205: Studio Fundamentals: Computers
Art: 231: Survey of Ad Principles
Art 233: Photography

Human Communication Area

COMM 203: Interpersonal Communication
COMM 306: Group Decision Making

Media Relations

Comm 323: Advertising Copy
Comm 328: Argumentation and Advocacy
Comm 334: News Broadcasting
Comm 432: Communication Law
Engl 216: Persuasive Writing

COMM 328: Argumentation and Debate
THTR 205: Acting

Communication in Business Area

COMM 306: Group Decision Making
COMM 326: Communication and Technology
COMM 327: Organizational Communication
BUS 330: Professional Salesmanship & Sales Management
BUS 347: Consumer Behavior

Writing Area

COMM 323: Writing Commercial Copy
COMM 331: Feature Writing and Editing
ENGL 216: Expository & Persuasive Writing
ENGL 217: Written Business Communication
ENGL 218: Technical Writing

Engl 321: Memoir Writing

Business Communication

Comm 203: Interpersonal Communication
Comm 306: Group Comm & Dec Making
Comm 326: Communication & Technology
Comm 327: Organizational Communication
Mktg 330: Professional Sales Strategies
Mktg 347: Consumer Behavior
Mktg 348: Marketing Strategies

Our department recognizes that many students may not want to major in communication. As such, we developed minors for each of our major areas. To provides more flexibility for the SAU student.

change **Communication Minor** (15 cr hrs) to **Communication Studies** (15 hrs)

COMM 203: Interpersonal Communication
COMM 225: Introduction to Desktop Communication
COMM 306: Group Decision Making
COMM 329: Business and Professional Speaking
Either COMM 327: Organizational Communication
Or COMM 328: Argumentation and Debate
Speaking

Comm 101: Public Speaking or
Comm 110: Basic Human Communication
Comm 203: Interpersonal Communication
Comm 306: Group Comm & Dec Making
Comm 328: Argumentation & Advocacy
Comm 329 : Business & Professional

Add **Broadcast Journalism Minor** (16 hrs)

Comm 224: Radio/TV Production
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 334: News Broadcasting
Comm 337: TV Practicum I
Comm 232: Media & Society *or*
Comm 432: Communication Law

Add **Journalism Minor** (16 hrs)

Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 225: Introduction to Desktop Communication
Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing
Comm 332: Print News Practicum (3 hrs)
Comm 232: Media & Society *or*
Comm 432: Communication Law

Add **Radio/TV Minor** (16 hrs)

Comm 225 Radio/TV Production

Comm 232: Media & Society
Comm 323 Writing Advertising Copy *or*
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 337: TV Practicum I
Comm 339: Broadcast Technologies

Add **Public Relations** Minor (15 hrs)

Comm 240: Principles of Public Relations
Comm 230: Media Writing
Comm 251: Public Relations Techniques
Comm 353: PR Cases and Research
Comm 432: Communication Law *or*
Comm 232: Media and Society

F. Change in credit

Comm 101. Public Speaking.

We would ask that this course be changed from a 2 credit course to a 3 credit course. The rationale is as follows:

- Additional contact time would allow for additional speaking opportunities for students. At present students give 2-3 graded speeches. Additional contact time would allow for 4-5 graded speeches/activities.
- In consistent with the primary way that public speaking is taught at other universities.
- Would not pose a hard ship on the department. As the course is only two credits and since we offer only 2-3 sections a semester, faculty who are teaching the course are 1 credit shy of a 12 credit load. The only economic impact is when we need to hire an adjunct instructor and that cost is minimal. 2 of the 3 sections taught this semester are full time teachers.
- Would not pose a hard ship to students. The vast majority of students take Comm 110 as their oral communication requirement. The additional credit would not be noticeable for the students.

New Course 4 pt plans

Communication 305

Communication 432.

1. TITLE AND DESCRIPTION:

Communication 432 COMMUNICATION LAW (3 credits): Provides understanding of historical, legal and ethical issues involved in freedom of expression. Principles and case studies in communication law, constitutional guarantees, libel, privacy, contempt, privilege, copyright, regulatory agencies, public policy. Discussion of major court decisions in each area of communication law and historical/political climate out of which the cases emerged provide the framework for the course. Prerequisite: junior or senior standing.

