Program Review
Department of Communication
The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo
October 15, 2003

1. Executive Summary

The Department of Communication is "impacted." Its major count has grown more than 600% in the past twenty years. Since 1997-98 alone the department has grown at an average rate of 22.52% per year. This substantial rate of growth has been achieved with one full professor, two associates, one assistant professor, and a single non-tenure track position (five total faculty). The Department of Communication closed ALL of its upper-division courses to non-majors during the 2002-03 academic year, and ALL upper-division courses were again closed to students who are not communication majors or minors during the 2003-04 academic year. The program is in serious need of additional staffing at the tenure-track level to accommodate its impacted major/minor program. It appears that one tenure-track position has been granted to the Department to begin in fall 2004, in the area of Communication and Culture, and a second position is pending funding, in the area of Mass Communication/Journalism. Should both positions materialize, the Department will have received the much-needed help for which it has so long waited. Ongoing lecturer support will also be needed, of course, for the Department to meet its general education commitments to the programs in Business Administration, Computer Science, Nursing, Agriculture, Agronomy, Aquaculture, Horticulture, and Crop Protection, and to service the overall student community in the general education area.

2. Background

Nationally Unique. On the U.S. mainland, the average enrollment of Asian/Pacific Islanders in undergraduate communication programs is only 2%. In fact, 44% of all undergraduate communication major programs have NO Asian/Pacific Islander students
enrolled (National Communication Association, 1997). At UHH, fully 70% of our communication majors are of Asian/Pacific Islander ethnic identity, with no single ethnic group in the majority (UHH Office of Institutional Research, 2002). In terms of our student composition, we are unique on the national scene.

**Orientation.** Communication majors at UH-Hilo are provided with a strong foundation in human communication theories, models, concepts and principles relevant to diverse populations in a variety of contexts. Students develop oral, written, interpersonal, group, and intercultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that prepare them for citizenship and leadership in a diverse civil democratic society. The Department of Communication emphasizes enhanced self-awareness, competent and sincere communication, and deep listening as powerful tools for cultivating personal and professional empowerment. Our students are better enabled to create human connection, cooperation, and community.

Underlying our communication program at UH-Hilo is the effort to foster these broad and primary understandings among our students:

1. An understanding of the powers of human language and speech that allow people to create connection, collaboration, and community.

2. An understanding of the role of communication in the construction of social realities, including the construction of personal identity and self-esteem.

3. An understanding of the role of communication in the initiation, development, maintenance, enhancement, and termination of human relationships.

4. An understanding of the challenges and components of communicating in interpersonal, group, presentational, and organizational contexts.
5. An understanding of the need for cultural sensitivity in a world where cultural diversity is increasingly commonplace.

6. An understanding of the importance of media literacy, and the impact of the mass media upon us, our culture and our world.

7. An understanding of the crucial role of inclusive high quality dialogue in a traditionally free and democratic society.

The promotion of the above fundamental understandings is at the center of our program planning and course design, and drives our efforts in the classroom. Our degree major (and minor) constitutes a liberal arts program consistent with the stated educational aims of our university: "The educational philosophy of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, broadly stated, is that the development of the human potential to the fullest extent possible is central to the very existence of the University" (General Catalogue, 2002-03, p. 11).

Curriculum Development. In October 1997 the UH Board of Regents approved the name change of our B.A. degree to "Communication" (from "Speech and Communication"), along with our departmental title. Our department has also undergone significant structural and curriculum changes since 1997. We removed the following courses from our curriculum: Morphology and Syntax, Generative Phonology, Descriptive Linguistics, Phonetics, Voice and Diction, Speech Pathology, Audiology, Practicum in Speech Pathology I and II, and Radio Drama. We established three main area headings for our coursework: Human Communication Studies, Organizational Communication Studies, and Mass Media Studies. In addition to more than a dozen existing courses, we processed the following new courses into our curriculum: Intro to Theories of Human Communication, Intro to Human Communication Research, Human
Communication in a Diverse Society, Communication and Culture of Asian Americans, Organizational Communication, Public Relations, Leadership and Communication, Communication and Conflict, Family Communication, Interviewing, and Seminar in Human Dialogue. In addition, we have offered experimental (COM 494) offerings in Health Communication, Rhetoric of Popular Culture, Rhetorical Criticism, and Non-Violent Communication. We have been busy expanding, evolving and refining our curriculum in order to better meet the needs of contemporary students.

