

# Instructional Program Review

Program Name: **Communication Studies**

Program Contact: **Li, Yaping**

Academic Year: **2016-2017**

Status: **Submitted for review**

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## 1. Description of Program

Provide a brief description of the program and how it supports the college's [College Mission and Diversity Statements](#), [CSM Strategic Goals 2013/14 to 2015/16](#), and other [Institutional Program Planning](#) as appropriate. What is the program's vision for sustaining and improving student learning and success over the next three years?

Communication Studies provides opportunities to speak well, listen with understanding, and engage in positive action through using communication skills to build community in the classroom and beyond. As such, department coursework "prepare[s] students to be informed and engaged citizens in an increasingly global community" [*College Mission*] and focuses on "student engagement" to "support student success" [CSM Strategic Goals 2013/14 to 2015/16]. The department fosters student efficacy in communication by complementing course instruction with academic support provided by its Communication Studies Center.

Department courses meet students' varied goals for degree, transfer, and life long learning, in keeping with CSM's institutional commitment to "robust programs in transfer, occupational education, basic skills and lifelong learning" [*CSM Revised Vision Statement*]. Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, Small Group Communication, Intercultural Communication, and Oral Interpretation of Literature, all transferable to CSU and UC, support the college's transfer function [CSM Strategic Goals 2013-14 to 2015/26]. COMM STUDIES' courses are 100% transferable [Student Success and Core Program Indicators, Academic Years 2013/14 to 2015/16]. The department offers the Associate in Arts Degree (AA), Associate in Arts Degree for Transfer (AA-T), and Certificate of Specialization (CS).

COMMLAB services--video recording of speeches and group presentations, viewing and critiquing class performances, viewing and critiquing academic materials, and working one-on-one with Communication Studies faculty--provide a complementary learning environment that enables students to benefit from TBA requirements. Integration of class work and praxis resulted in high student success [78.7%], along with high retention [88.8%] and low withdrawal rates [11.2%] in 2015-16. Overall, these numbers accord with college institutional priority #1: "Improve the academic success of all students (includes course-completion, retention, and persistence)" [*CSM Strategic Goals 2013/14 to 2015/16*]. To help underperforming groups, COMM faculty proposed and collaborated with team members to create the MANA Learning Community for Pacific Islanders. This learning community, with COMM 110 as a core course, is in its third semester. The COMM Center program review will be submitted under Center Program Reviews.

## 2. Student Learning and Program Data

### A. Discuss Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

1. Reflect on recent SLO assessment results for courses and degrees and certificates offered by the program. Specify how SLO assessment informs curriculum development and changes to curriculum.

Communication Studies engages in ongoing Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment to improve course delivery and increase student achievement of learning objectives. The department began by defining and developing SLOs for each course [prior to 2005], and continues to refine course SLOs over time. Results of assessment enable the department to monitor and manage progress on SLOs.

Communications Studies comprehensively assessed *all* Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for *all* courses in 2009, 2012 and 2015; on our own initiative, we also comprehensively assessed all SLOs in spring 2016 to try out the new version of Tracdat. Performance metrics for comprehensive reviews indicated student achievement of objectives for *every* course SLO; COMM STUDIES uses a *4-point grid tied with whole grade values* to assess student achievement of SLOs, so a low pass or C for a given SLO would be 2.0.

*Between* comprehensive review cycles, the department--for the two intervening years--assesses the lowest SLO across courses with multiple sections (COMM 110 and COMM 130) [*12/21/12 and 6/19/14 Results, Tracdat*]. To close the loop for COMM 110, instructors teaching COMM 110 would include additional outlining practice in small groups during the semester. Data collected after the end of spring 2014 determined this proved efficacious. For COMM 110's SLO 1, Outlining, [*Write a speech outline that demonstrates ability to use organization with a clear purpose*] a 2.8 result was improved to 3.2. Similarly, instructors teaching COMM 130 were asked to use additional exercises to improve results for the SLO with the lowest student success (COMM 130, Communication Model SLO) [*12/21/12 and 6/19/14 Results, Tracdat*]; the result for SLO 1, *explain basic elements of the communication process in interpersonal settings*, was improved from

2.6 to 3.19.

Data collected indicate that academic interventions were effective, so our pattern of assessment and action will be continued. However, we have reservations in attributing a strict *causal relationship* between intervention and result.

