

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, HAYWARD

Designation Code: 2003-04 CAPR 6
Date Submitted: June 3, 2004

TO: The Academic Senate

FROM: Committee on Academic Planning & Review (CAPR)

SUBJECT: Communication Five-Year Review

PURPOSE: For Approval by the Academic Senate

ACTION
REQUESTED: Acceptance of the Five-Year Program Review of the Communication Program and approval of the continuation of the program without modification

I. Background

Overview description of the program

Effective Fall 2002, the Departments of Speech Communication and Mass Communication merged to form the new Department of Communication. As such, this recently formed department has no history of five-year academic reviews.

The merger of Speech Communication and Mass Communication was the result of top-down, pragmatic decision-making, and was catalyzed by the administration rather than initiated by the faculty in both disciplines. However, according to Chair Anne Pym, the merger has, in fact, benefited both faculty and students, given a paradigm shift in the field of communication resulting in shared and overlapping theory, practice, and career opportunities in these two areas. Pym stressed that the department is unique in the country, offering programs of study that range from one-on-one to highly mediated communication. As a result of the merger, the faculty have developed a core of required courses for all majors. The Department now offers a B.A. in Communication with nine options: Advertising Communication, Broadcasting Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Journalism Communication, Mass [Media] Communication, Organizational Communication, Photo Communication, Public Communication, and Public Relations Communication. The Department is currently revising its M.A. program in Speech Communication to include public relations, advertising, and broadcasting, and plans to enroll new graduate students for fall 2004. In addition, the Department plans to complete a revision of its undergraduate curriculum, with an eye to refining some, and possibly eliminating other, options. The Interpersonal Communications option, for example, is being considered for elimination.

Overview of the documents submitted to CAPR

To comply with CAPR's Policies and Procedures for Five Year Review and Plans (00-01 CAPR 7), the Communication Department submitted to CAPR the following documents:

1) a comprehensive Self-Study; and 2) a Plan for the development of the program for the next five years. An Outside Reviewer's Report (with the corresponding departmental response) was not submitted, since such a review has not yet been conducted, given the department's newly merged identity. The Self-Study presented: 1) an overview of the new department; 2) applications submitted for new tenure-track positions; 3) program outcomes assessment document; 4) relevant program data for the past five years; 5) a comparison with existing programs; 6) program achievements since formation in Fall 2002.

II. Self-Study (Fall 2002 – Winter 2004)

Overview Established as a result of the merger of the Speech Communication and Mass Communication Departments in Fall 2002, the new Department of Communication's faculty comprise: nine tenure-track faculty; 20 lecturers; and two Graduate Teaching Associates. Total SFR is 17.05. This newly formed Communication Department now offers both a broad and integrated education in communication, preparing students to meet the demands and challenges posed by the "Information Age" in personal and civic spheres as well as in high-tech, multimedia, and other communications-related industries.

Last Five-Year Plan Not applicable since the Department was formed in 2002.

Academic Programs The undergraduate major continues to grow: Fall 2003 saw an increase to 376 majors (from a total of 327 in Fall 2002). To serve the needs of a growing undergraduate population, the Department of Communication has increased caps in some of its courses. Most notably in COMM 2100: Introduction to Communication and COM 3810: Introduction to Communication Theory -- both of which are new courses and are now required as part of a common core for all students -- the cap has gone from 50 to 90. The Communication faculty are concerned that nearly doubling the caps of such courses will, of necessity, limit the opportunities for one-on-one interaction with students and provide fewer opportunities for student practice in research and writing, while simultaneously meeting more students' needs to complete core requirements. Other new courses recently developed for the new common core in the major are: COMM 3200: Introduction to Communication Research and COMM 4875: Senior Seminar in Communication. COMM 4005: Histories of Film was also added to the curriculum, with students at the Contra Costa campus participating through distance technology. The graduate program in Speech Communication has been expanded to include public relations, advertising, and broadcasting.

Additionally, the faculty have proposed a new Master of Arts in Communication that, according to the Vision Statement appended to their Five-Year review documents will teach "theory, criticism, research, practice, and ethics in communication to prepare students for service in public and professional spheres, on local, national, and international levels."

Tenure Track Position Applications The Department had planned on requesting two new tenure-track positions to be hired during 2004-05 for 2005-06: one position in Technology and Communication (a position formerly held by Pat Radin, deceased) and a second position in Argumentation and Public Address. These positions were defined as essential for the development of the newly configured department in its mandate to merge media and modes (oral, written, and visual) of communication. The quality of the newly merged department will depend upon attracting more tenure-track professors to teach core courses (now taught predominantly by lecturers) as well as to implement the new graduate program being proposed.