Student Excellence. Also within this period we have instituted a local chapter of Lambda Pi Eta, the national undergraduate communication honor society. This fits well with the fact that an increasing number of our students are achieving academic distinction: the single Presidential Scholar in the Spring 2001 graduating class was a Communication major; 23% of those graduating with honors in the Spring 2003 graduating class were Communication majors; more than 20% of those UHH students selected for inclusion in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges 2002-2003 were Communication majors; three of our UHH student commencement speakers since Spring 2001 have been Communication majors, and a fourth was a Communication minor. In the fall of 2003, a new entrance requirement of a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (in at least 30 credits) for admission into our major went into effect; we predict even further academic achievements from our students in the future.

3. **Program Orientation and Performance**

Program Requirements. Students in our major are required to complete three lower-division courses: *Interpersonal Communication* (COM 200), *Public Speaking* (COM 251), and *Introduction to Theories of Human Communication* (COM 270). Each student is also
required to complete one course of their choosing within each of three designated blocks: (1) Media Studies, (2) Organizational Communication Studies, and (3) Human Communication Studies. One LD and one UD course in written communication are also required as of fall 2003, plus electives in the major for a total of 33 credits minimum for the B.A. in Communication.

Minors in Communication complete a total of 18 credits of Communication coursework, selecting one course from each of five designated blocks, plus an elective. These requirements are indicated on page 80 of the 2003-04 UHH catalogue.

Service to the University Curriculum. The Department of Communication also serves the General Education program through the UHH Humanities requirement. Students often take one of our lower division courses (e.g., COM 100, 151, 200, 231, 251, 260) to satisfy three of the nine credits required in Humanities.

Additionally, lower division Communication coursework is required of certain UHH majors, such as the School of Business requirement of a three credit course in Public Speaking (COM 251), and the Nursing, Agriculture, Agronomy, Aquaculture, Horticulture, and Crop Protection programs' requirement of Intro to Communication (COM 151), and the Computer Science program's requirement of either COM 151 or COM 251.

Our Communication and Conflict course (COM 442) is an option for students majoring in Administration of Justice, our Family Communication course (COM 420) is an option within the Women's Studies certificate program, and our Intercultural Communication course (COM 459) is an option within the master's degree program in U.S.-China Studies.

Program Growth. Our department has grown dramatically since the mid-1980s (data supplied in 2001 by Patrick Omori, former UHH registrar). In the second half of the
1980s (1985-89) we averaged 23 Communication majors per year. When that number is compared with the average number of majors during the first half of the 1990s (1990-94), there was 200% growth, with an average of 46 majors. In the second half of the 1990s (1995-99) we averaged 59 Communication majors, constituting 257% growth over the second half of the 1980s. Today, at 148 majors (2003-04), we have increased by 644% over our 1985-89 major enrollment figures, while having the same number of tenure track professors as more than twenty years ago (i.e., four).

Looking at only the most recent seven year period, using numbers supplied by UH Manoa (see Table 1, next page), and with 1997 as baseline, our major count increased by 10% between 1997 and 1998, by 46% in 1999, by 62% in 2000, by 108% in 2001, and 171% in 2002 over 1997 baseline. This demonstrates steady growth, and in substantial increments. If we annualize the growth, each year over the previous year, our rate of growth during this period has been 22.52% per year (the mean of 9.62%, 33.33%, 10.53%, 28.57%, and 30.56%). See Graph 1 (immediately following Table 1) for a charting of this rising growth.

In addition to meteoric growth of our major, we have also seen a dramatic increase in our number of minors: although current data are unavailable from the UHH Registrar at this time using the new Banner system, as of 2002 we had 32 Communication minors.

**Other Quantitative Indicators.** Our FTE enrollment figure was 69 in 1997-98, and in 2002-03 that figure had risen to 98 (Table 1).

Our average class size has not fallen below 24 in this review period, and in 2002-03 our average was 27 (Table 1). We have taught the vast majority of our classes in EKH #110 over the past 20 years, where the room holds 27 students maximum. We have in
April 24, 2003

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI’I AT Hilo
COMMUNICATION (BA) 1/

Data are for Fall semesters, except as noted.