2. RATIONALE:

The Communication Law course provides students a background in the legal issues that often confront professionals in the field.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

In other courses communication students are taught professional conventions, some of which have developed to avoid legal exposure. In Communication Law, students receive instruction and experience with constitutional and case law to provide them with understanding of why those professional conventions are practiced. This will enable students to make active decisions about what and how to communicate rather than simply following formulas.

4. COURSE RESOURCES:

Library and computer resources are available to deliver this course.

Course Fact sheet for COMM 435:

1. Title and Description:

Media Programming and Management. COMM 435. 3 cr. Hrs.

Prerequisite: Senior status for Radio/TV major, or instructor approval.

Offered every Spring semester

A study of past and present media programming philosophies and techniques, with an eye toward addressing future programming trends, and the needs of the industry from the perspective of programmers and managers. Media organization, structure, and behavior will also be studied. Final projects will be used as a means for the practical application of the theories studied.

2. Rationale:

This course will act as a capstone course for the Communication Radio/TV major. As such, it will bring together relevant theories and practices present in contemporary mass

media programming and management. Guest speakers will add to the practical application of the knowledge the students have acquired, and help prepare them for their future careers.

This course is not a general education course.

There is no other course that provides the Communication student with this information and these specific skills.

The learning outcomes addressed by this class include the major skill areas of information gathering, translating, analyzing, planning, presenting, and collaborating.

This is accomplished through the creation of reports, papers, and presentations which will exhibit the student's understanding of the issues and positions involved, and provide them a means of communicating that knowledge to others.

Since this is a capstone course for majors, a 400-level designation is appropriate. The range of topics and assignments required indicates that a 3 credit hour status is appropriate.

3. Relationship to Other Courses:

There is no course similar to this one.

4. Course Resources:

This course is taught in the traditional format.

Additional library resources may be required once course content is developed in greater detail.

G. New Course Sample Syllabi

**Comm 360 Mass Communication Law
Spring 2004**

Professor: Dr. Ann Preston **Office:** 42 Galvin Fine Arts Center
Phone: Office: 333-6046 **E-mail:** prestonann@sau.edu
Home: 370-6665

Office Hours*: Mon./ Wed. 1-3 p.m., Tues./Thurs. 11-2:30 p.m.
*Additional hours by appointment.

Catalog Description: Provides understanding of historical, legal and ethical issues involved in freedom of expression. Principles and case studies in communication law, constitutional guarantees, libel, privacy, contempt, privilege, copyright, regulatory agencies, public policy. Discussion of major court decisions in each area of communication law and historical/political climate out of which the cases emerged provide the framework for the course.

Objectives:

1. to develop knowledge of the context of legal and regulatory issues of media practice
2. to expose students to current legal and regulatory issues
3. to enable students to understand articles about legal and regulatory issues found in trade publications
4. to explore the repetitive nature of regulatory initiatives affecting media practice

Required Texts: *Mass Media Law*, Don R. Pember
Associated Press Manual of Style, Associated Press

Evaluation Criteria:

Class Assignments

Participation	5%
Reference Sources	5%
Book Report	5%
Trial Role Play	20%
Panels (work groups)	20%
Case Summaries	20%
Law Report	25%

Attendance Policy: Attendance is advised. Participation points and papers will be drawn from material discussed in class, including presentation of student book and law reports, as well as from the texts.

Academic Honesty: Honesty is expected. Plagiarism, or representing the work of another as your own, is grounds for failure. Statements lifted verbatim from other publications must be

cited as quotations. Ideas, summaries or paraphrased material, and other information taken from the literature must be properly referenced.

Special Accommodations: Students requiring special accommodations for learning are encouraged to share their concerns or requests with the professor as soon as possible.