Communication Studies AA-T Degree SLO were assessed from summer 2012 to spring 2014 with mean scores of 3.78 and 3.61 [CSM SLO Survey of Degree Applicants 2014]. These numbers showed positive outcomes on the two degree SLOs: apply communication theories when working in a team and express ideas and provide supporting evidence effectively in writing and in speaking. When the department asked for data for degree and certificate holders to answer the above question, "*Reflect on recent SLO assessment results for courses and degrees and certificates offered by the program,*" PRIE stated that "the program SLO survey was abandoned in favor of the SLO 'course-to-program-roll up' analysis . . . when Tracdat 5 gets implemented." So, for the moment, we have no new data to determine whether our degree- and certificate-holders feel they have mastered degree SLOs taught across our courses.

2. Comment on the success rates in the program SLOs that are aligned with specific course SLOs. What do the program SLO and course data reveal about students completing the program? Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement. Is the alignment between course and program SLOs appropriate and informative? Describe any additional methods used to assess program SLOs and reflect on the results of those assessments. See [course-to-program SLO alignment mapping](#).

When asked to fill out Program/Course SLO Alignment for fulfillment of the AA, COMM STUDIES *identified a single SLO that characterized the focus of each of its key courses*: COMM 110 (Public Speaking), COMM 130 (Interpersonal Communication), and COMM 150 (Intercultural Communication):

COMM 110 Write a speech outline that demonstrates proper organizational components

COMM 130 Apply learned skills and communication theories in teamwork

COMM 150 Apply critical thinking skills to analyze conflict and controversial situations

The Program/Course SLO Alignment for fulfillment of the AA-T, COMM STUDIES, named *identical* essential SLOs for the above courses.

The Program/Course SLO Alignment for the Certificate of Specialization identified *writing the speech outline* and *applying learned skills and communication theories in teamwork* as central skills for its achievement.

Discussion in *Section 2A3*, below, addresses how success rates in Program SLOs align with specific Course SLOs. *Assessment of Program Student Learning Objectives* for the AA, AA-T, and CS include only two of the above-named three Program SLOs (*outlining and teamwork*).

3. For any courses in the program that satisfy a GE requirement, which GE SLOs are supported or reinforced by the course SLOs? What do assessment results for the course SLOs (and for the GE SLOs, if available) reveal about student attainment of the GE SLOs? See [GE SLO Alignment Summary Report](#) or [All Courses GE SLO Alignment Data](#).

All COMM STUDIES' transferable courses satisfy the GE SLO for **Effective Communication**. COMM 110 (Public Speaking), COMM 150 (Intercultural Communication), and COMM 170/171 (Performance of Literature I and II) also emphasize **Critical Thinking**, while COMM 130, COMM 150, and COMM 170/171 further satisfy the **Social Awareness/Diversity** SLO. Finally, COMM 130 and COMM 170/171 reinforce the SLO, **Ethical Responsibility**. Below are assessment results for Course SLOs:

#### Course SLO Student Achievement

##### Effective Communication

COMM 110 3.4

COMM 130 3.3

COMM 140 3.8

COMM 150 3.7

COMM 170 2.9

COMM 171 3.6

##### Critical Thinking

COMM 110 3.4

COMM 130 N/A

COMM 140	N/A
COMM 150	4
COMM 170	2.8
COMM 171	3.49

**Social Awareness/Diversity**

COMM 110	N/A
COMM 130	3.3
COMM 140	N/A
COMM 150	3.7
COMM 170	N/A
COMM 171	3.5

**Ethical Responsibility**

COMM 110	3.0
COMM 130	3.5
COMM 140	N/A
COMM 150	N/A
COMM 170	2.9
COMM 171	3.4

COMM STUDIES uses a 4-point grid tied with whole grade values (discussed in Section 2A1) to assess student achievement of SLOs. By this measure, COMM STUDIES students have shown mastery of Course SLOs, ranging from a low of 2.9 to a high of 4. Course SLOs were most recently revised and approved by COI in Fall 2016 and were assessed and entered into Tracdat earlier, in Summer 2016.

**B. Student Success Indicators**

1. Review [Student Success and Core Program Indicators](#) and discuss any differences in student success indicators across demographic variables. Also refer to the [College Index](#) and other relevant sections of the [Educational Master Plan: Update, 2012](#), e.g., Student Outcomes and Student Outcomes: Transfer. Basic Skills programs should also refer to [ARCC](#) data.