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Note: Beginning Fall 1999, data may include continuing education classes.

1/ Formerly called "Speech". Name change effective Fall 1997.
2/ Departmental level data.
3/ Excludes classes numbered -99 (Individual instruction) and 700 (thesis research).
4/ Direct Instructional Cost (DIC) includes fringe benefits.
2003-04 begun to occupy other classroom locations in UCB and EKH that hold 35-50 students, to better accommodate our expanding class sizes.

In 1997-98 we awarded 18 bachelors degrees, while in 2002-03 we awarded our largest number ever, 48 (see Table 1). This is an increase of 166% in this period.

Our lower division SSH taken by non-majors is 72.7% in 2002-03, while our upper division non-major SSH is only 15.3% (down from 47.8% in 1997-98), due to the restriction that we have placed on our UD courses due to our impacted condition.

Our upper division “Analytical” FTE figure has increased from 1.09 in 1997-98 to 2.61 in 2001-02 (see Table 1; data from 2002-03 not yet available).

Our student-faculty ratio in 2001-02 (see Table 1) at the lower division level was 19.25, and 15.71 at the upper division level, for a combined average of 17.40. The direct instructional cost per SSH at the lower division level was $42 in the most recent year for which data are available (1999-2000, Table 1), and $342 at the upper division level. The combined figure, according to Table 1, is $150.

*Faculty Scholarly Activity.* Although our faculty has been small, we have been productive not only in teaching and curriculum development, but in scholarly activities (see Appendix A). In the past seven years, three of our department’s four tenure-track or tenured faculty have presented a total of 24 papers at academic conferences and conventions, with one-third (i.e., eight) of these presented at annual gatherings of the National Communication Association, the largest, oldest and most respected scholarly organization in our discipline. Other papers were presented at meetings of the International Communication Association, Pacific and Asian Communication Association, Communication Association of Japan, and the Eastern Communication Association. Sites have included Tokyo, Seoul, Sapporo, Seattle, Chicago, Honolulu, and New York City.
Number of Communication Majors: Graph 1

- HEADCOUNT MAJORS
- Headcount Majors and Double Majors

Year:
- 1997-98
- 1998-99
- 1999-00
- 2000-01
- 2001-02
- 2002-03

# of majors:
- 0
- 20
- 40
- 60
- 80
- 100
- 120
- 140
- 160
Our work has been published during this same seven year period in a total of seven edited volumes published by SUNY Press, Hampton Press, Ablex, and Sage Publications, and in the *Journal of Social Science, Journal of Intergroup Relations, Human Communication, Southern Communication Journal, and Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*. The majority of our department's faculty are within the upper 15% of those holding the Ph.D. in Communication in terms of numbers of academic publications (Hickson, Stacks and Bodon, 1999). We have also served as referees for competitive submissions to the National Communication Association, the Pacific and Asian Communication Association, Wadsworth, McGraw-Hill, and St. Martins Press.

Our Communication faculty have organized and hosted three international academic conferences in the past seven years, one in Sapporo, Japan, one in Honolulu, and the other here at UH-Hilo. These three events drew scholars from more than forty universities located in China, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Hawai‘i, and over a dozen states on the U.S. mainland.

*Service.* On campus, our faculty members have in this same period served on the UHH CAS Senate, Senate Executive Committee, UHH GE Assessment Team, UHPA Collective Bargaining Committee, UHPA Negotiating Team, UHH Assessment Support Standing Committee, UHH Learning Advisory Board, UHH Women’s Studies Steering Committee, Humanities Division Tenure & Promotion Guidelines Revision Committee, and five times chaired the UHH Humanities Division Personnel Committee, among other service activities.

We have also organized two successful campus-wide diversity symposia, organized three community dialogue sessions on contemporary issues and topics, and arranged student service learning projects and community service for more than two dozen local
organizations and businesses, including the American Lung Association, Healing Island Roundtable, Lehua Jaycees, Tough Man Competition, Hawaii Network for Cultural Preservation of Waipio Valley, KWXX, KHLO, International Longshore Worker’s Union, Hawaii Island Senior’s Institute, Hawaii Island Retired Teachers’ Association, Head Start, Keaukaha-Panaewa Farmers’ Association, and others.