Comparable Programs in Other Universities The Report continues to emphasize the uniqueness of this newly merged department, noting its singularity both within the Bay Area and throughout the CSU. Neither San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, nor UC Berkeley offers a comprehensive communication program combining mass communication with speech communication. The Report makes the claim that the newly merged Communication Department at CSU Hayward will serve a compelling need in the "new-media rich" Bay Area for communication graduates who have experienced the depth and breadth of such a combined program. Most CSU campuses, further cited by way of comparison, offer separate programs and departments for Speech Communication and Mass Communication. The three CSU campuses that have combined the two areas under the single aegis of communication are: San Marcos, San Bernardino, and Pomona. However, no data referring to undergraduate and graduate enrollments in any of these programs were included.

Outcomes Assessment Plan The Department has just begun to pilot the assessment of three learning outcomes in Spring 2004: knowledge, skills, and disposition. These are to be assessed at the entry level in Communication 2100 and at the exit level in Communication 4875. The faculty are currently developing rubrics for these outcomes, to be used with assignments embedded in each course.

Resources The Department currently has nine regular tenure-track faculty, but this is a misleading statistic. A number of faculty members are serving in other positions throughout the university: one as full-time Director of General Education; another as a half-time administrator; a third as President of the CFA, teaching in the department only on a 1/3 basis. Combine that with one professor FERPing 1/2 time, another at 1/3 time, add in the Chair's duties removing her from a full-time teaching load, and it becomes readily apparent that the Department can really only count on the equivalent of six full-time teaching positions, while it is attempting, meanwhile, to fulfill its mandate of building a new program. The recent, untimely death of their colleague, Pat Radin, has also taken a toll, particularly because Professor Radin's area of expertise in new media. The Department expects to lose not only two FERPers in the next five years but one or, possibly even two, more faculty who are approaching retirement age. The Department relies on 20 lecturers and two graduate teaching associates to teach the majority of its offerings. Temporary faculty teach: 57% of the courses; 60% of the required core courses; and 48% of the upper division courses. Because of the specialized, technical nature of some of the Department's course offerings, it is often difficult to find competent lecturers to staff sections. In addition, at the same time the numbers of majors opting for rhetorical theory and criticism are rising, the two professors in this field are likely to retire within the next five years. In contrast to its concern about the nascent crisis building vis a vis a dwindling full-time teaching staff, the Department is currently satisfied with its other staff resources and expects that satisfaction to continue over the next five years. However, the Department has demonstrated a compelling need for monies for equipment crucial to the functioning of its media lab, studios, control room, computer lab, radio station, etc. The Report provides a comprehensive list, along with cost calculations.

Faculty Achievements (since its inception, Fall 2002) Faculty have been active scholars in their fields, publishing books, journal articles, book chapters; making presentations at professional conferences; producing a PBS documentary; as well as garnering grants and awards, including research grants and a "Professor of the Year" award. The Report also notes "Program Achievements" in this section, among them a weekly student magazine show carried on CNTV; the creation of the Center for the Study of Media and American Culture at the Contra Costa Campus (a collection of almost 3000 film titles dating as far back as 1893); a growth in the number of students served by the Communication Lab (from 775 in 2002-3 to 953 in two quarters of 2003-4), as well as the development of a full media lab where outmoded analog equipment has been replaced with state-of-the-art digital equipment.

Justification for Over 180 Units The Report does not address the 180-unit limit, but Dr. Pym has verified that the new major in Communication does not require more than 180 units for completion.

Summary of Supporting Data

Because of the recent creation of the new Department of Communication, the range of data provided reflects the history of two recent departments before being combined into one. Data available before the merger convey a fairly consistent average undergraduate section size, ranging from 19.1 (in 2000) to 22.70 (in 2002), with graduate section sizes up in 2002 to five, from a low of three in 2001, and a high of eight in 1998. On average, 86 undergraduate degrees and five graduate degrees have been awarded yearly (although there is some inconsistency in the reporting figures for 2002, where there was an inexplicable drop to 27 undergraduate degrees granted -- most likely an error in reporting.) In 2002, total FTEF was 18.33; total SFR 17.05, in contrast to a system SFR of 21.00 (2001). When they were separate departments, SFR in Mass Communication had been ranging from 17.14 to 18.28; in Speech Communication, the range was 14.87 to 17.74.

III. Outside Reviewer's Comments & The Department's Response

Not applicable for this recently established Department, lacking a history as a merged entity.

IV. Program's Five-Year Strategic Plan

Curriculum

Undergraduate

Given the current size of the faculty, the new Department of Communications will be looking into decreasing or combining its nine undergraduate options. At the same time, the Department plans to review the entire undergraduate major, both required and elective courses, and to complete this process by the end of Spring Quarter, 2005. Possibilities include changing the current "Mass Communication" to "Media Studies" to reflect the changing nature of the field and of the associated job market. Should the pattern of growth in the Broadcasting option continue (its numbers have tripled since 2001), the Department will consider expanding offerings in this area.

