

The Instructional (Academic Affairs)
Program Review Narrative Report

1. College: Laney College

Discipline, Department or Program: Communication Studies

Date: November 6, 2012

Members of the Instructional Program Review Team: Dr. Angela Cherry, Catherine Brewer, Shirley Brownfox

2. Narrative Description of the Discipline, Department or Program:

Please provide a general statement of primary goals and objectives of the discipline, department or program in light of the College's priorities and goals. Include any unique characteristics, degrees and certificates the program or department currently offers, concerns or trends affecting the discipline, department or program, and any significant changes or needs anticipated in the next three years.

The mission of the Communication Studies Department is to examine human communication in culturally and socially diverse contexts so that students may learn to communicate more effectively and be sensitive to multiple perspectives.

We have recently become a transferable department/ program renamed Communication Studies. It was accepted and approved by the curriculum committee (November 2011). Communication Studies has been approved by both the CSU system as well as the CSU system. All communication regarding the approval process was communicated via the Chair of Curriculum Committee and the Articulation Officer of our college. Now that we have achieved this status, we can meet the needs of students who desire to major in our field.

See Attachment A for the overview of the Priorities and Goals of Laney College.

3. Curriculum:

Is the curriculum current and effective? Have course outlines been updated within the last three years?

Using advanced technology in terms of Educational Accountability programs, the Communication studies department has been in-line with requirements and standards set by college administration. All active courses have Student Learning Outcomes listed with each course as required, processed and approved within Administrative guidelines. The courses are currently in the process of up-dating all course assessments as well. Courses that are not active which have been de-activated and is still in course inventory.

1. Please indicate how many active courses are in the department inventory.

Communication 1A-Introduction to Speech;

Communication 2A--Fundamentals of Oral Interpretation; Communication 20-Interpersonal Communication;

Communication 44-Argumentation and Debate;

Communication 45-Principles of Public Speaking.

[5 courses in Communication studies have been up-dated.]

*The following courses are updated: Communication 1A; Communication 2A, Communication 20
Communication 44, Communication 45.*

1. How many of those have been updated in the last 6 years?

Through monthly department meetings, all courses have been discussed and revised as necessary. Each semester courses are reviewed and examined in terms of what textbooks being used, as well as teaching methods. The monthly department meetings are the link for all Communication faculty members and the chair of the department to review courses, syllabi, SLOs and other needed materials that are in-line with keeping courses up-to-date.

1. If courses have not been updated within the last 6 years, what plans are in place to remedy this?

Communication studies courses are currently up to date.

1. Has your department conducted a curriculum review of course outlines? If not, what are the plans to remedy this?

1. COMM1A Introduction to Speech
2. COMM2A - The Fundamentals of Oral Interpretation of Literature
3. COMM 20 Interpersonal Communication Skills
4. COMM 44 Argumentation
5. COMM 45 Public Speaking

1. What are the department's plans for curriculum improvement (i.e., courses to be developed, updated, enhanced, or deactivated)? Have prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories been validated? Is the date of validation on the course outline?

*The following courses have been deactivated:
Comm. 15 A and Comm 15B*

Currently, the department has no prerequisites but we would like to explore the option of requiring some prerequisites for specific courses such as Comm2A and Comm20.

1. What steps has the department taken to incorporate student learning outcomes (SLOs) in the curriculum? Are outcomes set for each course? If not, which courses do not have outcomes?

Student Learning Outcomes are described within Task-Stream (the Accountability Management database program). The department has completed SLOs for active courses and these SLOs have received _____ approved by the SLO college committee.

SLO's have been approved for Comm1A, 2A, 20, 44, and 45.

1. If applicable, describe the efforts to develop outcomes at the program level. In which ways do these outcomes align with the institutional outcomes? (Note: if your department has no certificate or degree offerings and does not offer a course as part of one of the College's associate degree programs, then skip questions 3.h. and 3.i.)

