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The Department of Communication at Millikin University is committed to providing a market-smart, challenging, and high quality major to students with a variety of professional and personal aspirations. We celebrate and inform our students about the wide variety of ways a major in communication can prepare them for a future life of meaning and value.

Communication is about the construction of meaning between people and their various stakeholders: friends, families, professional colleagues, communities, and more. The study of communication focuses on understanding the symbols and the processes that construct those meanings, whether the symbol is a word, a gesture, a song, a billboard, a website, or any other meaning-generating object in our world. We also examine the relationship of those symbols to the people who use them. We examine the pragmatic and ethical principles that guide people's communicative choices. We apply this learning to our personal and professional lives.

Consequently, the University's goals of professional success, citizenship in a global environment, and a life of personal meaning and value are manifest in the Communication department's goal to enable students to become effective problem-solvers, critics, and practitioners in their personal and professional communities. This is accomplished through classroom learning, research projects and practical application of service learning, internship projects, and media lab activities that help make these abstract ideas come alive.

Student skills and knowledge are assessed using a variety of techniques in the Department of Communication. Information is gathered through various sources and contexts: student exit interviews, internship evaluations, course evaluations, assignment evaluations, and the senior year capstone course and portfolio.

This past year work focused on five areas: 1) Search for an assistant professor, tenure-track position in the department; 2) Implementation (and tweaking) of curriculum redesign that took place last year; 3) Continued planning to move WJMU to the forthcoming new student center; 4) Preparation for and completion of an external review of the university studies curriculum; the Communication Department provides courses for the oral communication requirement in the university studies curriculum; 5) Assessment of the curriculum based on the capstone course.

First, the department conducted a national search for an assistant professor, tenure-track position. This position was temporarily filled for a couple years while the department completed a curriculum review and redesign. Since the curriculum was finalized, we determined what we

in IN 251 U.S. Studies, IN 350, Global Studies, International Cultures and Structures, January and May immersion courses, and in the PACE adult degree completion program by providing courses for the Organizational Leadership major and general education needs.

The Communication department currently occupies offices on the 4th floor of Shilling Hall and shares a secretary with the

In the Fall of 2007, the Millikin University faculty passed a new curricular structure including general education requirements. All students must now have an oral communication course under the new general education requirements. This requirement began with students entering Millikin University in the Fall of 2008. Thus, the university is entering into its 8th year with this requirement.

The Department offered 22 sections of oral communication courses (CO 200, CO 230 and CO 242) in the 2015-2016 school year between the traditional program and PACE. The breakdown is as follows:

Fall 2015: 8 sections of CO 200; 3 sections of CO 230;

Spring 2016: 7 sections of CO 200; 2 sections of CO 230

PACE: 2 sections (1 each) of CO 242 in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016

Part-time, adjunct teachers taught most of these sections, with the exception of three sections of the oral communication requirement. Even though this approach to deliver the oral communication program is seemingly cost-effective, it is not without other "costs" or ramifications. Although the department values the quality and commitment of its adjunct faculty, the lack of administrative support for a faculty member to oversee and coordinate this general education requirement does not demonstrate strong commitment to this general education requirement. The department chair contributes to some basic course coordination, but it is very minimal and not an optimal situation. What is needed is a faculty member who is compensated to serve as basic course coordinator. The current full time faculty generally cannot contribute significantly to the oral communication requirement teaching load without further eroding the access students in the major have to terminal degreed faculty.

The Communication Department combines diverse perspectives to investigate the social creation and management of meaning through delivery of the Communication major, B.A. or B.S. degree. The major in communication builds upon a critical foundation that blends theory, methodology, and practice to prepare students for more serious study in their own area of interest. We study the interplay of messages and audience in a variety of contexts. Students develop an appreciation for the power of symbols, awareness of the complexity of ethical choices in communication endeavors, and an understanding of the opportunities and constraints of technology. Course work in theory and methods are central to the investigation and understanding of communication processes provides majors with tools for more intensive study in areas such as media production, public relations, organizational culture, and social issues. Thus, our curriculum and its corresponding pedagogy fully incorporate the University's mission of professionalism, citizenship, and a life of meaning and value, and it is intentionally designed to challenge everyday assumptions about communication in a rapidly changing world.

The Communication major ending in spring 2016 consists of a minimum of 39-40 credit hours, consisting of 21 hours in the core (required of all Communication majors) and 18-19 hours of Communication electives, depending on the concentration chosen. Regardless of the concentration chosen, at least 12 of the 18-19 credit hours of which should be numbered 300 or

above. In the core courses, one course, the oral communication course, is required both for the major and for the MPSL university requirements. Thus, this course "double dips" for both. So technically, the major is 36-37 credit hours of additional Communication classes.