Course Outline

Week	Topic	Readings
Jan. 14, 16	Introduction The Legal System	Chapt. 1
Jan. 21, 23	First Amendment Content Form Prior Restraint	Chapt. 2-3
Jan. 26, 28, 30	Libel Elements Constitutional Defense Other Defenses	Chapt. 4-6
Feb. 2, 4, 6	Privacy	Chapt. 7-8
Feb. 9	Case Enactment 1 (Cherry Sisters)	
Feb. 11, 13, 16	Free Press/Fair Trial Open Courts	Chapt. 12
Feb. 18	Case Enactment 2 (OJ or Sheppard)	
Feb. 20, March 1, 3	Rights of Journalists Confidential Privilege Freedom of Information	Chapt. 9, 10
March 5 March 15, 17, 19	Panel Prep Panel 1: Iowa/Illinois Sunshine Book Report Presentations	
March 22, 24, 26	Obscenity	Chapt. 13
March 29, 31 Apr. 2	FCC: Broadcast, Cable, Internet Case Enactment 3 (WDAY)	Chapt. 16
April 5, 7, 14	Intellectual Property	Chapt. 14
Apr. 16	Panel Prep	

Apr. 19, 21	Advertising Regulation	Chapt. 15
Apr. 23	Panel 2: New Media, Old Law (?)	
Apr. 26, 28, 30	Law Report Presentations	
May 2-6	Final Exam Week	

III. Overall Description of the Department and its Programs

A. Review of the program's description in the current catalog for accuracy and adequacy

Major and minor requirements must be changed as per previous section.

Three courses need to be added. They are:

Comm 305: Media Theory and Ethics

Comm 432: Communication Law

Comm 435: Radio/TV Programming and Management

Three courses need to be deleted:

Comm 205: History of Mass Communication

Comm 335: Radio Practicum

Comm 405: Senior Seminar.

Seven courses need to be changed in title/course number. They are:

Comm 230: Newswriting to Comm 230: Media Writing

Comm 232: Mass Communication and Society to Comm 232: Media and Society

Comm 251: Writing for Public Relations to Comm 251: Public Relations Techniques

Comm 306: Group Decision Making to Comm 306: Group Communication & Decision Making

Comm 328: Argumentation and Debate to Comm 328: Argumentation and Advocacy

Comm 331: Feature Writing to Comm 331: Advanced Media Writing

Comm 353: Communication Research Methods to Comm 353: PR Cases and Research

Course descriptions need to be changed for the following courses:

Comm 353. PR Cases and Research Methods. Should read as follows.

Course prerequisites need to be changed for the following courses:

Students in the following courses will need to receive a grade of C or better to pass the class.

Comm 225: Introduction to Desktop Communication

Comm 230: Newswriting

Comm 251: PR Techniques

Comm 330: Advanced Media Writing

Rationale-- Students need to do more than pass these skill courses. Our thinking is very much the same as the general education requirement for oral communication.

B. Significant changes since the last program review

1. Department's organization, title, and curriculum.

Five years ago the department proposed significant educational changes. As we write this document today the benefits of those changes are significant. All of our majors are doing very well. We have approximately 135 students presently pursuing communication majors. Specifically, the journalism major and public relations and marketing communication major have grown considerably in the past five years. Our Radio/TV major provides a consistent 25-30 majors. As the assessment portion of the program review indicates, the quality of our offerings is high. Students are challenged by the curriculum and they are responding to these challenges.

Our general education courses in the oral skills area continue to meet the need of providing all students with a sound introduction to the field of communication and an opportunity to work on their oral communication skills. The introduction of the Comm 110 course allowed us to broaden the common communication experience to include interpersonal and group skills.

The organization of the department has not changed. Since the last review we have secured two additional faculty lines. Dr. Ann Preston is in her third year with SAU and we are presently searching for another full-time tenure track faculty member. Even so, another faculty member is needed. The university's overall growth along with the growth of our majors strains our advising and teaching loads. We will continue to press this issue within the context of the university planning cycle.