According to *Student Success and Core Program Indicators*, 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 academic years document COMM STUDIES students' high success and retention. Success rate for the above years is 76.9%, 77.9%, and 78.7%; retention rate is 88.4%, 87.9%, and 88.8%.

Successful completion rates for 2013-14 to 2015-16 indicate *comparable* success rates for Asian (76.4%, 82.8%, and 87.4%), Black (67.2%, 75.4%, 76.1%), Filipino (76.4%, 79.0%, and 74.8%), Hispanic (69.6%, 70.2.7%, 71.1%), White (82.7%, 81.1%, 80.4%), and Other (79.2%, 80.1%, 82.7%). Overall, the above groups of students showed improvement in success rates compared with the data reported in the last review cycle.

Native American student numbers are extremely low, so valid conclusions cannot be drawn from their rates of success (100%, 0.0%, 0.0%); Pacific Islander students are a significant population with a demonstrated history of performing least well of all ethnic groups (62%, 64.3%, 66.7). However, Pacific Islander success rates are much improved from the rates reported in the previous cycle of review (59.2%, 56.5%, 50%). The withdraw rates dropped significantly from 15.2%, 27.5%, 12% (2011-14) to 11.9%, 9.3% for the recent two academic years. This positive trend was brought upon by two interventions initiated by COMM faculty: the MANA Learning Community and an experiment in Spring 2014, COMM 170/171 that used content based on, and taught using, culturally-specific values and role relationships of Pacific Islanders. The course enrolled an unprecedented number, including four Pacific Islander students (38 total, retaining 37). COMM 170/171 had the same focus in Spring 2015 and will continue with the theme in subsequent spring semesters. The department's long-term strategy for Pacific Islander students has produced good results.

Females and males are equally represented in classes; females' percentage of success had been higher, but males' success rates became roughly equal in 2013-14 (77.7%, 79.4%, 81.4%) v. (76.3%, 76.6%, 76.4).

Age does not appear to be a significant variable, as students succeed across age-related categories. Those showing the lowest rates of

success had been those “19 or less” (75.1%, 74.4%, 76.0%). Highest rates of success are shown by those “50+” (84.2%, 84.6%, 94.7%). Of these groups, the “19 or less” category represents a significant population (527, 542, 567) whereas “50+” is fairly small (19, 13, 19). We are, for the third consecutive year, expressing our belief that the traditional cohort of entering freshmen would benefit from a mandatory .5 unit orientation to college; such a course could have students apply for financial aid; connect with college resources, including counselors, EOPS, DSPS; stress the importance of a Student Educational Plan, placement exams, class attendance, planning, note-taking, test-taking, persistence, and so on. This is particularly important in a population of first-generation college students or the plurality of students who require basic skills.

An interesting variable continues to be TERM. Compare success and retention rates of students in the fall and spring semester v. summer semester in the following table. Results are revealed to be *consistent* over time:

Term	Success	Retention
Academic Year (Fall, Spring— <u>excludes</u> summer)	76.9%, 77.9%, 78.7	88.4%, 87.9%, 88.8%
<b>Summer Term</b>	<b>86.9%, 82.8%, 84.6%</b>	<b>91.7%, 90.9%, 93.4%</b>

The department had discussed with PRIE whether records of enrolled students could be accessed to determine *which* students were concurrently enrolled at university and *whether* greater numbers of such concurrently enrolled students were enrolled in summer classes; this information cannot be tracked. The assumption is that such students would be more likely to have met the recommended preparation of ENGL 100 or internalized how to succeed in academic culture. This is the second year COMM STUDIES has asked whether increased student preparation (including a .5 unit orientation to college course, students who meet recommended preparation, students accustomed to university-level work) or shorter, more focused terms might contribute to higher success and lower retention rates.

2. Discuss any differences in student success indicators across modes of delivery (on-campus versus distance education). Refer to [Delivery Mode Course Comparison](#).

Communication Studies first offered a hybrid Public Speaking class in fall 2012, continued for two more years and discontinued the course offering in 2015.

The department had concerns about quality and efficacy of technology-mediated instruction for our courses, as all require public performance and the concomitant notion of “audience.” Additionally, because of our commitment to the success of *all* populations, the department resisted pressure to develop the hybrid course until best practices were investigated and the instructor of record had been STOT trained. Despite intervention of the local, the expected stipend for course development--as specified by contract--was not received by the instructor. Management and our bargaining agent must come to terms to resolve this.