Career Preparation. As for the ability of our students to pursue professional careers after graduating from our program, here is a listing of some of our most recent graduates and their current positions: Sally Ancheta, Director, Big Island Lung Association; Bernd Kupka, Ph.D. student, University of Otsego, New Zealand; Rayna Morrel, Lecturer, UH-Hilo; Ululani Cenal, Study Grant, Morocco; Rob Paiva, Kuhio Mall PR Director; Mikaela Marlow, Ph.D. student, UC Santa Barbara; Patrice Williams, National Student Exchange Coordinator, UH-Hilo; Daniel Schulaner, Real Estate Agent, Century 21; Rob Uyeda, Assistant Manager, Office Max; Gabriel Sasaki, Assistant Manager, Tokunaga Store; Mary Agnes Kila, Supervisor, Verizon; Josie Malepeal, Public Relations Specialist, Oahu; KasieLyn Sagawa, Loan Specialist, CPB; Chris Trevitt, Small Business Owner; Jackie Ching, Conference Coordinator; Natalie Yamasaki, Elementary School Teacher; Elizabeth Sanders, Small Business Owner; Alicia Hapai, Small Business Owner; Meked Besebes, Real Estate Agent; Norman Caceres, Entertainer, Walkaloa Hilton; Kalloa Harmon, M.A. student, Chaminade; Shelli Fernandez, Assistant Producer, KGMB Television; Shawn Doo, Teacher, Kauai High School; Mele Apana, KCCN Radio Personality, Honolulu; Joel Quebec, Police Officer; Diane Blanchard, Social Services; Chris Loos, Crime Reporter, Hawaii Tribune Herald; Erin White, Ph.D. student, University of Arizona; Laila Younis, Newspaper Publisher, Guam; Randall Usui, Director, Student Employment, UH-Hilo.
Areas of Weakness. The “good news” is that in 2004 we will add a fifth tenure track position to our department’s faculty, our first new tenure position in twenty years. The “bad news” is that we have traded away our instructor position to obtain this assistant professor position, and therefore actually lose two net classes per year. We are seeking to rectify this situation with the help of our Division Chair and our CAS Interim Dean.

Additional faculty are desperately needed at this time. We need a sixth tenure-track position, plus instructor/lecturer/adjunct faculty support. We are hoping that funding does in fact emerge for a sixth tenure-track position for the 2004 academic year.

The program content areas where we are weakest, we believe, are (1) Mass Communication/Journalism, and (2) Communication and Culture. We will briefly discuss each of these.

While we offer four media studies courses, these are intellectually-oriented critical analysis courses that survey key ethical issues pertaining to contemporary media, and that examine noteworthy impacts of the mass media; in short, these are “media literacy” courses. What we lack is a body of practical skills-oriented coursework in electronic and print journalism. By “electronic” journalism we mean cable television, internet, video documentary, and radio journalism, and by “print” we are referring to newspaper and magazine journalism. We believe that interested students would be more prepared for the professional world by having direct first-person contact with guided mass communication experiences utilizing one or more of these media.

There are social networks already in place that would hospitably support and nurture a UHH Mass Communication/Journalism endeavor. We envision potential interdisciplinary synergistic ties with the Department of English, the College of Hawaiian Language, the campus newspaper, the campus radio club, the local cable television system, the Hawaii
Tribune-Herald and Hawai'i Island Journal, local radio stations, and others. While there would eventually be start-up costs for digital cameras and editing equipment, until such a time as funds are available the internet and print media could perhaps be emphasized, and alliances with the local cable television access channel cultivated, etc. There would be a way to get such a program started with a faculty line alone, even in the short-term absence of an equipment budget.

As for the area of Communication and Culture, it is ironic that while we are located in the most culturally diverse county in America, we have in our program only two courses dealing with communication as related to culture: COM 459, *Intercultural Communication*, and COM 455, *Communication and Culture of Asian Americans*. While most Communication programs offer only a single intercultural course (the equivalent of our 459), we believe that our multicultural location demands that we add coverage and substance in this important, relevant and contemporary field of study. Our current search for an assistant professor in this subject area should directly address this deficiency.