The department has added two co-curricular organizations since the last review. A student chapter of the professional organization International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) was added four years ago to provide students with additional opportunities to network and learn outside the classroom. Membership in the chapter varies from year to year with about 12-35 students. St. Ambrose Radio Theatre (START) is a new organization in the approval process. START seeks to provide students with a creative experience combining storytelling and radio.

2. TV-11.

The most significant changes to TV-11 have been in the area of digital editing and digital field recording capabilities. TV-11 now has four DV (digital video) field camera/recorders, thanks, in part, to a grant from the Scott County Regional Authority. We also have 3 non-linear digital editing systems to compliment the linear analog systems still in use.

The television station continues to be one of the major resources of the department. Apart from serving the educational needs of the major, the TV station facilitates the ability of the University to communicate with the Quad City area, promote the University itself,

offer instructional materials to a larger audience, and offer a full range of educational, informative, and entertaining programming to the community. ICN programming and satellite downlinks are also facilitated by the TV station.

Cable networks SCOLA (a foreign language news channel) and Tech TV (a computer, new technology channel) are our main programming sources. “TV-11 Dateline” continues as the student-produced weekly newscast, along with live sports events, coaches interview shows, Scott County election returns, various guest lectures, and other important events.

TV-11 can be seen on the Mediacom cable system in 90,000 homes in the Illinois and Iowa Quad City region.

3. KALA (FM)

Since the last program review, KALA has made some technological advances. We’ve installed a new transmission system – transmitter, transmission line, tower, and antenna. The antennae are now protected from icing by radomes – fiberglass coverings. This will extend our coverage slightly, provide for more reliable on-air equipment performance, and insure greater safety with a newer, heavier gauge tower and guy system.

The on-air studio and studio A have new mixing consoles. We have the new, digital EAS monitor which permits the reception of weather- and Amber-alerts, along with the national and state emergency alert messages.

Digital production workstations, mini-disc field recorders, and non-linear editing capabilities have also been acquired and are in use for both on-air, and in-classroom use.

We’ve increased significantly our Catholic programming on KALA with the addition of programs from Maryknoll, the Catholic Communications Campaign, and Redemptorist Ministries in St. Louis. The latter includes Spanish language localized content from parishoners of the Diocese of Davenport.

KALA continues to be a quality learning lab for students, while serving the Quad City metropolitan area with specialized programming for communities underserved by other media providers in the area.

4. Individual Events Speech Team

5. The Buzz

In the past 5 years, The Buzz has turned over almost all of its computers to keep pace with publishing technology and software. Our move to digital photography, begun 10 years ago, is almost complete with the purchase of a digital SLR camera. While expensive, it will save money in the long run in photographic paper, chemicals and time. This will allow The Buzz to continue to publish more pages of color. 5 years ago, The Buzz could afford to published 4 pages of color in most issues. Now it often publishes 8.

We have purchased various inputting devices in the past 5 years (negative and flatbed scanners, card readers, zips) so we can read whatever information on whatever media anyone has. This has helped the students to problem solve and learn the various media.

This year the Buzz purchased Mac OS 10.3, Adobe Photoshop 7.0. Acrobat 6.0, Illustrator CS and InDesign CS. The plan is to install them this summer and be able to send our files to the printer by e-mail, thus saving driving time and energy. We currently use Quark, the industry standard at this point, but several papers are switching to InDesign, what we are teaching is not just the software, and the programs will match what has been installed in GA 139.

The fact that students will be taught InDesign and that GA 139 will feature it will most likely help the Buzz continue to grow. Thanks to the efforts of the communication department faculty, more and more students are choosing to participate on the Buzz, resulting in competition for spots on the staff and stories on the front page. The 1999-2000 staff consisted of 2 people with virtually no staff. This year, the staff meetings have consistently numbered 15-20 people and some stories just don't make it in the paper because of space problems. A better paper is the result.

C. Outside consultations since the last program review, and any subsequent program effects of such consultations

The primary outside consultations since the last program were a formal survey of our recent graduates. The results of this are detailed in the assessment section. Additionally, the faculty and IABC continually bring speakers to campus. As these speakers discuss what is relevant in the field we learn from them. All of this information contributes to the decisions that we make about our curriculum.

