

Response to Program Review Standards

Communication Department
College of Arts and Sciences
Western Carolina University

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THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
PROGRAM REVIEW
MARCH 2011

The Department of Communication was formed in July 2007 after extensive faculty input and outside consultation with Dr. Jeremy Lipshultz of the University of Nebraska. Provost Kyle Carter formed the department with the assistance of Dr. Lipshultz's report. The provost's mandate charged the department with evaluating its older 59-hour Communication, Theatre, Dance, and Motion Picture degree program and to design a new degree program that would be responsive to student needs and establish the university as having a quality communication program.

As a part of the redesign, the journalism program was moved from the Department of English to communication. A new journalism concentration was designed with extensive peer and industry input. The training and development concentration was converted to a much broader concentration in organizational communication (Now being removed from the program due to state budget cuts.)

A review of Western's peer institutions – plus five additional institutions selected by Chancellor John Bardo at a later date for all departments in the university – resulted in a new streamlined degree program of 38 hours. The department was one of the first in the university to streamline its degree program. Students have the flexibility to combine concentrations and majors that best fit their needs and still complete the degree program in 120 hours.

The department distinguished itself by instituting a minimum 2.5 overall GPA requirement to become a communication major. In fall 2007 the average overall GPA of a communication student was 2.90; fall 2010 the average was 3.17. To meet the demands of an extremely competitive communication industry the overall GPA requirement was raised to 2.75 effective spring 2011. Western's only peer institution to have a similar overall GPA requirement is James Madison University at 2.7.

A department benchmark is that graduates should be prepared to enter a top 100 market in their field of study upon graduation. As evidenced by student internship evaluations and where students are getting their first positions after graduation, the goal is being achieved as many of the department's students are entering top 50 markets.

The department supports the university liberal studies program offering the C3 Oral Communication class COMM 201 Intro to Speech Communication. Additionally, the department offers a liberal studies seminar class each semester COMM 190 A User's Guide to the Mass Media.

The department's faculty members are its strength. There is a balance between those from an academic background and those from an industry background and those who have professional experience and the doctorate. Many of the faculty members hold professional certifications and memberships in professional organizations in addition to their academic credentials. The faculty values collaboration and practical knowledge and learning experiences. A great deal of collegiality exists among faculty members leading to an outstanding integration and application of knowledge and skills across concentrations, departments, and colleges.

The university-wide adoption of the Boyer Model of Scholarship saw the communication department as an early adopter of the model resulting in its new collegial review document. An effective department must be accountable. Each year one degree concentration from the department is selected by the faculty for an annual evaluation.

The university Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a major element of the department's ongoing planning process and the program's strategic plan. The university-wide adoption of the Boyer Model of Scholarship saw the communication department as an early adopter of the model resulting in its new collegial review document. An effective department must be accountable. Each year one degree concentration from the department is selected by the faculty for an annual evaluation.

Communication students enjoy excellent opportunities to engage in enriching activities that promote retention and graduation. In addition to all of the QEP activities in communication courses, students can participate in The Western Carolina Journalist online news product; Catamount Communications, a student run public relations firm; the Public Relations Student Society of America chapter; Society of Professional Journalists; and WVCU FM. As a part of the communication degree, study abroad is encouraged. The department works closely with the International Programs and Services Office to ensure a successful overseas experience in which all classes transfer back to Western.

Students in the Department of Communication have the opportunity to sit for three professional examinations. Broadcast sales students can earn the radio marketing professional certification from the Radio Advertising Bureau. The department offers two opportunities for students in the broadcasting concentration to receive professional technical certification from the Society of Broadcast Engineers. Upper-level students can sit for the Broadcast Technologist Certification exam in radio and or television.

Funding for faculty positions has been a serious weakness for communication. It has been nearly four years since the founding of the department and the department still has yet to achieve the necessary complement of faculty to adequately cover the various concentrations and grow the department.

A major weakness of the department is its physicality. In 2007 the department was scattered among four buildings. Over the last two years the faculty members have been relocated to the second floor of the Stillwell building. However, nearly four years after the department was formed, the department's office is still temporarily located in the Old Student Union which is quite remote from the department's faculty and students creating a disconnect that should not exist. The department also lacks dedicated teaching spaces such as labs tailored to meet communication industry needs. As an example, there is no journalism lab or newsroom as a place of focus for journalism students.