During Dr. Cherry's tenure as Department Chair, monthly meetings and workshops have been required of the adjunct faculty to help develop, create, assess and enter the Student Learning Outcomes into Task-stream for active courses in the Communication Department. These are in alignment with the requirements of the institutional outcomes and have been approved by the committee overseeing Task-stream committees, which also approve SLOs and PLOs.

1. Provide one program level outcome (PLOs), and the assessment tool that will be used to measure the program level outcome this Fall 2012 and Spring 2013.

Because our Department was recently approved for a program, we are in the beginning stages of creating and measuring the PLOs.

1. How are the SLOs and PLOs, if applicable, mapped to the college's Institutional Learning Outcomes? (See Attachment B for copy of the Laney College Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs))

Student Learning Outcomes are entered in the Task-stream management database, and are in accordance with the Program Learning Outcomes. SLO's in the active communication courses link directly to the competencies of critical thinking, communication skills, as well as professional and personal development.

Outcome Assessment Method: speak, listen and critically think to resolve conflict and get your message across as intended through exams, role-play, oral presentations, essays, group discussions, projects, class discussion, and oral feedback. Deliver presentations that are clear in message and voice, using appropriate nonverbal communication.

Oral presentation: strategize proactively and reflect on interactions that are empathic, nondefensive, therapeutic, appreciative, and critical, while listening to others. Demonstration, role-play, discussion, essay, exams use conflict to strengthen group cohesion; apply effective communication to resolve issues.

*Group work: group projects, role-play, demonstration, exam, essay, voice shared visions and goals in order to create, build and maintain relationships.
Written work, discussion, exam, demonstration, group work.*

Research and think critically about the influence and impact of Mass Media on society. Essay, Oral presentation, discussion, group work, term paper

Recommendations and priorities.

See Attachment C for listing of the courses in your discipline/department. If applicable, this document also lists the certificate and degree programs offered. Be sure to check the appropriate boxes and submit completed forms as part of this Program Review.

4. Instruction:

1. Describe effective and innovative strategies used by faculty to involve students in the learning process. How has new technology been used by the department to improve student learning?

We involve our students through class lectures/discussions, critical thinking exercises, asking them to provide constructive feedback both verbally and written, cooperative learning exercises, speeches, group work, self-reflective journaling, etc.

For example, one assignment used by one instructor in Comm1A – Introduction to Public Speaking – classes is a group activity called The Structure Function Study. It requires students to work together using critical thinking skills, public speaking skills, and group communication skills to complete a task together which reinforces lecture material, cooperative learning exercises and self-reflective journaling done in class.

Technology has been used by the department in some Smart classrooms, which allows faculty to use up-to-date material via advanced software in the form of power-point presentations and videos that explain and show statistical data —all this helps to enhance faculty lectures and activities with their students, especially visual and auditory learners.

An example of technology being used in the classroom is in Comm44 where the instructor will reserve a computer lab in the Tech Center and either use the assistance of reference librarians or show the students themselves how to access databases for research. Students are allowed some in-class time to work with partners to research and craft their persuasive debates/arguments.

1. How does the department maintain the integrity and consistency of academic standards within the discipline?

The department maintains the integrity and consistency of academic standards and discipline through thoughtful communication among each other as well as fostering communication with other disciplines that connect with our mission and goals of the department.

One example of this communication is our on-going dialogue with the counseling department in regards to student academic and social needs.

Discuss the enrollment trends of your department. What is the student demand for specific courses? How do you know? Identify factors that are affecting enrollments.

Retention Rate

<i>Fall 2009</i>	<i>Fall 2010</i>	<i>Fall 2011</i>
461	469	468
339	407	395
74%	87%	84%

- delayed graduation due to fewer course offerings for particular programs*
- Higher enrollment with less classroom space, and the same amount of time to complete speaking assignments whether in a class of 30 or 45, which creates scheduling challenges*
- Fewer faculty assignments due to budget constraints*
- higher stress levels for students in completing courses that are offered only once per academic year, for example Comm20 and Comm44*

1. Are courses scheduled in a manner that meets student needs and demand? Please describe the criteria and considerations used in the scheduling process.