D. Long-range plans for the department

1. We need to secure additional faculty to better serve our students. We need a faculty member that can service our advertising course and provide students with another perspective in the classroom. We need to build some redundancy into our faculty so that faculty can teach other courses and renew their energy.

2. Continue to update our technology. The needs of the Ambrose Communication Center require that we stay abreast of the latest technological advances in broadcasting.
3. Develop additional formal methods of assessment. While we are pleased with the present assessment plan we need to examine further how to best assess our accomplishments.

IV. Assessment of the Department of Communication, its Programs and its Co-Curricular Entities

The purpose of this plan is to systematically gain information regarding how well our students are learning what we intend them to learn and to use this knowledge to improve the educational experiences of current and future students at St. Ambrose University. Parts of this plan have already been implemented, and parts will be implemented in the future.

Assessment Plan for the Communication Majors (Journalism, Public Relations, Radio/TV)

Introduction: In its “Mission Statement,” St. Ambrose University identified the following elements, which, we believe, are central to the current assessment plan:

“The mission of St. Ambrose University is to enable its students to develop intellectually, spiritually, ethically, socially, artistically, and physically in order to enrich their own lives and the lives of others.”

Departmental Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Department of Communication at St. Ambrose University is to prepare students to practice the professions of broadcasting, journalism and public relations with both ethics and excellence. We commit ourselves to creating an academic structure that connects the department to the teaching, learning, research and mission of the university, as well as to the broadcasting, journalism and public relations industries.

Students obtain a broad background in theoretical and applied areas in communication through their course work. Primary research among both faculty and students is integrated into coursework, allowing faculty and students to contribute to the popular culture and/or to the discipline’s body of knowledge .

The ethical treatment of news sources, research subjects, and clients in courses, practical and capstone research is emphasized.

Students are enabled to develop socially and spiritually through the Learning Labs, the campus chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators, and capstone projects that provide student research and creativity to local service agencies through a student public relations agency.

Learning Labs Mission Statements

....paste in ACC

....add “Buzz”

....add IABC

ST. AMBROSE RADIO THEATRE (START) creates opportunities for students interested in or majoring in communication and allied disciplines to bring their talents together and showcase them. Courses and other excellent co-curricular opportunities tend to split students apart. Public relations students work with the IABC. Broadcast students work with KALA and TV-11. Journalism students work on the *Buzz*. Theater students perform in live productions. Radio theater reunites script writing, legal issues, performance, broadcast production and PR/promotion.

Objectives for Teaching and Learning

The departmental mission statement affirms two different kinds of learning objectives, content (including attitudes and values) objectives and professional skills objectives. The following list of objectives was derived from a comprehensive review of literature about curriculum in broadcasting, journalism and public relations; the accreditation standards published by the Accrediting Council on Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication; “Portal to the Future,” the report of the Public Relations Society of America’s research into public relations education; and informed by weekly departmental assessment meetings.

Content Objectives

1. Theory: an understanding of the evolution and application of normative and descriptive models and theories used to diagram and explain interpersonal, public, persuasive and mediated communication are “substantive necessities,” according to communication professionals surveyed for one recent article about curriculum.
- 2-3. Legal Requirements and Ethical Issues: responsible, value-based consumption, comprehension, construction and sending of communication messages; celebration of free expression tempered with respect for those rights with which freedom of express sometimes conflicts.
4. Criticism: interpretation, understanding and evaluation of dramatics, consumer, and public discourse.
5. Appreciation: development of an aesthetic sense, enjoyment of and informed point of view about the various forms of communication.

Skills Objectives

- 6-7. Writing and Speaking: ranked as the most important skills by 95 percent of communication professionals surveyed, writing and speaking require cogent, creative and persuasive personal and professional communication; in its professional manifestation, writing requires use of Associated Press style.
8. Artistic: creating effective messages through artistic expression in such manners as acting, directing, word choice, layout and design, photography, and audio and video production and editing.

9. Critical Thinking: able to use basic problem-solving techniques for a variety of purposes, including strategic message construction; able to develop a personal perspective and to defend decisions through reading.