While still a very young the Department of Communication prides itself in turning out graduates that are well prepared to enter the workplace at a very high level.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
PROGRAM REVIEW SELF REPORT
2010-11

Standard 1: The purpose of the program reflects and supports the mission and strategic vision of Western Carolina University and the mission of its college.

Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research and service through residential, distance education and international experiences (see appendix exhibit A).

The Department of Communication offers the Bachelor of Science in Communication with concentrations in broadcasting, broadcast sales, journalism, public relations, and organizational communication. As of this date, the concentration in organizational communication is being removed from the program due to state budget cuts. The department supports the university liberal studies program offering the human communication component; COMM 201 Introduction to Speech Communication. COMM 201 is required of all undergraduate students. The department also offers a liberal studies freshman seminar each semester, COMM 190 A User's Guide to the Mass Media.

The mission of the department is to help students develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful employees in the communication workforce (see appendix exhibit B).

Communication concepts and theories are combined with hands-on experience both inside and outside the classroom through faculty-student collaborations and required professional internships (see appendix exhibit C). The department's existing facilities are equipped with current technology to provide students with marketable, professional skills. Many communication students leave WCU and immediately enter the most sought-after jobs, often in major markets, thanks to the required internship experience (see appendix exhibit D). A formal internship evaluation from the employer is used as one of the primary methods of assessing whether the department is adequately preparing its graduates for employment.

The department is actively participating in the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) (see appendix exhibit E). In addition to their academic credentials, many of the department's faculty members bring years of extensive professional experience to the classroom and hold nationally-recognized professional certifications. Faculty members teaching courses in broadcasting, public relations, and organizational communication continue to be active as working professionals. The blend of academic and professional credentials provides an excellent springboard for synthesis of the core expectations of the QEP. For example, faculty members who utilize real-world scenarios in the classroom from their recent professional experiences, in addition to the textbook and other scholarly and professional publications,

help students achieve the core outcome of integrating information from a variety of contexts.

A QEP core expectation is to “communicate effectively and responsibly.” Students pursuing the communication degree have multiple opportunities to “convey information in a variety of formats and contexts; identify intended audience; and communicate appropriately and respectfully.” For example, students in the public relations concentration are required to develop a comprehensive communication campaign for a real-world client. In the broadcast sales concentration, students work with a business owner to develop a radio marketing plan tailored specifically to the needs and opportunities of the respective client. Radio production students often create radio campaigns for clients, most recently the Town of Dillsboro, North Carolina. Students in organizational communication classes often develop training programs and participate in conflict and crisis resolution programs for external clients. One of the most important lessons students learn from these experiences is the importance of tailoring communication strategies and tactics to the specifics of a client’s problems, needs, goals, budget and time constraints.

The department has been a leader in the area of service learning and community engagement long before the university’s adoption of the QEP. As highlighted in the QEP Program Outcomes/Assessment Methods, the department has numerous examples to illustrate its commitment to achieving the core outcome of “practice civic engagement” (see appendix exhibit F).

The department was formed in July 2007 after extensive faculty input and outside consultation with Dr. Jeremy Lipshultz of the University of Nebraska (see appendix exhibit G). Provost Kyle Carter formed the department with the assistance of Dr. Lipshultz’s report. The provost’s mandate charged the department with evaluating its older 59-hour Communication, Theatre, Dance, and Motion Picture degree program and to design a new degree program that would be responsive to student needs and establish the university as having a quality communication program.

As a part of the redesign, the journalism program was moved from the Department of English to communication. A new journalism concentration was designed with extensive peer and industry input. The training and development concentration was converted to a much broader concentration in organizational communication (Now being removed from the program due to state budget cuts.)

A review of Western’s peer institutions – plus five additional institutions selected by Chancellor John Bardo at a later date for all departments in the university – resulted in a new streamlined degree program of 38 hours (see appendix exhibit H). The degree requires a pre-major of two classes that must be passed

with a C or higher to become a communication major. The communication core consists of 14 hours of communication courses. Each concentration consists of 18 hours; the total degree program is 38 hours.

The department was one of the first in the university to streamline its degree program (see appendix exhibit I).

Communication students take 42 hours of required liberal studies courses and 38 hours in the communication degree program for a total 80 hours. With the remaining 40 hours a student may select a minor outside the department, a dual concentration within the department, a second or double major with another degree program, or an approved program defined by the student and academic advisor, including international study. The communication degree program emphasizes flexibility so as to be responsive to changing market trends.

