

Academic Department Student Success Plan Annual Update: 2016-2019¹



Department: Communication

Department Chair: Debra Israel, Interim Chair

Department Mission: The Department of Communication takes a leading role in sustaining the strongly student-centered, broadly accessible educational mission and vision of Indiana State University. We do so through engaging students in experiential learning, fostering their development of skills, and promoting competences such as: a complex understanding of the communication process as the foundation of the ongoing human process of meaning-making and community-building; a profound respect for the diverse range of identities and ideologies within our local and global communities; a sophisticated grasp, as creator and user, of the wide range of information technologies that shape communication today and of those which will evolve to shape it differently in the future; and a lifelong commitment to presenting and interpreting communication in an ethical, responsible manner.

Department Freshmen (1st year) Retention Goal(s):

Plan to continue successful and proven strategies to maintain and increase freshman retention.

Action Steps² (with dates & person(s) responsible):

- Learning Community of Comm 202 and Comm 204 for all incoming Communication majors – every fall, continue to assess current practice (Darlene Hantzis and Brian Johnston)
- Increase Tutoring opportunities, collaborating with various university programs (provides support for students being tutored and experiential learning for tutors:
 - Use of Supplemental Instructors for Comm 101 students to provide extra support (various Comm 101 instructors)
 - New Speech Lab in the Math and Writing Center: Pilot the lab spring 2017 and officially launch the lab fall 2017 (Brian Johnston)
 - Drafting a tutor's guide to public speaking that Math and Writing Tutors can draw upon for the integration of the speech lab into their work. Drafting support materials for students utilizing the lab and designing the lab. (Brian Johnston, Ann O'Connor-Ledbetter, and Bryan-Mitchell Young)
 - Explore the need for tutoring for Communication majors (within department)
- Incorporation of Co-curricular activities into courses to help students integrate well into the ISU and Terre Haute community – seminar planned in Spring 2017 to share ideas of how to incorporate into classes (Dept. chair and interested instructors)
- Departmental advisors collaborate and communicate with UC advisors of Communication majors (Advisors and Chair)

¹ Plan updates are due to your Dean by Nov. 4 as informed by your 2015-16 End-of-Year Report that is due to your Dean by Oct. 3.

² **Action Steps Defined:** The specific activities/actions taken to realize progress toward the goal. Such action steps should include not only student support type activities/actions but also student learning enhancement focused activities/actions.

- Maintain focused transition plan for UC advisors over the summer; Encourage students to choose concentration (advisors and Chair)
- Departmental Open House in Spring for all students, including first-year UC students (Chair, staff, faculty & collaboration with Student Media)
- Student professional groups outreach (PRSSA & SPJ) – Lori Henson, Terry Nelson, Linda Welker

Retention Benchmarks
(by latest department)

Fall 2013 Cohort:
72.66

Fall 2014 Cohort:
71.33

Fall 2015 target & actual: 71% (target) 73.95 (actual)
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Fall 2016 target:
76%

Fall 2017 target:
78%

Fall 2018 target:
80%

Other Freshmen Retention related benchmarks of focal interest to department

Retention of students taking Comm 101 (departmental contribution to University retention of Freshmen)

- This fall the new OER textbook is being used by all Comm 101 students. Building on this student success initiative (saving money on textbooks and being a more relevant resource) new upcoming initiatives include:
 - Working with Kelly Wilkinson's office in the Scott College of Business to draft a new chapter for the OER textbook: Professional Communication. (Brian Johnston)
 - Working with the Center for Global Engagement to design a new assignment for Comm. 101 based upon Chapter 12: Global Enhancement that targets one learning objective from the chapter for assessment. Piloting this spring 2017 and launching it fall 2017. (Brian Johnston, Ann O'Connor-Ledbetter)
- Proposing an additional learning/course objective be added to Comm. 101 that is related to professional development – since the job application portfolio assignment is a requirement (Brian Johnston)
- Provide Comm 101 8 week course for 2nd half of semester (Natasha Barnett)

Department Persistence to Completion Goal(s):

- Encourage students to choose non-Communication courses in a way that will enhance their learning experience and be compatible with their ultimate goals. When appropriate encourage adding a minor to their course of study. (Advisors)
- Encourage students to engage in research, creative activity, experiential learning and community engagement related to their chosen area(s) of concentration. Where appropriate this will include experiences on-campus and in the community early on, and internships and study abroad in their junior or senior years.
- Develop curriculum that keeps pace with changes in the field, also making available interdisciplinary opportunities through collaboration with other units on campus.
- Provide tutoring opportunities, particularly for the more challenging courses (working with existing university resources and providing space within the department)
- Allow students to learn about career opportunities and graduate study in their fields of interest.

Action Steps (with dates & person(s) responsible):

- Offer a new Health Communication Concentration. This will benefit Communication majors interested in careers in health-related businesses and organizations, a growing area in Indiana and the United States. Proposed for Fall 2017.

- Work with Career Center to expand Internship and other experiential career-related opportunities; help students find funding opportunities for internships (Lori Henson, Shana Kopaczewski, Jennifer Mullen)
- Provide tutoring opportunities (Chair and interested instructors working with upper-level students)
- Provide teaching assistant opportunities for Graduate Assistants with Core Comm Major courses (particularly research method courses)
- Work with Center for Student Research and Creativity to encourage involvement in scholarship and creative activity (Chair and interested instructors)
- Bring in speakers and alumni, and provide opportunities for students to travel to conferences and on field trips (Chair, interested instructors, advisors to student groups)
- Develop additional Foundational Studies courses in the department to assist with improved graduation rates at the University and among Majors and Minors (interested faculty and Curriculum Committee)
- Continue to identify learning outcomes through assessment process and conduct additional workshops to increase communication among faculty teaching multiple sections of courses in the CORE and concentrations. Continue to strengthen collaboration with Student Media.

Completion Benchmarks
(by latest department)

Fall 2010 Cohort:
24.62

Fall 2011 Cohort:
32.1

Fall 2012 target & actual: 34% (target) 31.63 (actual)
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Fall 2013 target:
34%

Fall 2014 target:
36%

Fall 2015 target:
37%

Other Persistence to Completion related benchmarks of focal interest to department

Examine Persistence to Completion by Gender, by 21st century scholar, by Race/Ethnicity, by transfer/part-time vs. first-time FT freshman to make sure of success for all students.

Other Goal(s), Action Steps, and Benchmarks of focal interest to department:

Gather information about Careers of alumni and maintain networks with alumni, increasing connections between alumni and students.