10. Research: able to conduct and understand secondary research; able to conduct basic level original research using interviews, focus groups, content analysis and survey methods.

Methods for Assessment in the Major

Outcome Assessment: In-Class Activities

The creation of a series of objectives for each course taught in the department. Each course has on file with the department chair, a statement of intended outcomes that reflect the specific content and skill objectives. Table 1 presents the departmental objectives and the courses in which catalog copy indicates that those objectives play a significant role.

Table 1
Objective by Course

Objective	Courses			
	Broadcasting	Human Comm	Journalism	PR
1 Theory	205, 232, 403	110, 203, 306, 326	232, 403	232, 240, 405
2 Law	225, 232, 403		225, 232, 403	225, 232, 240, 405
3 Ethics	225, 232, 403	328	225, 232, 403	225, 232, 240,
4 Criticism	354		354	
5 Appreciation				
6 Writing	230, 334, 339		230, 331, 332, 334, 339	230, 251
7 Speaking		329		329
8 Artistic	225, 335, 337, 338		225, 335, 337, 338	225, 405
9 Critical Thinking		306		405
10 Research	230, 331, 354	230, 331, 354		230, 353, 405

Each major in the department has been evaluated in terms of outcomes and objectives. This on-going process becomes one of assuring that each course has specific objectives; and that the departmental objectives are present in each of the majors. Recent review of the majors yielded the following findings:

Objective 1, theory, was represented primarily in the introductory courses, when students are, according to the literature, least likely to find it useful and, therefore, memorable. Further, a

primary vehicle for teaching theory, Comm 232, also carried primary responsibility for teaching law and ethics, quite a lot to expect of an introductory survey course.

Objective 2, law, was addressed only through a week here or there within other courses. Ethics, while originally the most significant element of Comm 232, was finding itself squeezed by other needs being fulfilled by Comm 232.

Objectives 3 and 4 are addressed in only a cursory way, while Objective 6, writing, was underrepresented in the core requirements for Public Relations and Marketing Communication. Both the broadcasting and journalism curricula depend upon general education to deliver Objective 7, speaking. Objective 9, critical thinking, while embedded within the activities and assignments for many courses, is only emphasized in the manifest descriptions of two departmental courses, neither of which is included in the broadcast and journalism curricula.

Outcome Assessment: Co-Curricular Activities

Each teaching lab, co/extra curricular activity, and “off campus” component of the curriculum has a series of goals and objectives linked to the department’s mission.

Table 2 presents the departmental objectives and the co-curricular activities that contribute toward achieving them.

**Table 2
Objective by Co-Curricular Activities**

Objective	Courses			
	Broadcasting	Human Comm	Journalism	PR
1 Theory				
2 Law	KALA			
3 Ethics			<i>The Buzz</i>	
4 Criticism	KALA		<i>The Buzz</i>	IABC
5 Appreciation	KALA, START			
6 Writing			<i>The Buzz</i>	
7 Speaking	TV-11, KALA, START			IABC
8 Artistic	TV-11, KALA, START		<i>The Buzz</i>	
9 Critical Thinking			<i>The Buzz</i>	
10 Research	KALA			IABC

Any new activity or course would be measured and ultimately adopted only if it is consistent with the mission of the department.

Outcome Assessment: External Measures

The department has tracked its graduates for many years. The database maintained by Donald “Duke” Schneider allows us to stay in touch with many departmental alumni. The database contains about 150 individuals, who receive the department newsletter via e-mail. This process will be continued and enhanced through the commitment the university has made to improved use of computers.

Students and graduates are surveyed under a variety of informal and formal circumstances. Informally, at the conclusion of the senior capstone courses in which students are expected to integrate the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the curriculum, students are debriefed regarding their experiences with the integrative course and with the curriculum.

While findings indicate a high degree of respect and satisfaction regarding course content, concerns about sequencing surface every semester. These concerns result from structural constraints and cannot be corrected within the department. While much progress has been made in assisting student to integrate material presented throughout the curricula, there is much yet to do, as shown by the infamous quotation from a recent graduate: “If I’d known we were supposed to use what we were taught in other classes [in the capstone course] I might have paid more attention.”