4. **Student Learning**

*Curriculum Design.* Recently faculty from more than forty smaller communication programs across America participated in the *Hope College Conference on Designing the Undergraduate Curriculum in Communication*. The outcomes of that important conference have been published in an article appearing in *Communication Education*, Vol. 51, No. 1, January 2002, pp. 19-25 (see Appendix B). We quote from this landmark report:

"We believe an undergraduate degree in communication should educate individuals to be capable of assessing situations and crafting appropriate communicative responses to interact effectively with diverse others and to participate as socially responsible members of their
increasingly mediated and complex communities. The following nine goals in combination address this mission. The ideal communication curriculum achieves all of the goals.

Each goal can be met in a variety of ways, including requiring:

- A specific course OR
- A significant assignment component within required courses OR
- Significant topic coverage within required courses OR
- A capstone experience/senior thesis, portfolio, or scholarly service learning.

The above statement is taken verbatim from the 2002 undergraduate curriculum report, pp. 22-23. The following statement of curricular goals for the discipline of communication are also taken directly from that report, pp. 23-24:

**Goal 1:** Understanding of multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse intellectual underpinnings in communication as reflected in its philosophy and/or history (e.g., communication theory, rhetorical theory).

**Goal 2:** Competency in effective communication with diverse others (e.g., intercultural communication).

**Goal 3:** Competency in presentation, preferably in more than one form (e.g., public speaking, listening, online presentations, web page development, advertising campaigns, media production).

**Goal 4:** Competency in analysis and interpretation of contemporary mass media.

**Goal 5:** Competency in reflective construction and analysis of arguments and discourse intended to influence beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices (e.g., argumentation, rhetorical criticism, persuasion, negotiation, conflict resolution, public address).

**Goal 6:** Competency in systematic inquiry (e.g., research methods, ethnography, rhetorical criticism, survey research, quantitative research).

**Goal 7:** Competency in analysis and practice of ethical communication (e.g., relational ethics, media ethics, and organizational ethics).
**Goal 8:** Competency in human relational interaction (e.g., interpersonal communication, group communication, family communication, nonverbal communication, listening, and leadership).

**Goal 9:** Competency in analysis and practice of communication that creates or results from complex social organization (e.g., organizational communication, family communication, political communication, and the rhetoric of social movements).

We are pleased to report that there is high congruence between those goals believed to be appropriate for the "ideal" American undergraduate communication program, as specified above, and what we actually do in our Department of Communication here at UH-Hilo. In eight of the nine goal areas cited above we have one or more entire courses directly dedicated to the specified competency.

The single area in which we lack a dedicated course is in "communication ethics" (goal #7). We hasten to add that few communication departments do have an entire course dedicated to this topic; further, we believe that we are especially attentive to ethical issues in our interpersonal, intercultural, organizational and media studies coursework here at UHH (our faculty have published three papers in the area of communication ethics).

In a recent national survey (Wardrope, 1999), Departments of Communication both large and small were surveyed to determine those specific courses that actually comprise their curriculum or that they would like to see in their curriculum (see Appendix C for results). We are pleased to report that at UHH we currently offer every course, with a single exception, that more than 50% of Departments of Communication offer or would like to offer. We do not offer a course in *Argumentation and Debate*, but we do offer all of the other most desirable courses (>50%), including *Interpersonal Communication, Group Discussion, Communication Theory, Organizational Com, Public Speaking, Persuasion, Multicultural Communication, and Communication Research*
Methods. In addition, we offer seven other courses cited in the survey that fewer than 50% of American departments have offered, including *Intro to Communication* (taught at 43% of schools surveyed), *Oral Interpretation* (40%), *Interviewing* (30%), *Language and Communication* (26%), *Listening* (20%), *Family Communication* (18%), and *Health Communication* (14%). Beyond this, we offer other courses that didn’t even appear in the survey results (e.g., *Impact of the Mass Media, Modern American Cinema, Seminar in Human Dialogue, Nonverbal Communication, Public Relations, Leadership and Communication, Communication and Conflict, Communication in Innovation*).

In sum, for a small department of four tenured faculty we have done a remarkable job of not only offering the “basics,” but, in addition, of also making available other specialized courses that many larger departments do not offer. We are pleased, considering our size, with the range of options we have been able to provide. Our UHH students have not been deprived of coursework considered to be important by national standards, and, even more, have been presented with options they would not have had at many mainland schools, regardless of school size.