The department distinguished itself by instituting a minimum 2.5 overall GPA requirement to become a communication major. In fall 2007 the average overall GPA of a communication student was 2.90; fall 2010 the average was 3.17 (see appendix exhibit J). To meet the demands of an extremely competitive communication industry the overall GPA requirement was raised to 2.75 effective spring 2011.

Western's only peer institution to have a similar overall GPA requirement is James Madison University at 2.7. To be admitted to the journalism concentration students must make a B or higher in ENGL 101, 102, and COMM 240 Writing for Communication.

An additional benefit of the overall GPA requirement is that a close relationship has developed with the Advising Center's professional student advisor assigned to communication. The advisor works with students who want to become communication majors who have not yet earned the necessary overall GPA.

Students have the flexibility to combine concentrations and majors that best fit their needs and still complete the degree program in 120 hours. Examples of concentration combinations include broadcasting with broadcast sales and public relations with journalism. Examples of dual majors include broadcasting with marketing and public relations with international studies. The department is beginning to see majors from other departments selecting communication as a second major.

A department benchmark is that graduates should be prepared to enter a top 100 market in their field of study upon graduation. As evidenced by student internship evaluations and where students are getting their first positions after graduation, the goal is being achieved as many of the department's students are entering top 50 markets (see appendix exhibit D).

The liberal studies core communication class, COMM 201, has been redesigned to meet standards established by the National Communication Association (see appendix exhibit K).

The faculty wrote and adopted an entirely new university-approved Collegial Review Document (CRD) to complement the new degree program and the department's commitment to the Boyer Model of Scholarship (see appendix exhibit L).

The department's faculty members are its strength. There is a balance between those from an academic background and those from an industry background and those who have professional experience and the doctorate. Many of the faculty hold professional certifications and memberships in professional organizations in addition to their academic credentials (see appendix exhibit M). The faculty values faculty collaboration and practical knowledge and learning experiences. A great deal of collegiality exists among faculty members leading to an outstanding integration and application of knowledge and skills across concentrations, departments, and colleges.

Under the prior degree program faculty members were burdened with teaching a large number of required classes for the degree and very few, if any, electives were offered each semester. The new degree program affords the department the opportunity to offer a variety of electives to enhance a student's degree program.

Funding for faculty positions has been a serious weakness for communication. It has been nearly four years since the founding of the department and the department still has yet to achieve the necessary complement of faculty to adequately cover the various concentrations and grow the department. Program staffing needs will be discussed in detail under Standard 7.

A major weakness of the department is its physicality. When formed, the department was scattered among four buildings. Over the last two years the faculty members have been relocated to the second floor of the Stillwell building. However, nearly four years after the department was formed, the department's office is still temporarily located in the Old Student Union which is quite remote from the department's faculty and students creating a disconnect that should not exist. The department also lacks dedicated teaching spaces such as labs tailored to meet communication industry needs. As an example, there is no journalism lab or newsroom as a place of focus for journalism students.

Standard 2: The program engages in ongoing, systematic planning that is reflective of the University's strategic priorities.

When formed in July 2007 the department began an immediate program of evaluation and strategic planning that continues to this date. The faculty completed the new degree program in spring 2008. After conducting nearly 40 consultations across the university the new degree was submitted for approval by the college curriculum committee, university curriculum committee, and the faculty senate. The new degree was approved spring 2009 and started fall 2009.

Evidence of goal setting and forward movement is clearly demonstrated through the degree redesign and the redesign of many of the department's classes. Several dormant courses had been left in the university catalog for years as placeholders and were deleted from the program. This process was in compliance with the university-approved guidelines for curriculum development (see appendix exhibit N).

The university QEP is a major element of the department's ongoing planning process and the program's strategic plan (see appendix exhibit E). The university-wide adoption of the Boyer Model of Scholarship saw the communication department as an early adopter of the model resulting in its new CRD (see appendix exhibit L).

An effective department must be accountable. Each year one concentration from the department is selected by the faculty for an annual evaluation (see appendix exhibit O).

With the degree redesign, the faculty sought accountability in two core areas determined to be lacking in the old degree program. COMM 201 Introduction to Speech Communication was redesigned from a loosely based set of 15-year-old goals and objectives to a course that clearly reflects the standards established by the National Communication Association. The faculty members instituted the redesign and have taken ownership of this outstanding new course including pre- and post-testing to measure the effectiveness of the course on an ongoing basis (see appendix exhibit K).

