

Indiana State University

2006 - 2007 Academic Annual Report

Department of Communications

Vision Statement

[View/Modify Vision](#)

Below is your vision statement from previous years. Please take this opportunity to review it and if necessary update it.

The department is committed to the belief that communication is central to human existence and that knowledge of it provides an essential foundation for enriched personal living and helps people improve the world in which we live. Faculty in the department help students become articulate participants in contemporary society and develop the analytic abilities and technical competencies needed to excel in communication-related professions, including those in the mass media. The department is also committed to creating opportunities for innovative teaching, research, service and professional development that benefit its students, faculty and the citizens of Indiana. To that end, members of the department continually seek to develop and share knowledge and expertise in interpersonal, organizational, rhetorical, cross-cultural, international, instructional, mediated and mass communication. Ultimately, these commitments lead the department to a central mission of providing a model environment within which creative and dedicated faculty, staff and students work together to explore—and expand—the theories and processes of communication.

Year in Review

Accomplishments

As you have heard, increasing public awareness of Indiana State University's accomplishments is crucial to building student enrollment, influencing policy makers, and developing a place of pre-eminence in the Midwest. What do you consider to be your department's accomplishments for the 2006-2007 year that will contribute to this effort? [Please list in priority order and limit to no more than 8.]

1. Reconfiguration of the undergraduate curriculum, resulting in one major with four concentrations.
2. Initial reconfiguration of the graduate curriculum in response to feedback from Program Prioritization.
3. Refurbishing of Studio B to update and upgrade the TV production facilities to enhance student preparation.
4. Attracting and hiring a highly qualified new faculty member to join our department in fall, 2007.
5. Stressing "students first" as a departmental mission.
6. Actively cooperating with recruitment initiatives by emails, writing letters, conducting departmental tours, and attending recruitment events.

Research and Scholarship

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of research and scholarship that is focused primarily on contributions to practice and discipline-based scholarship? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

We have some strong examples of pedagogical scholarship in the department, although, for the most part, only two or three of our professors engage in this type of scholarship. I would prefer to see more of our professors engage the SOLT. Our department at this point is particularly strong in providing discipline-based textbooks as evidenced by two textbooks in production and two other

textbooks in planning. One of these proposed textbooks is particularly important for a new course in our department. Additional attention to SOTL yielding articles in appropriate journals would strengthen our profile.

Grants, Contracts & Off Campus Professional Service

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of grants, contracts, and off campus professional service? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

Our department does not have a strong record with grants or contracts, although we have two examples of internal funding to promote a non-profit resource center and to enhance an integration of public relations and journalism course work. We have some very impressive examples of professional service to non-profit organizations, which continue regularly as a result of faculty who integrate this service into our undergraduate courses, especially in the Public Relations course sequence. We would strengthen our profile by finding and pursuing more grant opportunities as well as identifying ways in which we can enhance professional service to the community.

Teaching

We would like to highlight innovative approaches to teaching. Has your department developed any pedagogies or practices you'd like to share with us? Please describe briefly.

The Director of our Public Relations program has recruited alumni to return to campus to provide professional information and advice to our undergraduates. These presentations are integral to the course. A professor and an instructor are working to provide students in public relations and journalism with a unique news conference experience, in which journalists serve as questioners and PR students respond to these questions. The event is being held in the Heritage Ballroom and being videotaped for future use as a teaching resource.

Course Scheduling/Enrollment Management

How is the department making sure that students are able to get the classes they need to graduate in a timely manner?

We have reconfigured our undergraduate major and reduced the course array in order to ensure a direct, timely path to graduation. As a part of this process, we have developed both a transition plan for students who are completing the previous configuration of our undergraduate major, as well as a plan of graduation that identifies how students can progress toward degree completion in a timely manner. Additionally, we seek to provide students with careful advising to ensure their timely graduation.

Outreach

What are the outreach opportunities for your discipline? (non-traditional modes of delivery and timing, etc)

We would do well to investigate how we might deliver our courses by incorporating more technology and fresh pedagogical approaches. Our chair will attend the NCAT meeting in Austin, TX this spring with a view to identifying potential new strategies. A new Visual Communication minor that links Art, Communication, and perhaps Interior Design is an idea that should be explored. This would create interdisciplinarity and an important emphasis for our students. It may also serve to recruit students. Other institutions are succeeding in targeting non-traditional learners. A strong, interdisciplinary program that creates emphases such as leadership, professional communication, and other areas offered online and on campus during evenings, weekends, etc. is a

strong possibility that should be explored.

