

Communication Studies BA/BS

Application Of Theory (Goal)

Goal Description:

To develop student understanding and utilization of communication theory in all major communication contexts, including the development of critical thinking skills. These contexts include interpersonal and family relationships, small group professional and business situations, and public/media messages. Examples of communication theories include, but are not limited to, expectancy violations theory, social penetration theory, relational dialectics theory, social judgment theory, cognitive dissonance theory, cultivation theory, agenda-setting theory, face-negotiation theory, and standpoint theory.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Applying Communication Theory (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to apply communication theory to specific communication contexts.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Application Of Theory (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of Goal 1 through an annual evaluation of a sample of final student term papers in 3300 and 4300 level courses, such as Intercultural Communication, Small Group Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Communication Theory, and Family Communication. The first component of this rubric is Evidence of Understanding of the Applicable Theory or Theories including the Effective Connection of the Theory or Theories to Communication Behavior. The scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for BA/BS students.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal. An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

1. Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
2. All means in the table below are based on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating.
3. I have previously sent you the pre- and post-test data for B&P and Public Speaking. I am attaching that email chain here.
4. Finally, I want to highlight the hard work, time, and effort [@Arrington, Michael](#), [@Horne, Dena](#), and [@Weikle, Kelly](#) put into these evaluations. They did a phenomenal job!

	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
<i>Theory/Concept (Explanation)</i>	4.15	4.12
<i>Theory/Concept (Application)</i>	4.27	4.24

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Application Of Theory (Action)

Action Description:

While the criterion for students learning to apply communication theory was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department. Faculty will be encouraged to develop assignments that stress the importance of understanding and applying theory in their personal and professional experiences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Mastery Of Written Composition (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

The second component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition. Student papers were submitted to faculty reviewers who assigned scores based on: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal

Criterion Description:

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome that the students are capable of applying their knowledge of communication theory and their skill in critical thinking in written communication.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

- 1. Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
- 2. All means in the table below are based on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating.
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	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
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<i>Writing Skill (Grammar)</i>	4.16	4.20
<i>Writing Skill (Organization)</i>	4.30	4.47

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Mastery Of Written Composition (Action)

Action Description:

While the criterion for students learning to apply communication theory was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department. Faculty will be encouraged to develop assignments that stress the importance of understanding and applying theory in their personal and professional experiences.

Communication Presentations (Goal)

Goal Description:

To train students (majors and nonmajors alike) to make a variety of effective communication presentations in different professional, educational, and social contexts. These presentations include informative and persuasive speeches, group decision making discussions, and interviews.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Communication Presentations (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of oral communication situations. A part of a good oral presentation includes an outline that helps to organize and structure oral presentations.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Communication Presentations: Speech Outlines (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of the outline/writing skills goal through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the final student presentations. Students will take a pre and post test to demonstrate the effectiveness of performance classes.

Criterion Description:

The criterion for success is a statistical significant difference in the pre and post test.

Findings Description:

Fall 2023

Importantly, 290ish and 260ish students completed the pre and post-test surveys, respectively. However, duplicate cases and missing data affected the overall sample when I matched the pre- and post-test results together; roughly 160 students completed both the pre- and post-test surveys. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statistic	p
Writing Skills	3.72	4.18	.45	5.54	.001
Research Skills	3.76	4.23	.48	6.14	.001

Students' post-test writing skills were significantly higher than the pre-test writing skills.

Students' post-test research skills were significantly higher than the pre-test research skills.

Spring 2024

In total, we had 160 paired responses (pre- and post-test reports), which is consistent with the Fall. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statisti c	p	Cohen’s D
Writing Skills	3.78	4.24	.44	6.47	.001	.53 (Moderate Effect Size
Research Skills	3.75	4.25	.50	6.75	.001	.54 (Moderate Effect Size)

Students' post-test writing skills were significantly higher than the pre-test writing skills.

Students' post-test research skills were significantly higher than the pre-test research skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Communication Presentations: Speech Outlines (Action)

Action Description:

Scores indicated that on the whole students demonstrate outline competency, but the faculty should continue to work to improve the outline score for all students in the coming academic year. Faculty will be reminded about the Department Outline Instruction Document. They will be encouraged to share the document with students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Communication Presentations: Student Speeches (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of the outline/writing skills goal through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the final student presentations. Students will take a pre and post test to demonstrate the effectiveness of performance classes.

Criterion Description:

The criterion for success is a statistical significant difference in the pre and post test.

Findings Description:

Fall 2023

Importantly, 290ish and 260ish students completed the pre and post-test surveys, respectively. However, duplicate cases and missing data affected the overall sample when I matched the pre- and post-test results together; roughly 160 students completed both the pre- and post-test surveys. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statistic	p
Presentation Skills	3.86	4.14	.47	6.82	.001

Students' post-test presentation skills were significantly higher than the pre-test presentation skills.

Spring 2024

In total, we had 160 paired responses (pre- and post-test reports), which is consistent with the Fall. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statisti c	p	Cohen’s D
Presentation Skill s	3.74	4.19	.45	7.76	.001	.63 (Moderate Effect Size)

Students' post-test presentation skills were significantly higher than the pre-test presentation skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Communication Presentations: Student Speeches (Action)

Action Description:

Scores indicated that on the whole students demonstrate public speaking competency, but the faculty should continue to work to improve the speaking score for all students in the coming academic year. Faculty will be reminded about the Department Outline Instruction Document because strong outlines produce strong speeches. They will be encouraged to share the document with students and to help students exhibit good public speaking practices.

