

## Assessment Plan and Report for Southern Utah University

### Communication Department 2003-2004

#### Communication Department Mission Statement

The Southern Utah University Department of Communication provides opportunities for its students to learn and apply the principles, theories and skills of human communication and mass media in situations that simulate the professional world. The department operates in a student centered environment that fosters the essential skills needed for effective human interaction and prepares students for successful careers.

#### Communication Department Goal Statement

The department operates in a student-centered environment to foster communication skills in 1) writing, 2) speech and oral presentations, 3) researching and understanding theoretical aspects, 4) specific media practices, and 5) interpersonal communication situations requiring leadership abilities, critical thinking, and ethical behavior.

#### Five-Step Assessment Plan and Report

Communication Dept. Goal Statement	Program intended Education Outcomes	Means of Program Assessment and Criteria for Success	Summary of Data Collected	Use of Results
<p>1. The Communication department fosters skills in writing that enable effective human interaction and preparation for career success.</p>	<p>1. Writing proficiency- Superior writing skills including, grammar knowledge and demonstrated writing ability. Students will learn appropriate style, effective research presentation, structure, documentation, attribution, logic and reasoning ability.</p> <p>Specifically students learn:  the ability to adapt a message to different audiences; execute a proper news release; write and prepare theoretical essays; create messages for mass campaigns; properly document and credit material created by others; write properly organized media messages for different media applications.</p>	<p>Written projects including term papers are required in lower division courses and all upper division courses.</p> <p>A pre-core course is required of students in the fall of 2004 to improve writing skills of all Communication majors as they begin their course work.</p> <p>Instructors use various means of assessment including written feedback to assignments, critique of messages written for different audiences, evaluation of group projects, journal writing and activities where writing assignments are prepared, planned, organized and completed. Live writing exercises are used in journalism courses.</p>		

		Pre-requisites are required for upper division courses skills and writing courses.		
2. The Communication department promotes skills in oral presentations and speech communication enabling effective human interaction and preparation for career success.	<p>2a. Students are to be skilled in speech communication-research, writing, delivery modes and critical evaluation of oral presentations.</p> <p>Research: The intended outcome is for students to be able to synthesize material from research on the Internet, from library sources and personal sources and cite these sources properly. Students analyze the research they collect for value from each source.</p> <p>Delivery modes: students learn to deliver messages in a variety of settings including public, mass media, group and interpersonal communication situations.</p> <p>Evaluation: Students will know how to evaluate persuasive and informative messages and make critical judgements of messages in all types of social settings.</p> <p>2b. Students in the Forensics program practice and perform oral presentations.</p> <p>2c.To offer students more training in oral presentations as they move from the university to the job market.</p>	<p>2a. In class performances are required in all upper division courses and most lower division courses. These vary according to the course. For example in Organizational Communication and other courses, students report on final research projects at the end of the course work.</p> <p>Students are given opportunities to evaluate presentations in some upper division courses. Assignments encourage critical evaluations.</p> <p>2b. National team and individual rankings and success at tournaments is a means of assessment for the forensics program.</p> <p>2c. A course that focuses on professional presentation has been created and is available for majors. The course assesses the level of professional presentations students are capable of making as they prepare for the workplace</p>		

<p>3. The Communication department fosters research and understanding of theoretical concepts of human and mass communication.</p>	<p>3a. The students demonstrate that they know and understand research methods and the basic theories in human and mass communication</p> <p>Students are required to learn to construct surveys and are taught to use SPSS. They learn to write quality papers or scripts in upper division courses. Students prepare and present oral presentations and are expected to pass examinations on theoretical material.</p> <p>Many students demonstrate case analysis proficiency</p>	<p>3a. Students conceive, plan, research and write term papers in the upper division courses which are graded and critiqued by their professors. For example at the present time the Communication Theory course serves as a capstone course for majors. The students are assessed on entering the Communication Theory course on the knowledge they have gained in the department prior to entering the class. To do this a 195 item pre-test is administered. This is an assessment of the departments teaching and the knowledge gathered by students to this point. Students write a theory paper and these are submitted and graded and reviewed by faculty. The best papers are selected as competition papers. These papers are read and reviewed and then ranked by department professors to determine the quality of each for presentation. Top papers are presented in a session attended by majors and faculty.</p>		
<p>4. The Communication department provides simulations of real-world experience and job preparation through intense practical courses and internships.</p>	<p>4a. Practicum courses in specific media allow students to learn the best practices and produce professional quality work in newspaper, radio, television, advertising and public relations and in speaking situations.</p> <p>4b. The department advises students to complete at least three hours of internship credit. The department</p>	<p>4a. We track success in student competitions.</p> <p>Students are assessed in various ways by the instructors as they complete projects in the different practicum classes offered by the department. For example stories are published in the Journal and packages are aired on SUTV and on Power 91-radio. Also press releases and advertising campaigns are used by local media.</p> <p>4b. Summarize and critique internship supervisors final summary of student performance. Evaluate</p>		