Graduate

As previously detailed, the Department has embarked on an overhaul of the current graduate program—an M.A. in Speech Communication—to include the entire department. The faculty plan to add one more regularly scheduled seminar to the current offerings. In addition, the faculty have proposed a new graduate degree program, granting an M.A. in Public and Professional Communication. According to Dr. Pym, in order to build this new graduate program, the faculty have expressed their willingness to take on extra, unremunerated duties, for example, by providing instruction through Independent Study.

Students

The Department expects the growth trend in majors (327 in Fall 2002 to 367 in Fall 2003) to continue unless, the Report notes, the university chooses to limit enrollment. The Department is confident that the trend in enrollment will follow the trend in the marketplace, wherein the demand for communications professionals trained in new technologies, such as the Internet, as well as skilled in spoken, written and graphic communications, will grow. A new advising and mentoring program is being established, based on student interests and goals, but it is feared that the faculty's ability to deliver on this could be compromised by the limited and eroding number of full-time faculty available for such mentoring.

Faculty

The original plan was to seek two new hires for 2005-6: tenure track positions in 1) Technology and Communications (to replace Pat Radin, deceased); and 2) Argumentation and Public Address.

The Department projects that in 2005-6 three new tenure-track positions will be sought in: 1) Public Communication: Rhetorical Theory & Criticism; 2) Broadcasting: Radio and Cinema; 3) Public Relations and Advertising Communication. These projections are based both on anticipated retirements as well as on an assumption that faculty hires should keep pace with program growth.

Staff

No changes are anticipated.

Resources

As noted above, the Report contains a comprehensive, itemized list of equipment needed immediately and requisite for the functioning of the Department in the long term, especially in its mandate to deliver high-quality education consistent with the technological innovations in the field of communication. Besides studio and computer equipment needed on both an immediate and ongoing basis, the Department is eager to rebuild the campus radio station as soon as resources are available.

Student Learning Assessment

The Department plans to emphasize critical thinking and writing skills when assessing student learning, and expects to have learning outcomes in place by the end of this academic year, 2004.

(See "Outcomes Assessment Plan")

Cost Considerations

The plan outlines the costs of hiring new tenure-track faculty as well as provides a detailed, line-item budget for its resource requests, ranging, for example, from \$100 for gels and filters needed in studio to an estimate of \$44,000 required to rebuild the radio station.

V. CAPR's Analysis of the Program's Five-Year Review

Dr. Anne Pym (Chair) of the Communication Department met with CAPR to discuss Communication's Five-Year Review documents at the April 15 meeting of CAPR. She provided the committee with a background history of the genesis of the decision to merge Speech Communication and Mass Communication; walked the committee through the plan, as presented; and highlighted the particular challenges the newly formed department is facing in architecting a new program at the very moment a system-wide budget crisis is not only curtailing tenure-track searches but is also threatening cuts to a lecturer pool heavily relied upon by this department to staff its core courses. Committee members asked questions and made suggestions for strengthening the five-year review document.

The Document Format

CAPR appreciates the thoroughness and clarity of the materials presented, as required by CAPR 07, 2001-2002. CAPR recognizes that the extent of information made available to the committee is limited by the relatively recent establishment of this new department (Fall 2002), one that doesn't have a history of data collection, nor the opportunity, as yet, to be evaluated by an outside reviewer.

The Five-Year Review

CAPR acknowledges that the new Communication Department is indeed a work-in-progress. As such, many of the assumptions that led to the establishment of the Department, based on a merger of Speech Communication and Mass Communication, are yet to be tested. Growth in the major appears an early, healthy sign.

Given the current budget climate, however, CAPR is concerned that any concomitant growth in the number of tenure-track faculty is unlikely -- even as the Department has embarked on its plans to overhaul the undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as to keep pace with the technological changes and innovations so seminal in the field of communication today. Meanwhile, in light of projected retirements in the next few years, as well as the current, extensive deployment of full-time faculty in key university positions outside the Department, CAPR not only finds it commendable that the Department is engaged in such ambitious projects, but also recognizes how urgent it is to receive institutional support for more tenure-track hires. CAPR deems it essential that resources, both in personnel and in equipment, necessary to maintain a state-of-the-art program, be made available to the Department, as requested. CAPR also recommends that, in the future, the Department consider providing justifications for how new faculty hires will lead to an increase in the numbers of students served.

CAPR recognizes that the new Communication Department is currently establishing and redefining its curriculum to meet student needs and to incorporate innovations and advances in the field; the committee urges the Department, as it is just now piloting its first assessment study, to continue to link assessment with goal-based outcomes for student learning, as well as to report on its methodology and its findings in greater detail in the future.

VI. CAPR Recommendation for Continuation of the Program

Continuation without modification

VII. Date of the Program's Next Five-Year Review

2008-2009