Informal exchanges continue after students graduate, and specific comments and recommendations sent via e-mail have included:

“Teach students how to be creative. My employers expect me to generate ideas instantly.”

“Add a law class.”

“I used theory on the job!”

“Require the use of Lexis/Nexis; I use it all the time on my job. “ (several alumni have made a similar suggestion)

“Most of what I do is read, organize and summarize.”

The department undertook a brief postcard survey of recent graduates in Fall 2003 to discern how graduates perceive the preparation they received at St. Ambrose University. The response rate was 24%, and equal percentage of surveys was returned because the address had expired. Percentages and cross tabulations were generated using SPSS. Of those who responded to the postcard survey, 59.3% are employed in the communication professions, and other 7.4% are employed in positions somewhat related to communication. Of respondents, 77.8% said that the curriculum realistically portrayed the profession, while 22.3 felt the portrayal of the profession was less than accurate.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance [in their professional lives] of a series of knowledge and competence areas. Table 3 presents the importance ratings. Respondents were also asked to rate their own competence in each area. Table 4 presents the competence ratings. Respondents overwhelmingly agree with the department that these knowledge and competencies are important or very important. Surprisingly, A larger percentage of respondents who are not employed in the communication professions rated Media Writing & Editing as Very Important than of those employed in their major. Perhaps those not employed in their major perceive [lack of] writing talent or skill to be a barrier to breaking into the communication professions.

Table 3
Competence Areas by Importance Ratings

Competence Area	1 Not Important	2	3	4	5 Very Important
Knowledge of Discipline			4.0%	32.0%	64.0%
Knowledge of Profession			4.0%	12.0%	84.0%
Media Writing & Editing		8.7%	21.7%	13.0%	56.5%
Visual Competency	4.2%	8.3%	12.5%	25.0%	50.0%
Software Competency			20.8%	41.7%	37.5%
Hardware Competency	12.0%	8.0%	16.0%	24.0%	40.0%

Self report of perceived knowledge is frequently used in institutional research as a proxy for actual knowledge. More than 75% of recent graduates rate themselves as competent or very competent in their knowledge of the discipline and the profession. Their assessment of their own competence drops slightly in the area of media writing and editing, more in the areas of visual competency, software competency, and hardware competency. The overconfidence literature supports the notion that people in all professions except meteorology overestimate their knowledge and competence. Mindful of that caveat, departmental observes that it must remain especially vigilant in reinforcing high standards in writing, visual communication, and computer use.

Table 4
Competence Areas by Competence Ratings

Competence Area	1 Not Competent	2	3	4	5 Very Competent
Knowledge of Discipline			14.8%	44.4%	40.7%
Knowledge of Profession			25.9%	44.4%	29.6%
Media Writing & Editing			30.8%	34.6%	34.6%
Visual Competency		19.2%	15.4%	42.3%	23.1%
Software Competency	3.7%	7.4%	25.9%	37.0%	25.9%
Hardware Competency	4.0%	12.0%	12.0%	48.0%	24.0%

Not surprisingly, those employed in the communication professions rated themselves more competent in knowledge of the communication profession than those not employed in their major. Those who felt that the curricula realistically portrayed the profession also rated themselves as more competent in the profession.

Responses to open-ended questions revealed only two trends: (1) Respondents valued the hands-on opportunities they experience through classes, practica and internships. (2) Respondents wish they had greater skill in visual communication problem solving and software.

The department intends to use focus groups and the e-mail database to explore and explain the percentages, as well as to consider ways to address areas for continuing development.

Outcome Assessment: Portfolios and Capstone

Portfolio preparation is key to career opportunities for communication majors. Students accumulate and maintain portfolios of published articles, packages produced for TV-11, and public relations plans books.

Journalism students produce an end-of-semester reel that is shown in a public forum to provide feedback.