Research Literacy (Goal)

Goal Description:

To develop student competencies in locating, understanding, assessing, and reporting communication research findings. This includes training in the use of print and electronic database sources and focuses attention on published scholarly research. It also includes training in the use of computer software appropriate for the word processing of reports and the use of online research sources.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research Literacy (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to assess and report the results of communication research found in refereed scholarly journals as well as in electronic and online databases.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Research Literacy (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure research literacy goal with an annual evaluation of a sample of student papers involving reviews of literature reviews assigned in such courses as Introduction to Communication Theory and Communication Theory. The *first component of this rubric* is evidence of a comprehensive knowledge of a confined research area. Included in this rubric is an assessment of each student's mastery of digital searches, the evaluation of sources, etc. from databases such as Communication Abstracts, Mass Media Complete, PsychInfo, and similar online databases.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

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	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
<i>Research Skill</i>	3.83	3.46

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Research Literacy (Action)

Action Description:

The criterion for students' research literacy was met, but faculty will be encouraged to help our students continue to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department.

Ways to enhance and encourage undergraduate research will be discussed and implemented. Faculty will be encouraged to get students to submit papers to *The Measure* and to other academic outlets/conventions.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

New Faculty

The department unexpectedly lost two tenure/tenure track faculty members at the end of this academic year. We were able to hire two new faculty to maintain the number of full time tenure track faculty. Unfortunately, the intent with the spring job posting was to increase the number of FTEs. The next step will be to meet with the CHSS Dean and develop a plan to move forward with our efforts to increase the number of full time faculty positions.

Program Growth

The goal is to continue trying to grow undergraduate enrollment. The department will again partner with Enrollment Marketing and SHSU to raise awareness of our programs, course offerings, and career opportunities for graduates.

During the past year we have looked for opportunities to collaborate with other departments. We will continue to pursue those possibilities. In the upcoming cycle we will try to reach out to other colleges and departments.

Proposal of Certificates

In the upcoming cycle we will begin offering our approved certificate (Communication for Criminal Justice and Legal Studies). We will be waiting final approval for our the other two certificates we have proposed. We will also work with the appropriate disciplines and Enrollment Marketing to promote these new free standing certificates as they become available.

Linked-In Learning

In the coming year the department will continue to encourage undergraduate faculty to incorporate Linked-In Learning badges in their courses. This will help students show employers the variety of skills they have learned in our program before they even get an interview.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Closing Summary

Over all, the unit was very successful in this assessment cycle. The goal is to continue meeting or exceeding our benchmarks. In order to continue to improve in the coming cycle the unit should:

New Faculty Integration

We hired two new assistant professors during the last cycle. The new faculty were encouraged to participate in PACE and they were assigned a faculty mentor. The new faculty members were encouraged to participate in committees, meetings, and department and campus activities. The chair maintained an open door policy in order to answer any questions. The two new faculty settled into the department and are thriving.

Strategic Planning

The unit acted within the goals of the University's strategic plan. There was a strong focus on student success. Faculty met with students, mentored students, and encouraged students to show case their research at conferences and in *The Measure*. The department maintained social media presence, departmental events, etc.

Program Growth Recruiting

Unfortunately we were not allowed to work with the Office of Enrollment Marketing (IMC) in the fall. Further as we were not allowed to talk to the Carnegie company running our late spring and summer advertising, the Department is unsure if any undergraduate ads were placed. It is entirely possible that ads were limited to the graduate program. The unit has been unsuccessful in getting any assistance with marketing our three new undergraduate certificates.

New Program Certificates

The three proposed certificates have all been approved and added to the catalog. The Department hops to be able work with IMC to develop a marketing campaign to raise awareness about these new programs.

LinkedIn Learning

Faculty will be encouraged to continue to use LinkedIn Learning in their courses to help students build a bridge from education to employment.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

1. Curriculum Review & Development:

- Conduct a review of the graduate curriculum to ensure it reflects current trends in the discipline. Add or delete undergraduate courses as needed.

2. Faculty Enhancement:

- Professional Development: Encourage faculty to engage in professional development opportunities including workshops, active learning, conferences, etc. to improve their teaching skills & innovation.
- Research Support: Provide resources and support for faculty-student research projects by encouraging publication and participation in and travel to academic conferences.

3. Research and Innovation:

- Encourage students to submit to the Measure and undergraduate conferences.
- Encourage faculty to work with undergraduates on research projects.

4. Teaching Excellence:

- Encourage faculty to participate in a peer review system for teaching, and/or use PACE for teaching reviews.
- Encourage faculty to seek workshops and seminars to improve their instruction.
- Support faculty to pursue certifications in teaching and learning.
- Encourage faculty to attend the annual PACE Teaching and Learning Conference.
- Support interdisciplinary teaching via faculty guest lectures, the Honors College, and/or co-teaching with other departments.
- Encourage Develop strategies to increase student engagement and participation in the classroom (active learning, experiential learning, service learning).

5. Service:

- Participate in Department events such as Lambda Pi Eta and Communication Day to meet and engage undergraduates.
- Encourage faculty to be active in Department committees to move the Department forward.
- Attend graduation, Bearkat Kickoff, New student Convocation, etc.