Results continue to support reservations about online delivery. Rates of success in 2013-2014 are 26.% and 60% [comparable rate for traditional classes are 72.4% and 76.8%], with retention rates of 47.4% and 73.3% [rate for traditional classes in the same academic year is 87% and 88.4%]. Beginning enrollment in hybrid courses is lower than the traditionally observed course limit of 29, at 19 and 15, respectively, enrollments that would routinely trigger course cancellation. COMM 110H had been a service course to the college to assist students in completing GE requirements by online means--yet it is one that affects our student success indicators. The *Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness* (2013) compared achievement data for online coursework with courses traditionally delivered and concluded, "The historical 'achievement gap' between online and traditional coursework success rates has been virtually eliminated at CSM between fall 2005 and fall 2011 . . . The corresponding withdrawal and retention rates reveal the same pattern of convergence [p. 39]." COMM STUDIES did not observed these trends and discussed whether to continue to offer COMM 110H; COMM 110H was discontinued in fall 2015 and a face-to-face class was offered instead.

C. Program Efficiency Indicators. Do we deliver programs efficiently given our resources?

Summarize trends in program efficiency as indicated in the [Student Success and Core Program Indicators](#) (LOAD, Full-time and Part-time FTEF, etc.)

Communication Studies has been efficient, with strong enrollment and relatively high load within the division (above division average; see below). This is the fourth program review cycle in which the full-time/adjunct FTEF ratio is low, at 54.6%. The department stands at Full-Time FTEF, 6.1, and Part-Time FTEF, 4.9 this academics year [Student success and Core Program Indicators Academics years 2013/14 to 2015/16].

Enrollment is 1371 for the 2015-16 academic year; LOAD is 480.1. The Language Arts Division LOAD is 426. The department LOAD has increased significantly in the last two years (443.1 for 2013-14 and 461.8 for 2014-15)

Considering the productivity of the department, particularly in areas of student retention and success, an additional full-time faculty member is merited when awarding new resources in future years; in anticipation of the next likely retirement, a generalist faculty member with strengths in Performance of Literature and Argumentation/Debate would be needed. The department will submit a request next year. Comparative rates of success and retention are displayed below:

Unit	Success%	Retention%
<b>COMM STUDIES</b>	<b>78.7%</b>	<b>88.8%</b>
LANGUAGE ARTS DIVISION	72.3%	86.6%
COLLEGE	70.0%	85.3%

COMM STUDIES courses incorporate speeches, performances, panels, or presentations and--unlike other programs and many other COMM STUDIES departments--digitally record and store classroom videos for student analysis. Rounds of *recorded in-class speeches* are an important but time-consuming commitment in all 100-level courses; we believe this is in the interest of our students' best learning. For example, a speech-intensive class such as COMM 110 (Public Speaking) *equally* divides the 17.5 week semester into rounds of speeches *and* non-speech days for instruction or group work; classroom management is critical when recording classroom speeches for teacher and student evaluation. Clearly, **adding numbers of students to end the semester with 35 (equivalent to a 525 LOAD) works against student success and quality instruction.**

### 3. Additional Factors

Discuss additional factors as applicable that impact the program, including changes in student populations, state-wide initiatives, transfer requirements, advisory committee recommendations, legal mandates, workforce development and employment opportunities, community needs. See [Institutional Research](#) as needed.

No discussion.

### 4. Planning

#### A. Results of Program Plans and Actions

Describe results, including measurable outcomes, from plans and actions in recent program reviews.

Communication Studies has had two continuing goals over the years.

Goal I: *Ensure that long-time part-time faculty remain with the department.*

We schedule courses around the requests of our four part-time faculty with greatest longevity. Through *numerous* instructional equipment requests, each has been provided a laptop and camera for recording classroom speeches; the department commitment to in-class recording is discussed in *Section 2C*. The concrete outcome of this goal is that we have retained this core of part-time faculty and have provided equal access to equipment used daily in COMM STUDIES. This goal has been achieved.

Goal II: *Initiate a set of best practices for the new Communication Studies Center based on evidence.*

This goal has been met; it was discussed in last year's Program Review and will not be further discussed. COMM STUDIES also worked with PRIE to modify a standard user satisfaction survey that were administered to COMMLAB students in Spring 2015 (outside the current Program Review cycle).

