

Communication Studies, Department of
Assessment Plan Summary

Communication Studies, Department of

Graduate Recruitment And Admission

Goal Description:

To increase the enrollment of highly-qualified graduate students. Communication training is critical to a broad variety of disciplines, ranging from teaching to corporate training and development to fundraising to family counseling. Accordingly, the graduate program offers varied coursework designed to meet the needs of diverse range of students and is available entirely online to attract such a group.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Graduate Recruitment And Admission

Performance Objective Description:

The graduate faculty will recruit and admit four or more new qualified applicants.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Recruitment And Admission Of Graduate Students

KPI Description:

This objective will be attained by identifying qualified graduate applicants and admitting them to the program. The criterion for meeting this goal will be the admission of 5 new graduate students.

Based on feedback from the program's 5-year review, a change in admission practices was implemented. Previously, applicants submitted either a 'resume' or GRE scores. That was changed to give the option of submitted either GRE scores or the Miller Analogy Test scores, which were considered a better indicator of analytical skills and potential graduate school success.

Results Description:

In the fall semester, three new students were enrolled in the graduate program; and in the spring, another seven new students were enrolled. Those ten students were double the criterion for success for the recruitment goal.

Increase Faculty Size

Goal Description:

Because both the undergraduate and graduate student enrollment continue to increase, it is imperative that the number of faculty members keep pace with that growth to be able to adequately serve both populations. Before adding one faculty member in 2014, it had been several years (2005) since a new faculty member was added to the department. The goal is to add one new assistant professor to the faculty to address this need.

Professional Activity And Service

Goal Description:

To promote regular faculty participation in and service to state, regional, national, and international professional organizations with an emphasis on *participation in international conferences* held outside the United States. The department also promotes the conduct of *interdisciplinary research* wherever possible.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Professional Activity And Service

Performance Objective Description:

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members will participate regularly and perform service to the university and community and in the state, regional, national, and international professional organizations of the field. Special credit will be given to participation on the programs of international conferences and to conference papers which are interdisciplinary in nature.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Professional Activity

KPI Description:

Professional activity will be measured by the number of professional organization conventions attended during the evaluation period. The criterion for achieving this goal is attendance at 1 regional or national conventions or 1 international convention.

Results Description:

Four of six tenure track faculty members attended either a regional or national convention during the year. All six were active in professional organizations as officers, committee members, or reviewers, meeting the criterion for professional activity.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Professional Service

KPI Description:

Professional service will be measured by the number of service activities performed as a member of a professional organization. Examples of such activities include serving as an officer, a journal editor, member of an editorial board, division officer, and the like. The criterion for achieving this goal is service in any official capacity during the evaluation period.

Results Description:

Each member of the full-time faculty is engaged in professional service either to regional or national organizations, fulfilling this objective.

Research Productivity

Goal Description:

To establish and maintain an ongoing program of research and publication by the tenured and tenure-track faculty exclusively in *refereed* journals and books in communication studies and related fields. The department acknowledges the added rigor of refereed publications and is committed to continuing its record of publication in such venues.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research Productivity

Performance Objective Description:

Tenured and tenure-track faculty will maintain an ongoing program of research and publication in refereed journals and books in communication studies or related fields.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Research Productivity

KPI Description:

The first measure of research productivity will be the number of refereed journal publications published or accepted for publication during the evaluation period. The criterion for achieving this goal is one paper published or accepted for publication during the evaluation period. For tenured faculty on a 4-4 teaching load, the criterion is one paper published or accepted for publication during a three year period. A second measure of research productivity will be publication of a scholarly book during the evaluation period.

Results Description:

Each faculty member had at least one article published or accepted for publication during the year, meeting the standard set for success for this objective. Four faculty members exceeded the standard with multiple acceptances/publications during the year.

Teaching Excellence

Goal Description:

To perform with excellence in classroom instruction.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Teaching Excellence

Performance Objective Description:

Faculty members will sustain an above average level of classroom instruction.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comparison Of Faculty Teaching Scores To Those In The Discipline Nationally

KPI Description:

The third performance indicator for Teaching Excellence will be the overall average of IDEA System Standardized Scores for faculty members in comparison to similar scores of faculty members in the discipline nationally found in the IDEA database. The criterion for achieving the goal of teaching excellence using this indicator will be an overall average above the Middle 40% of all classes in the IDEA database.

Results Description:

Every faculty member’s average IDEA teaching score achieved the stated criterion for this indicator of being above the Middle 40% in the IDEA database in comparison to the discipline.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Evaluation Of Teaching

KPI Description:

The second performance indicator for Teaching Excellence will be the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness, which is the Summary Evaluation score (adjusted) provided by IDEA System forms for each class taught. The criterion for achieving the goal of teaching

excellence using this indicator is a Student Rating of 3.5 or greater (averaged across classes).

Results Description:

The Student Rating for all faculty members (averaged across all classes) was 4.55, exceeding the standard of 3.5, thus achieving success on this performance indicator.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness

Action Description:

Data indicate that all faculty have reached or exceeded acceptable standards of classroom instruction. However, there is always room for improvement, both in measuring the effectiveness of instruction and in the delivery of the instruction itself. To that end, these actions are proposed:

1. The Chair will continue to discuss with individual faculty members and the faculty as a whole with the aim of fostering instructional excellence. These discussions will continue to focus on identifying any issues that are preventing faculty from achieving excellence in instruction as well as sharing best practices among colleagues.
2. The Chair will schedule observations of each faculty members' teaching at least once a year to foster development of teaching excellence. To that end, pre-observation meetings will be held to discuss the objective of the class to be observed as well as to reassure the instructor of the support of the evaluator for the instructor in the process. Follow-up meetings will also be held to discuss observations of the evaluator and give the instructor the opportunity to provide feedback about the lesson in retrospect.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Improving Instruction

Action Description:

Toward constant improvement, the chair will continue the practice of classroom observations, with pre- and post-observation consultations with each instructor as part of a developmental approach to enhance each instructor's teaching skills.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

1. Continue to work toward enrolling high quality graduate students into the masters program.
2. Continue to promote, encourage, and support faculty participation in professional activity and service in university, state, regional, national, and international research and activities.
3. Continue to support faculty scholarly efforts both individually and in collaborative research both within the department and with colleagues outside the department. Also, provide support as possible for travel to present research on competitively selected conferences.
4. Continue to support faculty efforts to improve instruction, both online and in-classroom, in all ways possible.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Measures in place will continue, with best practices continuing to be shared among faculty with the goal of trying to increase students' writing competence.

COMS Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

With the department growing in both the graduate and undergraduate levels, marketing efforts will continue aimed at continuing those trends.

To accommodate that growth, an additional faculty member will be sought who can teach both undergraduate and graduate courses and possibly broaden the range of specialties within the department faculty.

Research collaborations will continue to be encouraged among department faculty and with faculty from other departments. Also, with the physical move of the department to a new building during the next year, the proposed research lab should become functional, giving greater research opportunities to departmental faculty.

Two efforts will be focused on enhancing teaching excellence:

1. Continuing the chair's classroom observation of departmental instructors, with pre- and post-observation meetings with the aim of enhancing best practices.
2. Holding periodic meetings to discuss best practices in instruction among presentation classes (Coms 1361 and Coms 2382, both of which have multiple sections).