All communication majors begin their studies with an introduction to communication theory, after which they may select any required and elective course work, provided the prerequisites for the higher-level courses are completed. There are a few courses that do build onto each other in stages, for example: public relations, video or radio production, organizational communication, and media courses.

Majors are required to use an internship experience to round out their classroom experience. The internship requirement is also an important part of the learning process for our majors. This requirement contributes to developing the student's goal of achieving professional success after graduation. It is al

Communication. Each concentration requires 12 of the 18-19 hours to be 300/400 level hours. Each concentration has four parts: A) Introductory course(s); B) Contexts courses; C) Platforms and Practices courses and D) Culminating Experience course. Each concentration has some choices of courses for B and C.

- 4) Restructured the general studies option to also require 12 of the 18 credit hours be 300/400 level.

A new curriculum began in Fall 2015.

- All four full-time faculty in the department contribute their scholarship to regional, national, or international conferences and to publications. One adjunct faculty member was also active in research.
- Dr. Tom Duncanson completed a successful study abroad program in London with a large number of majors.
- A new assistant professor will begin August 1, 2016.

Participated for the fourth consecutive year in the College Radio Foundation's College Radio Day. This international event is a day of programming which seeks to specifically highlight the benefits of noncommercial alternative radio, and the efforts of students and community members who dedicate their time and energy to staff and support college radio stations. WJMU again had DJs on air for 24 hours during the event.

Created and supported programming for the Illinois Junior Academy of Sciences Exposition. WJMU student staff, with the cooperation of Millikin Public Safety, created parking and campus safety PSAs that ran throughout the IJAS Expo. WJMU staff also interviewed Millikin students, faculty, and administrators on air during the proceedings on topics ranging from senior thesis science and math presentations to the benefits of hosting IJAS at the Millikin Campus.

Upgraded crucial audio editing software and hardware to industry standard programs and units.

Sent a cohort of seven students to the annual Intercollegiate Broadcasting System National Conference and Awards Ceremony in New York City. WJMU received a finalist nomination in the "Best Show Promo" production category for senior Eric Shafer's *90s On Tap* segment, and won the "Best Radio Documentary" production category for alumnus Mallory Wiedenkiller's *Online Friendship* short.

Students join the communication major at many different times during a Millikin University experience. As an incoming freshman, transfer student, change of major, second major, or interdisciplinary student; our majors have a variety of demands to make on our curriculum.

A communication program in the twenty-first century must be prepared to engage every facet of communicative competency from the physiology of sign production to the politics of institution formation and legitimation. A fully functional university program in communication must provide:

- First courses, non-remedial first courses, appropriate to the maturity and self-reflective habits of traditional university aged students and adult learners, instilling meta-vocabularies of risk, effects, and critique
- Skill courses, especially in the arts of public communication
- Intermediate and advanced courses, with special support for skill building, in interpersonal, small group, and organizational communication
- Initial and advanced courses in media production
- Specific preparation for the norms and standards of specific communication professions and industries
- Research methods training
- Creative outlets for student performance
- Courses in discourse in historical and comparative contexts, especially as related to the dominant institutions of society
- Ample opportunities to practice communication skills and knowledge in real world settings, to engage in performance learning in the spirit of the Millikin University mission
- Developing leadership for communication industries

The Millikin Department of Communication has done all of these things, and the current faculty see tremendous demand that it does these things more, and in increasingly sophisticated market-driven ways, and that there are extraordinary opportunities that remain to express leadership in communication education and win the rewards that go with that leadership.

Performance learning in the Communication major occurs in various classes. Some of the classes with performance learning include the following:

- CO 204, Communication Research Methods
- CO 341, Survey of Organizational Communication
- CO 342, Training & Technology Applications in Organizations
- CO 332, Gender Communication
- CO 432, Intercultural Communication
- CO 360, Crisis Communication
- CO 401, Topics in Persuasion: Environmental Advocacy
- CO 480, Internship
- CO 481, Communication Capstone

Specifically, these are classes that have completed projects and presented to external audiences (third-party, not peers who are taking the class also). There are some semesters in which some of these classes may not have this third-party component because of varying circumstances, such as lack of accessibility in securing a project or a new professor who has yet to develop an external project, etc. In short, while the Communication Department has many performance-learning courses, sometimes there is some variability.

There are other Communication courses that consistently incorporate a presentation component of presenting to peers in the classroom, like CO 200, Public Speaking; CO 230, Business Conversations, and most other Communication courses.