The faculty determined students across the discipline showed weak writing skills. COMM 240 Writing for Communication was created as a gatekeeper class that all potential communication majors must pass with a minimum of a C. The writing intensive course is limited to 25 students. Typically, about 12 percent of the class does not make a C on their first attempt. Beginning fall 2010 both a pre- and post-test is administered using a standardized writing test developed at the University of Tennessee (see appendix exhibit P). Fall 2010 data showed an average pre-test score of 68 percent and a post-test score of

72 percent. Ironically, the standardized grammar test given in the later part of the course averaged 80.7 percent. The trend data from these testing benchmarks will be tracked closely.

The pre- and post-testing in COMM 201 and COMM 240 above will occur every semester as an ongoing evaluative process of students and the effectiveness of the courses.

The department sees strategic planning and goal setting as an ongoing fluid process rather than something done every five to seven years. Spring 2011 the department completed a College of Arts and Sciences Program Review and Prioritization as a part of the state budget process. The report contains information and data on how critical the department is to the mission of the university, internal demand, productivity, quality, and cost effectiveness (see appendix exhibit P1). As a proactive department, the faculty has a responsibility to the students, the university, and the workplace the students are entering.

This program review was requested two years early because the department has accomplished most, if not all, of the strategic goals established by Provost Carter and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the department.

Standard 3: The program provides and evaluates a high quality curriculum that emphasizes student learning as its primary purpose

The alignment of the department's curriculum with disciplinary standards is based upon review of Western's peer institutions and from industry feedback as previously discussed. An example is the journalism concentration. The course selection was based in a large part on interviews conducted with those in the industry. From these interviews six benchmarks were universally identified as core components a journalist must have. The six benchmarks became the six classes in the journalism concentration.

One of the problems of the former curriculum was the preponderance of unnecessary prerequisites. Many were found to be leftovers from years past and were outdated. The department's new degree program was designed to be as open as possible and the only course prerequisites are those that are absolutely necessary to ensure learning outcomes. This openness allows for inclusion of many of the department's classes in other departments' interdisciplinary programs and opens many classes for students to take as electives (see appendix exhibit Q).

The logic, sequence, and coherence of the curriculum occurs across the four concentrations of the degree program. The pre-major and core are required of all communication majors as is one of the four 18-hour concentrations. There are two benefits to this streamlined curriculum. First, students can tailor a program of study that meets their needs. Second, due to the openness of the curriculum, the faculty can add elective topics classes that track current industry trends.

The curriculum includes several interdisciplinary classes from areas such as English, entrepreneurship, geography, law, and marketing. The curriculum includes international studies as well (see appendix exhibit I).

The department participates in the university Liberal Studies program providing the human communication requirement COMM 201 (see exhibit K). COMM 201 is especially suited as a university-wide requirement including sections on listening, team and group skills, conflict resolution, and team presentation in addition to individual presentation. The department also offers a freshman seminar COMM 190 A User's Guide to the Mass Media. Over 1,549 students enrolled in these two courses in 2010-11.

Syllabi in the Department of Communication are required to: 1) clearly state the course objectives and the expected student learning outcomes; 2) contain a statement regarding academic honesty; 3) contain a statement regarding accommodating students with disabilities; 4) contain a university-mandated grading scale that includes an A+ grade (see appendix exhibit R). Many syllabi contain rubrics for assignments.

Learning outcomes are expressed as measurable statements of what students shall know or be capable of upon graduation. Each semester the department conducts exit interviews with graduating seniors. The purpose of the annual concentration assessments is to ensure that the department remains on track for curriculum development in between formal program assessments (see appendix exhibit O). Added to these departmental assessments is the university QEP assessment that is an ongoing process at least through 2013 (see appendix exhibit F).

Standard 4: The program has sufficient faculty resources to meet its mission and goals.

All faculty in the Department of Communication (full-time, part-time, and instructional staff) are credentialed consistent with SACS accreditation standards (see appendix exhibit S).

The department has four concentrations and the faculty members are grouped as follows: Broadcasting -

Radio and Broadcast Sales, one; Broadcasting - Television, two; Human Communication lecturers, five; Human Communication/Organizational Communication instructors, two; Journalism –Writing, two; Public Relations, two. The department head is also the director of broadcasting and advisor to the university radio station.