Assessment

Please share your stated student learning outcomes.

The following learning outcomes are the initial draft which we intend to refine, given the revisions in the undergraduate curriculum. Knowledge: • Role & uses, design of research • Communication planning • Audience segmentation & analysis • Communication & persuasion concepts • Communication theory (all communication contexts) • Ethical & legal issues in communication • Current trends in the professions • Multicultural & global issues • Historical and contemporary development of comm. study • Understand creative resources, constraints, and processes in industrial, professional, and public contexts. Skills: Conducting research Discover, cite, evaluate, and appropriately use relevant, recent evidence to support contentions and positions in a variety of contexts Analyze and evaluate ideas and evidence in a variety of communication contexts and as represented in various media Managing information Mastery of language (written, oral, visual) Problem solving Informative and persuasive writing (craft messages using varied channels) Identify and analyze audiences in variety of communication contexts Effective listening skills Technology & visual literacy Sensitive interpersonal communication Ethical decision making Writing and production of messages Public speaking (delivery) and presentation skills Read and understand contemporary research Respond and critically analyze communication processes and practices Identify appropriateness and effectiveness of messages as a producer and receiver in a variety of contexts Creative skills, particularly in industrial, professional, and public contexts. We are also working to develop learning outcomes for each of our newly configured concentrations, as well as clear outcomes for each of the courses in each of the concentrations.

Strategic Initiatives

Community Engagement I

Please summarize your faculty's efforts in community engagement this year.

One of our faculty received a fellowship through CPSCE to develop a non-profit resource center, in conjunction with community partners. The majority of our students complete internships with a variety of community partners as part of their respective academic programs. Our Public Relations courses integrate working for community clients to produce materials, campaigns, etc. COMM 101 includes a group project that focuses on learning and presenting information regarding a community event, person, or organization. Other courses (e.g., COMM 302 and COMM 266) involve engaging students with local schools or organizations that provide child services. We were a sponsor for "Human Rights Day" this year. WISU continues to offer a unique broadcast service to the community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our "reach" into the community has never been greater (as measured by Arbitron). Additionally, journalism courses include internships and service-learning, that directly benefits the public. Three students during 2006-07 were interns working at local newspapers. Dr. Buchholz participated in a national Sunshine Week project in January to help the Tribune-Star and the county League of Women Voters test state access laws at local government agencies. The Trib's editor, Max Jones, and I discussed that project with the law class this semester. Journalism courses integrate local and state issues into curricula. In public affairs reporting, for example, we discuss and examine the coverage of state issues, such as the impact of the 2 percent circuit breaker legislation affecting local property taxes, and local issues, such as those surrounding last fall's state and county elections and this spring's city primary elections. In the law class, we discuss local libel, access and obscenity issues.

Experiential Learning

What is your vision for experiential learning in your department?

Our vision is to continue to emphasize experiential learning, while also identifying fresh ways to expand this endeavor. For example, we have an opportunity to have a closer working relationship with one of the local TV stations, which we should pursue.

Fundraising Activities

What steps have you taken to support fundraising activities in your department? How can your efforts be supported?

We send a newsletter each semester to reconnect with our alumni, which has resulted in some contributions. We have made initial connections with SONY in Terre Haute, with the hope of applying for a donation of equipment for our electronic media area. We work with development personnel to identify and respond to prospective contributors, which has created a valuable link to support our fundraising endeavors.

Quality

Quality

Please provide 1-2 suggestions to increase the ability of your department or the University to meet the criteria above.

1. Enhance our research productivity among more faculty. 2. Develop stronger links with local high schools to connect with students interested in communication programs.

Feedback

This section is to allow you to share your ideas for enhancing enrollment, dealing with budget and other challenges facing the university community.

1. Use the considerable insight, talent, and skills we have on campus to address issues rather than allocating funds to hire consultants. For example, a marketing and promotions task force composed of some of our best professors and graduate students may yield some useful insights at little or no cost. 2. Develop strong working relationships between departments and local high schools. Perhaps we should launch departmental level "college for a day" initiatives with students who express interests in a given major. 3. Find ways to reduce costs through cooperation. For example, in what ways could departments that are geographically near one another share resources, equipment, etc? 4. Identify, as necessary, the two or three central reasons (over which we have a measure of influence) students do not choose ISU or choose to leave ISU. Strategically and purposefully address these reasons administratively and departmentally.