

Precis

Program Performance Review for the Department of Human Communities Studies College of Communication

During the 2006-07 academic year the Department of Human Communication Studies conducted a program performance review. At that time Dr. Kim Kitselman, was the Chair of the department. he was succeeded by Dr. John Reinard. The process included an evaluation by an internal reviewer, Dr. Heather Battaly, Philosophy Department, CSU-F. There was also an external reviewer; however, the Dean reports that the external reviewer did not submit a written report. **This PPR is missing the critical evaluation of the external reviewer.** After reviewing the department's self-study, meeting with faculty and students. Dr. Battaly submitted a report. Dr. Rick Pullen, Dean of the College of Communications issued his appraisals in two documents: 1). *Dean's Response to the Program Performance Review* and 2). *Dean's Response to the Internal Review of the Program Performance Review*.

The Department includes two undergraduate degree programs and two master's level programs in Speech Communications and Communicative Disorders. There are 21 full-time, 52 part-time and 2 FERP faculty. Of the 21 full-time and 52 part-time Communicative Disorders has 8 full-time and 8 part-time faculty, while Speech Communications includes 13 full-time and 44 part-time. The Department has seen a decline in undergraduate majors at the time of the review there were 137 majors. Graduate enrollment has not declined. Enrollment is a concern for the department. Sixty percent of the Department's FTES involve the general education requirement. It is reported that 3,400 students use HCOM 102 (Public Speaking) to satisfy the oral communication requirement and another 500 students use HCOM 320 (Intercultural Communication) to meet a cultural diversity requirement.

The internal reviewer cites high praise for the faculty noting effective teaching as well as mentoring students both undergraduate and graduate. A student survey of undergraduate majors in Speech Communication also confirms student satisfaction with knowledge and accessibility of faculty. But that same survey also indicates that students feel that "too many classes are offered only once a year" and "overcrowding (classes too crowded; not enough room in classrooms".)

The Department is commended for its strong community outreach it sponsors the highly successful Southern California Urban Debate League (SCUDL) which provides debating opportunities for regional high school students. And one of the most noteworthy

distinctions of the Department is the perennial success of the Forensics Program which is consistently ranked among the top 16 debate teams in the country.

In addition to undergraduate enrollment as a concern, the department also identifies low morale as concern. They point out the low morale is due to heavy teaching loads 4/4 and numerous committee assignments. Also a challenge is the need to continue to diversify the faculty. The Department will hire new faculty (3) this academic year.

The Department has begun to identify learning goals and align these goals to assessment strategies. There is some ways to go in this regard. Department needs to align learning goals to learning outcomes to assessment strategies and to utilize the results for on going improvement. The Department reports that there is no programmatic strategy for the assessment of writing.

As mentioned earlier, there is an interest in and need to attract more undergraduate majors. The Department feels that this may be accomplished by better "marketing". The Department name was changed from "Speech Communication" to "Human Communication Studies". But the current name of the degree is "Speech Communication". The Department seeks to change the degree designation to "Human Communication Studies" stating that "speech communication" does not capture the nature of the curriculum nor the kinds of career opportunities that are open to graduates including mediation, relational communication and health communication. Furthermore, fewer than 15 percent of the courses in communication and theory include "speech" in the title.

Submitted by:

Gerald W. Patton
Director of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

To:

Ephraim Smith
Vice President Academic Affairs

November 19, 2007