The department lacks a second person in radio broadcasting. To staff the 30 sections of COMM 201 necessary to meet student demand three communication lecturers did class overloads teaching five sections of the class fall 2010 and spring 2011. This is an ongoing issue each semester.

The faculty represent a broad demographic and experience spectrum from recent master's-level lecturers in COMM 201 to tenured faculty with years of professional industry and teaching experience (see appendix exhibit T). A weakness is that the department only has three tenured faculty and three tenure-track faculty. As of spring 2011, 53 percent of the department's faculty are fixed-term positions. The department has to use tenured faculty from other departments for the annual tenure and promotion review.

Through involvement in the QEP program, membership in professional associations, attendance at national conferences, and engagement in professional projects and consultations, the faculty demonstrate continuing growth as professional practitioners, teachers, and scholars (see appendix exhibit U).

Faculty in the department have opportunities for professional development through industry-sponsored internships, participation in regional and national associations, attendance at regional and national conferences (see appendix exhibit V), leadership in university projects such as the Dillsboro revitalization project, and participation in faculty development and support services at the Coulter Faculty Commons (see appendix exhibit W).

As previously stated, the department is a very collegial department. Faculty members routinely mentor and assist newer faculty and often cross disciplines. They also combine knowledge sets, abilities, and scholarship to creatively solve problems and create new works. Examples include scheduling the journalism and television practicum classes at the same time so that students can work across the platforms and learn from jointly working on projects. An annual scholarship fundraising project involves faculty, staff, and students from three colleges and five departments. This year the department formed a partnership with athletics to operate the new football stadium video scoreboard resulting in an internal grant of approximately \$60,000 from athletics to purchase fiber-optic equipment to interconnect the television studio to any site on campus where fiber is available (see appendix exhibit X).

Fall 2011 instructional loads are transitioning from an older 4/4 model to a 3/3 model for those tenured or

on tenure track. Starting fall 2010, a new tenure-track faculty member is assigned two classes his or her first semester followed by a 3/3 teaching load. Lecturers and instructors are assigned a 4/4 load. Release time is judiciously and equitably used for special projects and assignments. It is important that those on tenure-track have adequate time for research and service.

All faculty participate in an Annual Faculty Evaluation (AFE) per the department's university-approved CRD. Tenure-track faculty members submit their TPR dossier and supporting documents each year (see appendix exhibit Y) in addition to the AFE. These procedures apply to all faculty members across the department.

Standard 5: The Program Attracts, Retains, and Graduates High Quality Students.

The size and demography of the student body enrolled in the Department of Communication is appropriate to the department's size and goals. The diversity of the communication student population is comparable to that of the university (see appendix exhibit Z). When the department was formed there was concern that the institution of the 2.5 overall GPA would impede the department's development and growth. The student census data in appendix exhibit J appears to indicate a dip in the number of majors; however, it must be noted that for two consecutive academic years (2007-2009) freshman enrollment in the university was down substantially. Overall, the department has remained stable while increasing the overall GPA and quality of its student body. The 2.5 minimum overall GPA was also put in place to regulate the growth of the department. Anecdotally, the faculty members noted a marked difference in student performance. Fall 2010 the faculty asked and received approval to raise the minimum overall GPA to 2.75. The 2.75 minimum overall GPA puts the department ahead of all of its university peer institutions and on a par with the nationally recognized nursing and teacher education programs at Western Carolina University.

The future viability of the program will depend on several factors including the funding and adaptation of facilities and faculty growth. An example is the journalism program. Journalism is bringing new media, radio, and television together. As a new concentration launched fall 2010, journalism already has 32 students in the concentration. Spring 2011 journalism is in the process of founding a chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. The public relations program is presently undergoing national accreditation. The broadcast sales concentration has been one of the tops in the country from its inception with many graduates being hired prior to graduation. In the broadcasting concentration the television program is now expanding to provide students a background in sports video production. The faculty in broadcasting will be presenting at the Broadcast Education Association in April 2011 on sports video

production as an innovative new career field for television production.

The department takes advising seriously. The department works closely with the professional communication advising specialist in the One Stop advising center as undeclared students' transition to majors. All faculty members at the rank of assistant professor or higher have a student advising load.

When a student declares the major the student is assigned a faculty member in his or her area of specialty to serve as advisor to a particular student.