Courses are scheduled in a manner that meets student needs and demands as our classes are consistently full. There is a high demand for all sections being offered including M/W, T/TH morning, afternoon, and single evening class sessions. We have monitored the enrollment over the years to see what days/times most successfully attract students and continue to offer classes on those days/times. However, as a result of fewer sections being offered, we are often forced to turn students away.

The Communication Studies department class schedule takes into consideration those students who work part-time and full-time in addition to taking classes at school.

1. Recommendations and priorities.

Perhaps put a cap of 35 students for all Communication courses

5. Student Success:

1. Describe student retention and program completion (degrees, certificates, persistence rates) trends in the department. What initiatives can the department take to improve retention and completion rates?

Our classes are well attended and students complete them at a high rate for the requirements to transfer to 4 yr. classes. Many of them transfer to the UC and CSU system according to the Counseling Department..

Some of our students reported to instructors (within our department) that as a result of our classes they were encouraged to pursue graduate degree programs in Communication or related fields.

Trends of student's retention at community college have increased at unprecedented rates. Classroom enrollment has more than doubled with the impact of budget cuts and may increase again depending on new legislation and developments. Communication courses usually have large enrollments and course room wait lists, where students wait to see if any drops will occur for the first two weeks of class, so that they can enroll into the course before the add period stops. Students are so desperately in need of classes to graduate that they will still request to add to courses that are closed or even have a lot of students on the wait list. Budget cuts impact the students due to fewer course offerings, which result in delayed graduations.

The Communication department would like to request that more classes be added to the already limited amount of courses be offered so that students could have a better chance in completing their degree programs in a more timely fashion and help increase chances of landing a career in their field of work. Also create more courses in Communication studies, which have a general education requirement to increase retention and completion rate.

Identify common challenges to learning among your students? What services are needed for these students to improve their learning? Describe the department's efforts to access these services. What are your department's instructional support needs?

There are a lot of ESL students enrolled in the classes and some do really well and others could benefit from taking more ESL classes before attempting to take a Communication course as many of them believe the course will teach them to better communicate in English by teaching them English.

1. Describe the department's effort to assess student learning at the course level. Describe the efforts to assess student learning at the program level. In which ways has the department used student learning assessment results for improvement?

SLOs have been assessed in the following courses: Comm1A, Comm44 and Comm45 in hopes of learning how to better serve the students at the course level.

Recommendations and priorities.

Our next priority is to assess Comm20 the next time it is offered on the schedule.

Please either embed or attach data that you will be referencing. Use the Program Review data applicable to your department supplied by your Dean. In addition, the following link, (<http://web.peralta.edu/indev/research-data/documents/>), will take you to more data that you may find helpful as you study the overall efforts and impact of your unit. See the appropriate tab in attachment C referencing the assessment data.

6. Human and Physical Resources (including equipment and facilities)

1. Describe your current level of staff, including full-time and part-time faculty, classified staff, and other categories of employment.

The Communication Studies department employs one full-time faculty, and two part-time faculty.

1. Describe your current use of facilities and equipment.

We use whatever resources are available to us in our classrooms as well as the Tech Center. We would like to see more SMART classrooms on campus.

1. Are the human and physical resources, including equipment and location, adequate for all the courses offered by your department (or program)? What are your key staffing and facilities needs for the next three years? Why?

Although (approximately 80%) of our classrooms are technologically equipped as "Smart Classrooms" we assert that 100% would positively impact our instruction and student's presentations. Better ventilation, and sound barriers (ie not sharing a classroom that has only a cloth barrier between it and an adjacent classroom ex: E255) and classroom size and structure (movable desks not in a lecture hall) would enhance delivery of instruction and presentations from students.

1. If your department experienced a reduction in resources, describe the impact of that reduction on the overall educational quality of your unit and the College.

It would depend on the type of resource being reduced. If the resource were PT instructors, it would place a greater burden on the students, as fewer class sections would be offered. In addition, it would place a greater burden on the department chair. In addition, PT faculty is allowed teach up to three 3-unit classes, which can alleviate some of the burden on FT faculty.

