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Sam Houston State University (SHSU)
2014 - 2015

Communication Studies BA/BS

Goal	Application Of Theory  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.
Objective (L)	Applying Communication Theory  Graduates will be able to apply communication theory to specific communication contexts.
Indicator	Student Application Of Theory   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 Theory or Theories to Communication Behavior (see Supporting Document attached). The scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for BA/BS students.
Criterion	Student Application Of Theory  An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.
Finding	Student Application Of Theory DRAFT  Faculty member evaluated student papers (N = 10). The mean of the evaluation was 3.8.
Indicator	Student Mastery Of Written Composition DRAFT   The second component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition (see Supporting Document attached).
Criterion	Student Mastery Of Written Composition  An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.
Finding	Student Mastery Of Written Composition DRAFT  A set of student papers were evaluated by a faculty member. The combined mean of the evaluation was 3.75 (tabled results can be found in the attachment for Student Application of Theory).
Action	Improve Student Writing Competence DRAFT  

Although student writing exceeded the level set for mastery, faculty felt that improvement was called for. A faculty committee constructed a document entitled "Communication Studies Writing Guidelines" (see attached document) that establishes writing expectations across the department for organization and structure, grammar, and format of papers. The document was initially disseminated in some classes in fall 2014 with full dissemination across all classes in fall 2015.

Goal	Communication Presentations  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.
Objective (L)	Communication Presentations  Graduates will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of oral communication situations
Indicator	Student Presentations  We will measure attainment of Goal 2 first through an annual evaluation of a sample of recorded final student presentations given in such courses as Public Speaking and Speech for Business and the Professions. The <i>components of this rubric</i> include the following: Evidence of Content Mastery and Evidence of Mastery of Delivery including Visual Aids (see Supporting Document attached).
Criterion	Student Presentations  An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.
Finding	Student Presentations DRAFT  Student presentations (N = 9) were evaluated by faculty. The mean student score for the presentations were 3.3.
Indicator	Student Speech Outlines  We will measure attainment of Goal 2 secondly through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the recorded final student presentations. The <i>components of this rubric</i> are adherence to standard outline form and proper reference citation form (see Supporting Document attached).
Criterion	Student Speech Outlines  An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.
Finding	Outlines For Presentations DRAFT  The mean student score for the presentation outlines was 3.6 (tabled outline scores are

included in the attachment for Student Presentations).

Action

Improve Student Outline Writing Competence **DRAFT**



Although student writing exceeded the level set for mastery, faculty felt that improvement was called for. A faculty committee constructed a document entitled "Coms Departmental Speech Outline Format" that establishes writing expectations across the department. Another document with a detailed example of a complete speech outline was also constructed. (See attachments) The documents were initially disseminated to selected public speaking classes in fall 2014 with full dissemination across all classes in fall 2015.

Goal

Research And Computer Literacy

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.

Objective (L)

Research And Computer Literacy

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.

Indicator

Student Research And Computer Literacy **DRAFT**

We will measure Goal 3 with an annual evaluation of a sample of student papers involving reviews of research literature 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 and is the same as for Goal 1 Indicator 1. Included in this rubric is an assessment of each student's mastery of Microsoft Word and the use of Communication Abstracts and similar online databases. (see attachment)

Criterion

Student Research And Computer Literacy

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Finding

Student Research And Computer Literacy **DRAFT**

The mean score for Research and Computer Literacy was 3.9. (see Supporting Document attached).

Indicator

Student Mastery Of Written Composition II

The second component of this rubric is mastery of written communication (see document attached to Goal 1 Indicator 1).

Criterion

Student Mastery Of Written Composition II

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Finding

Student Mastery Of Written Composition II

DRAFT 

A set of student papers were evaluated by a faculty member. The combined mean of the evaluation was 3.75 (table results can be found in the attachment for Student Application of Theory).

Action

Improve Student Writing Competence **DRAFT**

Although student writing exceeded the level set for mastery, faculty felt that improvement was called for. A faculty committee constructed a document entitled "Communication Studies Writing Guidelines" that establishes writing expectations across the department. (See attachment) The document was initially disseminated to selected classes in fall 2014 with full dissemination across Coms classes containing writing assignments in fall 2015.

Previous Cycle's "Plan for Continuous Improvement"

The primary focus for improvement in the coming year will be the development of student guidelines for writing and for outlining. This will address weaknesses noted in the findings for Goals 1, 2, and 3 for this year and will prepare the department for anticipated university-wide changes in the expectations for writing-enhanced courses. To accomplish this, the faculty will: 1) discuss the components of good outlining and writing, 2) develop guidelines for outlining and writing, and 3) distribute these two sets of guidelines to undergraduate students in each of our classes.

Please detail the elements of your previous "Plan for Continuous Improvement" that were implemented. If elements were not implemented please explain why, along with any contextual challenges you may have faced that prevented their implementation.

Based on prior assessments and IDEA evaluations, faculty discussed strategies for improving student writing mastery. Faculty formed two committees, The first focused on general writing form and the second on outline writing for speech presentations. The outcomes of these committees were documents attached above: a departmental Writing Guidelines handout, and two outlining handouts: a departmental Speech Outline Format handout and a Outline Format Example handout. The outlining handouts were distributed in all presentation classes beginning fall 2015. The writing handouts were also distributed to all Coms writing-intensive classes beginning fall 2015.

The faculty also had a one-day workshop for all instructors of the public-speaking courses. Best practices were shared along with information about prior-semester's assessments and the newly-created handouts. After looking at the variation in IDEA scores in the different sections of the public speaking classes across the department, this workshop was created to bring more consistency across all sections of the presentation courses in the department.

Plan for Continuous Improvement - Please detail your plan for improvement that you have developed based on what you learned from your 2014 - 2015 Cycle Findings.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

1. Faculty will meet to analyze and discuss IDEA scores and ways that those assessments can inform pedagogy in the department.
2. Faculty will continue to develop more detailed rubrics for evaluating levels of achievement across all indicators.
3. Department put into place practices intended to insure more consistency in pedagogy on writing (e.g., departmental handouts distributed across all classes in the department; semesterly evaluation of student progress).
4. Faculty will develop a behavioral-based rubric for the Faculty Rating of Teaching Effectiveness portion of the IDEA assessment of Teaching Effectiveness.
5. The department chair will make classroom observations of each faculty member as part of faculty teaching assessment.

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