The Communication Department assesses student skills and knowledge using a variety of techniques. One of our assessment goals is to create a consistent, ongoing assessment process to improve the quality and quantity of data useful to our department for program development and growth. Assessment data will be gathered from the following sources and contexts:

- Student Interviews: A random sample of students is interviewed each year. These have included exit interviews for graduating seniors, discussions held with student leadership, and student feedback provided in the capstone course.
- Internship Evaluations: Communication majors are encouraged to have at least one internship experience. At the end of the internship, students, supervisors, and the faculty advisor evaluates

Students will
demonstrate the

	Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate in personal, scholarly, and/or professional contexts through appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and mediated formats.	Students will distinguish the theories pertinent to communication studies and demonstrate the skills needed to create, present, analyze, and evaluate messages in relevant contexts	Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills when generating, consuming, and evaluating messages in relevant communication contexts.
CO 332, Gender Communication	x	x	x
CO 341, Survey of Organizational Communication	x	x	
CO 342, Training & Technology Applications in Organizational Comm.	x	x	x
CO 343, Communication and Conflict	x		x
CO 344, Leadership & Communication	x	x	
CO 345, Leading Organizational Change	x	x	x
CO 351, Topics in Writing for Communication Professions	x	x	x

Furthermore, students want to be challenged and want non-Communication majors to understand the rigor of the major. There is a perception that the major is easy, that it is a "fall back" major, etc. Quite simply, Communication majors want to be challenged, have a credible,

"I quickly learned that communication and effective facilitation were a large part of the financial planning industry. All of the other interns were either majored in finance or economics, while I was majored in communication. They had to learn facilitation and communication skills while I had to learn the finance part of the business. The company trained me from the ground up and continued to pay for my certifications. I was able to effectively learn about finance through doing joint work with the various representatives of the company. The other interns were having a harder time learning facilitation and communication skills through the joint work representatives as they did not have a background for it. I am currently the most successful intern for the Champaign office which is why I was offered a job to work at their practice. This gave me a lot of confidence not only with my major, but with myself."

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As noted above in the CO 481, Communication Capstone portion, student papers are read to gather themes. Some other themes that have been gathered through these papers, faculty-student interactions and in oral presentations in the capstone include the following:

- Advising was highly praised by graduates from the major. On average, students were pleased that the department made an effort to help them graduate on time and that curricular and advising resources were available to make that possible. Students felt that their departmental advisor, the department secretary, and Registrar's office were meeting their advising needs. Ordinarily, freshmen receive an advisor who follows them through their four years in the major. Many students reported getting help on advising issues from multiple members of the Communication faculty, not just a single advisor. All full-time faculty are prepared for and expected to assist students with advising issues during their time in the department. Students described the advising experience in our department much more favorably than other departments they had transferred from prior to becoming Communication majors. Many students mentioned that they have had multiple meetings during the semester with their advisor and that advising extended well beyond scheduling. Students received assistance in their career planning, with issues concerning their courses and university services, study abroad, graduate school, and with other academic and personal challenges. This success has been possible despite communication faculty advising as many as 25 or more advisees each semester.
- Many students referenced at least one favorite faculty member and/or course in the department and recognized the collegiality and support Communication faculty provide to students and to each other. The variety of courses and faculty described demonstrated a breadth of courses and teaching styles that students found attractive and that helped them to succeed. Students in the major usually have at the minimum three of our full-time faculty in their major program, many have all of us at one time or another as they move through the program. The range of courses was interesting. The individual courses were important but so was their teaching style and success at contributing to student learning. Many of the core courses were included in their comments, students seem to appreciate, if only later in the process, the central theory and knowledge the core contributed to their preparation. Those courses included: CO 101 Introduction to Communication Theory and CO 204 Communication Research Methods in Communication. Popular elective courses included: CO 432 Intercultural Communication, CO 332 Gender Communication, and CO 343 Communication and Conflict.
- Students who have selected a concentration in their major were generally pleased with that option and outcome. Most would like even more upper-level coursework in their individual concentration areas—to deepen the amount of coursework in each track. This seem particularly true for students entering the major their freshmen year. The longer a student is a major in the department, the more our limitations become evident. Offering a variety of topics courses, including immersion courses, is helping this situation. However, with a limited faculty size, a heavy core course demand, and a significant number of majors, variety is going to be limited.
- Students in the media track were o P k

The 2016-2017 academic year promises new challenges, dangers, and opportunities for the Department of Communication. A summary of concerns and goals include:

- Development of the public speaking requirement is too limited due to resource restrictions. A full-time hire for a basic course director who can also contribute to at least one other curricular track is needed