If the resource was SMART classrooms, perhaps the instructor could reserve more time in a computer lab, although those labs fill quickly.

1. How does the department plan to sustain the quality of instruction and/or services offered through your department in the current environment of reduced resources?

We will continue to offer the same level of excellence in teaching and encouraging our students to meet their educational goals. Modifications to class assignments may need to be made in order to accommodate the increasing number of enrollees. We plan to continue using affordable textbooks/readers

What does the department recommend that the college do to maintain quality educational programs and services?

Begin to hire more full-time faculty

2. Please provide any other recommendations and priorities. (Use the appropriate request forms within Attachment D.)

7. Community Outreach and Articulation

For Career and Technical Education Programs:

1. Describe the department's connection with industry. Is there an Advisory Board or Advisory Committee for the program? If so, how often does it meet? Is the program adequately preparing students for careers in the field? How are you assessing this?
1. Have students completing the program attained a foundation of technical and career skills? How do you know? What are the completion rates in your program? ????
1. What are the employment placement rates? Include a description of job titles and salaries. What is the relationship between completion rates and employment rates? Job titles and salaries for what positions and in what field?
1. What industry trends are most critical for the future viability of the program? What are the implications of these trends for curriculum development and improvement?

For transfer programs:

1. Describe the department's efforts in meeting with and collaborating with local 4-year institutions. How is the program preparing students for upper division course work?

We meet with recruitment officers and counselors from local 4 year institutions. We also communicate with UC and USC universities via email. The Communication department works very closely with the transfer centers, counseling center, and other student outreach centers in making sure the department efforts in preparing students for 4 year universities are a priority. We also prepare college students for 4-year local universities and colleges, by continuing to teach material through different mediums, such as class demonstrations, activities, speeches, electronic means and research projects and exams. The reinforcement theories lectured on in class through practical applications help students understand the complexities of communication.

1. Has there been a Transfer Model Curriculum identified for your program? Has it been implemented? If not, what are the plans to do so?

The Curricunet program uses a combination of models to analyze the Associates of Arts transfer degree program.

For all instructional programs:

1. Describe the department's efforts to ensure that the curriculum responds to the needs of the constituencies that it serves.

We work closely with students to ensure that their needs are served.

1. Please indicate how many of the full and part time faculty have been evaluated in the last three years. For faculty that have not been evaluated in the last three years, what are your plans to become current.

We are in the process of evaluating full-time and part-time faculty employees; the process may be completed by 2013.

1. Recommendations and priorities.

*The budget needs to reflect the ability to hire more full-time and part-time instructors that would possibly facilitate more courses offered, while meeting demands of student needs.
We would also like to establish a communication lab in conjunction with ESL, and foreign language students with peer tutoring to ensure student success in the classroom and beyond.*

Checklist of Tasks

1. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will establish the schedule for completion of the Instructional Program Review at the beginning of the academic year or the semester in which the Instructional Program Review will occur. The schedule will include a timeline and deadlines for completion.
1. The Division Dean, in conjunction with the Department Chair (or lead faculty in the discipline) will assemble the Instructional Program Review Team.
1. The Instructional Program Review Team will review and analyze the Core Data Elements.
1. The Instructional Program Review Team will assemble and review the course outlines.
1. The Instructional Program Review Team will complete the Instructional Program Review Narrative Report.
1. The Instructional Program Review Chair will submit the narrative report, electronically, to the Division Dean. The Dean will review the report and forward it to the Vice President of Instruction at the College.
1. The Instructional Program Review Chair will share the recommendations and priorities with the other Colleges that have completed a comparable disciplinary program review at District-wide disciplinary meetings.
1. The Instructional Program Review Team will develop an action plan based upon the recommendations and priorities from the Instructional Program Review that feeds directly into the College's integrated planning process.
1. The Executive Vice President of Student Learning will compile a summary of recommendations and priorities from all the Instructional Program Review Narrative Reports and submit the summary to the College President, the College's planning and/or budget committees (if applicable), and the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services.