Students and faculty have online access to student transcripts and degree audits (see appendix exhibit AA). Further, students and faculty can perform what if degree audits to determine the effect of any change that might be made in the student's concentration, minor, dual concentration, dual major, or approved program, including international study. The department works closely with Student Support Services to ensure students with special needs are accommodated and offers a section of COMM 201 for reticent speakers. The electronic advising system is slowly phasing out paper advising files other than for course waivers, substitutions, internships and approved programs.

Each fall and spring, the department hosts an advising day picnic in conjunction with the university-wide advising day. Faculty provide home-cooked food and desserts and share advising information and communication news. At the spring picnic the department presents its academic awards and recognizes graduating seniors and outstanding students. The picnic promotes a sense of family among communication majors.

Communication students enjoy excellent opportunities to engage in enriching activities that promote retention and graduation. In addition to all of the QEP activities in communication courses, students can participate in The Western Carolina Journalist online news product; Catamount Communications, a student run public relations firm; the Public Relations Student Society of America chapter; Society of Professional Journalists; and WWCU FM.

As a part of the communication degree, study abroad is encouraged. The department works closely with the International Programs and Services Office to ensure a successful overseas experience in which all classes transfer back to Western.

Honors College students enrolled in communication courses often work on honors contracts with faculty. Based on consultation with the Honors College, the department offers two or more Honors sections of

COMM 201 each semester. Typically, the sections are at 100 percent capacity.

Students earn three hours of university credit for their required professional internship. Students begin searching for their internship in COMM 296 Seminar in Professional Development, and must have completed 90 hours prior to taking COMM 483 Internship. Students keep a journal, copies of work performed (when permitted), and complete a paper about their experience (see appendix exhibit BB). Students are evaluated at the mid-term and final by their employer as if the student was an employee. The professional internship is the opportunity for the student to interact with the real world and to make valuable networking contacts for when they graduate. Employer evaluation of students in the internship class also serves as a valuable assessment tool of the department and student performance.

The department aggressively works to recruit students within the limits of the departmental budget (approximately \$15,000 for all department operations) and established university guidelines. Items such as the departmental display, authorized cloth table cover for displays, etc., must be borne by the department. The department has a professional display that the faculty created. The department participates in all university open houses and works with admissions to conduct one-on-one departmental tours with families. For the last three years the department has been selected to send a representative on the Western on Location tour of four major cities the university has identified as core recruiting areas. The department's liberal studies seminar, A User's Guide to the Mass Media, is an excellent class for generating interest in the department. Working within the university branding and website guidelines the department maintains a website and is considering a Facebook page.

Students in the Department of Communication broadcast sales concentration and sales minor take the Radio Advertising Bureau's (RAB) Radio Marketing Professional (RMP) certification exam to earn an industry-recognized first level of professional sales certification. Over the last 10 years only one student out of over 165 has failed the written exam administered by the RAB.

The department offers two opportunities for students in the broadcasting concentration to receive professional technical certification from the Society of Broadcast Engineers. Upper-level students can sit for the Broadcast Technologist Certification exam in radio and or television. The examinations are heavily based on engineering principals and FCC regulations and require a minimum score of 90 percent to pass. Typically, about fifty percent of the students pass the exam on their first attempt which appears to be about average according to the SBE.

Students have the opportunity to attend national conferences (at personal expense). Public relations

students regularly attend both the regional and national Public Relations Student Society America conferences. One PRSSA student is seeking election to the PRSSA national board this spring. Broadcasting students attend the annual Broadcast Education Association and National Association of Broadcasters' conventions each year. Students in journalism are attending their first regional conference this spring for the Intercollegiate Online News Network. Students pay their own expenses.

Standard 6: The Program Has The Administrative Structure That Facilitates Achievement Of Program Goals And Objectives.

The department has what would be called a typical administrative structure with the department's faculty, committee chairs, and administrative assistant reporting to the department head, who in turn reports to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The department meets every two weeks. All faculty members, regardless of rank, are treated as equals. Only when specified by the university or college are those who are not tenure-track or tenured are asked to step back from the decision-making process.