Comm 403 Senior Seminar serves as the capstone for the journalism and R/TV students. Comm 405 Communication Campaigns serves as the capstone for Public Relations and Marketing Communication students. The capstones offer the opportunity to include presentations of research to which all members of the department can be invited; and the opportunity to invite members of the professional community. Work in the capstone is designed to serve as portfolio material.

Comm 405 Communication Campaigns was proposed during the 1999 Program Review, and is now offered every semester. During the course of the semester, students produce guided research and public relations materials for a community client. They present their findings and materials to an invited audience of communication faculty, local professionals and the client. Audience members and students are asked to rate or comment on the students' level of achievement in the six essential skill areas identified by the Task Force on Public Relations and Advertising Education. Those outcomes are:

Information Gathering: conducting secondary, journalistic and social science research to obtain information to include in public relations products and to answer public relations strategy questions

Translating: converting the information gathered into terms appropriate for the intended public.

Analyzing: using data and theory to answer public relations strategy questions such as the dissection of attitudes, the identification of publics, the identification of copy points, and the selection of media vehicles.

Planning: developing communication strategies to move publics through the cycle of awareness through adoption; using time management tools such as management by objectives, Gantt charts and Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT); and budgeting

Presenting: creating public relations products that deliver the intended message to the desired publics. This requires excellent verbal skills, both written and oral; understanding of and skill in visual communication; and competence with word processing, pagination, and presentation software.

Counseling: advising clients on the use of public relations products to reach public relations goals, and advising clients on the public relations implications of policy, products, architecture, and other aspects of modern business.

Although audience members resist numerical ratings, their comments reveal performance level “as expected” of not-quite-professionals in most areas. Trends observed through five semesters show persistent weaknesses in Analyzing (specifically the selection of media vehicles); Planning (identity, technological and budgetary consistency of recommended strategies); and Presenting (specifically seriousness of oral presentation, language use in written presentation). The department is responding to these weaknesses by altering one course to emphasize analysis strategic planning over data gathering, requiring a theory course, and by requiring an advanced writing course.

Rationale choosing these methods of assessment:

These methods were chosen because the department believes that they best reflect the ways our curricula can be assessed. Other approaches were not pursued because of practicality or mission consistency. For instance, a comprehensive departmental examination would not be possible, as the department houses diverse majors. There are no value-added standardized tests for the communication disciplines and/or professions.

In-class assessment. Examinations, assignments and terms papers are the primary means of in-class assessment. Faculty who teach the courses will easily be able to select a random sample of work from each course at the end of each semester.

Co-curricular assessment.

External measures. An exit survey or focus groups are under consideration since the response rate and self selection of respondents for the alumni survey was troubling. The alumni survey measures graduands’ perceptions of how well the overall program met each of the stated objectives, the importance of those objectives, and job placement. The survey will be replicated at intervals to ensure that any changes that have been implemented from one program review to the next can be evaluated.

The records of students who have participated in research will indicate whether the number of students participating in research activities outside the classroom is increasing or decreasing, as well as indicate the skills of the students involved.

The copies of papers submitted for publication will provide evidence of the students’ research and APA writing skills.

The copies of papers accepted for presentation at conferences will provide evidence of students’ research, APA writing, and oral presentation skills.

GRE psychology subject scores will allow faculty to evaluate the degree to which our graduates have learned the basics relevant to the discipline.

Placement records provided by the Career Development Center will indicate whether students completing the Psychology major have been accepted into psychology graduate programs as well as the types of employment they are obtaining.

Portfolios and Capstones. The capstone courses offer a unique opportunity to view student accomplishments holistically and in context. The public presentation of the capstone project, with audience evaluation, will be expanded from the Communication Campaigns course to the **Comm 454 Advanced News Reporting (formerly Comm 353 Advanced Broadcast Reporting) course**. Final projects will be presented and circulated for review by the departmental faculty and professionals to discover areas of strength and areas to further strengthen.

Evaluation of the Departmental Assessment Plan

During the departmental program review and analysis of the documentation of student performance, the faculty will review the effectiveness of the methods of assessment selected and make any appropriate changes.