B. Future Program Plans and Actions

Prioritize the plans to be carried out to sustain and improve student success. Briefly describe each plan and how it supports the [CSM Strategic Goals 2013/14 to 2015/16](#). For each plan, list actions and measurable outcomes. Plans may extend beyond a single year. Describe the professional activities and institutional collaborations that would be most effective in carrying out the program's vision to improve student learning and success.

COMM STUDIES has led in developing, revising, and implementing SLOs to improve what are already strong rates of student success and retention. We plan to *continue* our work in advancing student learning, advocating for COMMLAB as a student resource, and serving the college community. To address student learning and success, the department developed and now participates in a Pacific Islander Recruitment and Retention Program, the MANA Learning Community. The MANA Learning Community is successful and is in its 3rd semester. The department will continue to be part of this learning community.

COMM STUDIES has a faculty on CSM International Education Committee to closely work with the ESL department and COI representative in developing strategies to help our increasing population of international students, especially those who place themselves into transferable courses without taking recommended ESL courses.

**5. Program Maintenance**

A. Course Outline Updates

Review the [course outline update record](#). List the courses that will be updated in the next academic year. For each course that will be updated, provide a faculty contact and the planned submission month. See the [Committee on Instruction](#) website for [course submission instructions](#). Contact your division's [COI representatives](#) if you have questions about submission deadlines. **Career and Technical Education courses must be updated every two years.**

Courses to be updated	Faculty contact	Submission month
none		

All COMM courses were approved by COI in Fall 2016.

B. Website Review

Review the program's website(s) annually and update as needed.

Faculty contact(s)	Date of next review/update
Kate Motoyama	Summer 2017


Review of the department website was completed in Summer 2016. The content of the website is updated each semester, but the review allows us to revise and improve the representation of department and its students' accomplishments. Inconsistencies and omissions were corrected with the assistance of our IAll (.48), Jacqui Swan. In particular, course SLOs were checked and corrected to be consistent with those appearing in official course outlines and Tracdat.

The review provided impetus to implement inclusion of video thumbnails, which better reflect our discipline—a feature we had been working toward with Community Relations & Marketing. Please visit <http://collegeofsanmateo.edu/speech>; the reader will be able to view ANIMOTO videos of student projects. A request for funding ANIMOTO will be submitted this year.

C. SLO Assessment Contacts

Faculty contact(s)	Date of next review/update
Yaping Li	Spring 2017 comprehensive review; data to be entered Summer 2017

A. Course SLO Assessment

Explain any recent or projected modifications to the course SLO assessment process or schedule.

No planned modifications from current practice. Communication Studies Department will follow its established assessment schedule for future SLO assessment, performing comprehensive assessment of *all* SLOs for *every* course in a three-year cycle. Between comprehensive assessment cycles, the department annually tracks SLOs with the lowest student success and suggests interventions to improve student learning. Email communication is then sent to all affected faculty, with the dean cc'd, as to which SLO requires special attention.

New SLOs were entered into Tracdat and were assessed in spring 2016.

B. Program SLO Assessment

Explain any recent or projected modifications to the program SLO assessment process or schedule.

SLO assessment of degrees and certificates appears to have been discontinued by the college.

C. SLO Alignment

Discuss how Course SLOs support Program SLOs. Discuss how Course and/or Program SLOs support Institutional/GE SLOs. Refer to [Tracdat](#) related Program and Institutional SLO reports.

This section was discussed in 2A2.

#### 6. Dominant Themes Summary for IPC

Briefly summarize the dominant, most important themes or trends contained in this program review, for division deans to collect and forward to the Institutional Planning Committee. What are the key program issues that matter most? (Brief paragraph or bullet points acceptable).

1. COMM Studies has consistent high retention and success rates, and low withdraw rates.
2. COMM Studies has been efficient and productive with higher LOAD than division average.
3. The one key program issue is the need for a full-time Instructional Aide II for COMM Center after the loss of our full-time instructional aide due to managed hiring years ago. The COMM Center along with Learning Center serves a huge number of students. In Spring 2016 COMM Center served 560 unique visits, 7702 repeat visits, with Learning Center, 3177 unique visits, and 39218 repeat visits. The department has co-requested with the Learning Center a shared Instructional Aide II.