The department head receives regular training and support through department head workshops conducted by the Office of the Provost. The department administrative assistant routinely attends both mandatory and non-mandatory workshops held by the various offices of the university such as financial affairs, the Registrar's office, etc. Faculty members receive support from the Coulter Faculty Commons through weekly programs and special one-on-one training when appropriate (see appendix exhibit CC). The faculty also receives support in the form of small group analysis of their classes by the Coulter Faculty Commons staff. Small group analysis is a confidential, class evaluation service to help faculty improve their teaching. A faculty member can request this service as needed to help improve teaching.

Faculty members in the department are involved in the ongoing program activities of the department by chairing and serving on committees as needed. Faculty members are involved in assessment of the programs such as COMM 201 and COMM 240 (see appendix exhibit K and P respectively). The communication lecturers and instructors were responsible for the course redesign of COMM 201 spending approximately one year in the redesigning and piloting of the program. Per the department's CRD, faculty members comprise the committee for the AFE and for the annual tenure, promotion, review.

On several occasions the department has discussed the formation of professional advisory groups for each of the concentrations to be comprised of industry professionals and alumni. The public relations

concentration is the first concentration to begin the process this semester. Other concentrations will follow fall 2011.

The department head completes the annual AFE and is also evaluated by the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The faculty review of the department head is a blind electronic evaluation. Using this information, the department head's self-evaluation statement, AFE, and comments from the associate deans and staff of the college, the dean writes an annual evaluation of the department head.

Standard 7: The program has adequate resources to meet its goals and objectives.

The department does not have adequate resources to meet its goals or objectives. Specifically, the department is limited in its number of faculty and has insufficient equipment and technical support.

Communication was for many years seriously understaffed as pointed out in the 2007 report of Dr. Jeremy Lipshultz (see appendix exhibit G). In fall 2010 the department finally attained two television faculty members after five years with only one. Radio has only one faculty member in radio broadcasting and broadcast sales. That one faculty member is also the department head and advisor to the university radio station, WWCU FM. The department head's teaching load for 2010-11 was 3/3.

Although approved to start fall 2009, the journalism program had to wait until fall 2010 for its first faculty member in journalism. The journalism faculty member teaches courses specific to journalism. The journalism faculty member works with the department's writing specialist who instructs writing courses in the department ranging from COMM 240 Writing for Communication to COMM 307 Advertising Writing. The writing specialist splits time between journalism and public relations and has been in a visiting position for over five years.

There is one communication generalist teaching interpersonal communication and mediated communication; two instructors are covering organizational communication classes and some sections of COMM 201. Five lecturers with assistance from the two instructors cover the 30 sections of COMM 201. This includes three lecturers teaching course overloads each semester. The weakest link in the communication degree was the concentration in organizational communication. A tenure-track search for that position has been cancelled due to the state budget shortfall.

Based on the SCH model in 2009-10 the department earned \$773,936 in salary lines for the year 2010-11. In 2010-11 the department was allocated \$698,842 in salary lines with actual salaries of \$670,811. The

average faculty salary in the College of Arts and Sciences is \$56,425 at Western Carolina University. The average faculty salary in communication is \$46,927, or \$9,498 less than the college average.

In fall 2010 93.7 percent of the available seats in communication classes were filled; spring 2011 92 percent of all communication seats are filled.

The television studio operates on a budget of \$15,000 per year. In six years the only substantial equipment purchases have been two high-definition field cameras and two high-definition tape decks. The studio is under a Sony service contract paid for by the university. This enables the department to maintain the original equipment or, at Sony's discretion, replace equipment that has become unserviceable. Through very limited university education and technology (E & T) funding the department converted to a more effective video editing system in the television studio fall 2010 and equipped an existing electronic classroom with 27 licenses of the video editing software.

As mentioned earlier, in fall 2010 the department and the athletic department formed a partnership to produce the content for the new video scoreboard in the football stadium. With athletic funding of approximately \$60,000 to purchase equipment, fiber-optic lines were installed from the Ramsey Center through the football stadium and passing through the Fine and Performing Arts Center to the television studio (see appendix exhibit Y). When the remote fiber-optic equipment is not in use for an athletic event, the equipment is used to produce other programs from remote locations on campus.

Technical support for the television studio has been extremely limited from the studio's inception. The technician hired to be the recording studio technician was also charged with maintaining the television studio. This technician does not hold a college degree or professional engineering certification. The new tenure-track television faculty member hired fall 2010 has extensive television technical experience at the local and network level.