	<p>has recently tracked internships so students can seek positions which offer the best learning experiences. The department requires that students filling internships be at least of junior standing in order to understand and learn during the internship most effectively.</p>	<p>the strength of each internship used for intense practical learning on the job.</p>		
<p>5. The Communication department promotes skills in interpersonal communication, leadership, critical thinking, and ethical behavior.</p>	<p>5a. Useful interpersonal communication skills applicable to all areas of life.</p> <p>5b. Leadership Students take on leadership roles in various settings in communication courses. This experience allows students to simulate workplace features and be prepared for leader-member roles in the workplace.</p> <p>5c. Critical thinking Successful participation in classes and practicum demonstrates proficiency in critical thinking and analysis of problems.</p>	<p>5a. 1. Review of Gen. Ed. Course material by University General Education Curriculum Committee.</p> <p>5a.2. Senior exit interviews with graduation seniors. We are using a survey instrument plus a short answer qualitative sheet to assess their satisfaction and suggestions as graduating comm. majors.</p> <p>5b. Leadership- The practicum and upper division courses offer leadership experience in working with other students and carrying out the functions of the groups. Students assess the groups progress in some of the courses as do faculty members in the practicum and upper division courses.</p> <p>5c. Critical thinking. Courses call for discussion and questioning exercises which allow for critical thinking by students in Communication courses. In the critical thinking and listening course, test questions are keyed to learning objectives described in the syllabi materials and have students</p>		

	<p>5d. Ethical Behavior. The desired outcome is for students to understand what ethical behavior is both personally and in the various disciplines taught in the Communication department.</p>	<p>encounter previously unknown situations to apply critical thinking/listening skills.</p> <p>5d. Ethical behavior. Ethics discussions in upper division courses. Specific media ethic discussions and situational analysis of ethical behavior. For example in Journalism ethical behavior is discussed in each of the courses offered.</p>		
<p>6. The Communication department requires a senior assessment of general knowledge of communication studies, theory and practice. The Communication Theory course is currently used for this purpose.</p>	<p>The Communication Theory course offers a pre-test and post-test for students. The outcome of each is first to assess the student's knowledge on entering the capstone course and then again on leaving the course with the results of the post-test.</p> <p>The course is used to assess the preparation students have received and evaluate their readiness to enter the job market following graduation.</p>	<p>The pre-test is used as an assessment of student learning to this point and is also used to assess the overall learning in previous courses taken from the Department of Communication.</p> <p>The post-test requires a 70 percent success percentage in order for the student to pass the communication theory course.</p> <p>The students are assessed by the final paper or project completed in the course and the quality of the paper written using communication theories learned. Students must earn a 70 on a scale of 0-100 to pass the course. Papers are read for excellence by a panel of professors.</p>		

<p>7. The Communication department wants to protect the integrity of its programs and to solidify the content of the courses taught in the department through internal review.</p>	<p>The internal review is a tool to be used to assess what is being taught in courses in the department and to increase and improve the rigor of courses and the integrity of courses.</p> <p>The intended outcome of the review is to examine the content of the body of knowledge that needs to be delivered especially in courses that are being taught by multiple instructors. The intended outcome is not to diminish in any way the academic freedom of the communication faculty.</p>	<p>Assessment of course syllabi is an important method used plus common course discussions and the sharing of information between colleagues.</p> <p>Assessment criteria are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Learning objectives clearly and correctly stated that address appropriate course content.</li> <li>2) Assessment from objective to objective that is clearly specified and 3) that all course activities that are evaluated will relate to the objectives for the course.</li> </ol> <p>Peer review will be a part of this assessment so professors can learn from each other in the department.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Classes visited by invitation each semester once this is in place. The department chair will make assignments.</li> <li>2) Syllabi success will be mentored by senior faculty and the department chair and the department administrative council.</li> </ol>		
<p>8. The communication department desires to have external review of its program and courses in order to continue to improve and keep up with current changes and adjustments made in similar departments of communication across the nation.</p>	<p>The intended outcome of this objective is to help the department keep moving forward and adjusting as necessary in order to offer the best possible education to our students. The outcome will allow us to keep the integrity of our courses and maintain and increase the rigor of the courses.</p>	<p>Following a year of preparation, we would allow an outside group from an equivalent regional university to come and evaluate the department to assess the needs of the SUU department of communication.</p>		