The journalism program was submitted to the university with a clear statement of the resources necessary for a convergence journalism newsroom to serve the journalism program and the radio station, and to support television students working on news projects (see appendix exhibit DD). Funding was not provided to launch the program fall 2009. December 2009 the department was permitted to hire a tenure-track faculty member to start fall 2010. The department has funded seven 35mm professional SLR cameras that also shoot 1080P high definition video and twelve flip cams to shoot and wirelessly upload video clips. Additionally, five older Sony consumer video cameras were repurposed from surplus property to be used for journalism. Through university service-contract funding the Associated Press news service was activated in October 2010.

The department is being provided an off-site host for its online news product (The Western Carolina Journalist) through its membership in the Inter-collegiate Online News Network (ICONN). The Western Carolina Journalist is in beta testing and is expected to be launched later this semester.

The journalism program has 32 students in the new concentration. A minor in journalism is presently pending having received approval from the department and college curriculum committees.

Catamount Communications was under the student media board as a student activity until fall 2010. At that time the students chose to separate themselves from the student media board and become an academic activity. The students' desire was to become more professional and to create higher quality products. Catamount Communications needs a dedicated office and equipment in order to grow and operate.

WWCU FM operates on an annual budget of approximately \$42,500 per year. The station has one control room and one production room that are in excellent condition. There are two paid student staff members and the rest of the station operation is by volunteers. As the only FM for the region the station serves the community and the students as a professional learning laboratory. The station is the flagship station for the Catamount Sports Network and distributes the signal for the six-station network. The university has applied for the class A FM allocation on 95.3 MHz for Dillsboro, North Carolina. Costs for the pending application were shared by the university, the dean's office, and the radio station.

A university librarian assigned to the department coordinates library resources for the department. The department receives regular updates as to how much money is left in its annual library account. New faculty members receive a start-up budget of \$500 their first year. Fall 2010 the department boosted its holdings in public relations with approximately \$2,000 for books (see appendix exhibit EE).

The department has an efficient plan for course and instructor management. Courses are selected carefully and strategically placed throughout the day and week to obtain a good spread and to eliminate course conflicts. The department coordinates class offerings with interdisciplinary classes. Enrollments are monitored and course offerings are adjusted accordingly. Proposed course offerings are submitted to an associate dean in the college to review for efficiency prior to each semester. Fall 2010 93.7 percent of the available seats in communication classes were filled; spring 2011 92 percent of all communication seats are filled.

APPENDIX EXHIBITS

Exhibit A	University Mission Statement
Exhibit B	Department of Communication Mission Statement
Exhibit C	List of internships completed by Department of Communication students
Exhibit D	List of first positions secured by Department of Communication students upon graduation
Exhibit E	Western Carolina University QEP program
Exhibit F	Department of Communication QEP draft
Exhibit G	Report of Dr. Jeremy Lipshultz, 2007
Exhibit H	List of peer institutions for Western Carolina University
Exhibit I	2010-11 University Catalog - Department of Communication degree program
Exhibit J	Department Of Communication Census and Productivity Data, 2007 – 2010
Exhibit K	Communication 201 Intro to Speech Communication course redesign; pre/post test
Exhibit L	Department of Communication Collegial Review Document
Exhibit M	Department Faculty Member Professional Certifications and Memberships
Exhibit N	University Curriculum Development Guidelines
Exhibit O	List of Concentrations and years evaluated
Exhibit P	Pre/Post Test for COMM 240 Writing for Communication
Exhibit P1	Department Program Review and Prioritization
Exhibit Q	Students Taking Communication Classes as Electives from Other Majors.
Exhibit R	Sample Syllabi from the Department of Communication
Exhibit S	Faculty Vita and Credentials
Exhibit T	Tabular Distribution of Age, Tenure Status, Gender, and Ethnic Origin of Faculty
Exhibit U	Faculty Professional Projects and Scholarship.
Exhibit V	Faculty Conferences Attended
Exhibit W	Western Carolina University Coulter Faculty Commons Faculty Development and Participation

Exhibit X	Collaborative Partnership between Athletics and Communication
Exhibit Y	Requirement for Tenure-track and Tenure and Promotion Dossiers.
Exhibit Z	Communication Student Diversity
Exhibit AA	Electronic Transcript and Degree Audit Samples
Exhibit BB	COMM 483 Syllabus and Internship Forms
Exhibit CC	Sample of Coulter Faculty Commons Weekly Programs
Exhibit DD	Journalism Program AA-5
Exhibit EE	Library Resources