*Quality of Teaching and Coursework.* Let us review data from the “Perceived Teaching Effectiveness Form” that is used by virtually all UHH teachers each semester, examining student responses to summary item #20, which evaluates the instructor in comparison with all other instructors taken at UHH. The exact wording of global item #20 is as follows: “Compared with other instructors that you’ve had at UHH, how would you evaluate (grade) this instructor?” Three of our four tenured professors submitted their requested PTEF scores (see Appendix D). Where a mean class score of 4.0 is equivalent to “Good,” 78% of Professor Becker’s classes during the past five years have evaluated her teaching as “Good” or better, and 100% of both Professor Gordon’s and
Miura's classes across the past seven years have met this level of teaching performance. When we average across all classes (total N = 114) taught by these three Communication teachers since previous review, in 88% of these classes the teacher was seen as doing a "Good" job or better (defined as class means of 4.0 and above). It is clear that from the perspective of our students, who, of course, are among our primary stakeholders, that our Communication faculty is upholding the traditionally high standards placed upon effective teaching at UHH.

In terms of reaching teaching excellence, a level of performance described as "Outstanding" on the PTEF, Professor Becker was evaluated by 41% of her classes as being within this upper range (4.5 - 5.0, class means), while for Gordon the comparable statistic is 91% and for Miura it is 88%. When we average across all courses (N = 114) taught by these three teachers during the past five (Becker) to seven years (Gordon and Miura), an average of 77% of these courses are evaluated by students as being characterized by "Outstanding" teaching. We are pleased with this level of success. As Professor Becker gains more experience in the classroom at UHH, we will see this level rise even higher.

Item #21 on the PTEF deals with a global evaluation of the entire course experience, as follows: "Compared with other courses that you've taken at UHH, how would you evaluate (grade) this course?" This item would seem to subsume yet go beyond teaching alone. Professor Becker's classes were "Good" and above 78% of the time across the past five years, while Gordon’s and Miura's classes reached this standard 100% of the time. This averages to 88% across these three teachers’ courses combined.

In terms of a course being described overall as "Outstanding" (i.e., 4.5 and above), Professor Becker earned this designation 38% of the time, while the figures for
Gordon and Miura are 89% and 63%. Averaging across these three faculty members, in 66% of their classes across the review period their courses have been judged to be "Outstanding" when compared to other UHH courses. This stands as evidence of the high satisfaction of UHH undergraduates with our department's coursework, and is consistent with the high value placed upon educational excellence by the UHH administration and faculty.

**Outcome Assessment: Challenges.** We are in the early stages of outcome assessment in our department. We have been so busy creating our curriculum and coping with our phenomenal enrollment increase that we have had little time for methodically assessing course impacts. Now that we have largely established a basic curriculum that appears robust in its breadth and content, we can begin to more seriously consider assessing learning achievements.

We have identified the general sorts of outcomes we are seeking in our courses, making tangible progress in identifying program outcomes in the areas of attitudes and motivations, knowledge, and skills (see Appendix E).

For this review period, however, we must primarily rely on the customary forms of evidence as to the effectiveness of our coursework.

One problem with assessing our majors is that there have been only two courses required of ALL majors, and even this requirement has been in effect only during the past three years. A third course was added to this required lower division core as of fall 2003, so that all UHH communication majors will be required to take (1) COM 200, *Interpersonal Communication*, (2) COM 251, *Public Speaking*, and (3) COM 270, *Introduction to Theories of Human Communication*. 
Beyond this, students are required to select one course from each of three blocks of options (four to six options per block): Media Studies, Organizational Communication Studies, and general Human Communication Studies. The student major then selects courses of their choosing from within our curriculum, depending upon their personal and professional goals. Assessing this largely elective program in any macroscopic manner would seem a challenge, since each student assembles his or her own unique program to such a large degree. Yet we are convinced that if we had a more sequenced and prescribed degree plan for our majors, with our small faculty in our impacted situation we would not have been able to graduate our majors in a timely fashion.

A Beginning: Assessing the Core. We have decided to begin initial assessment efforts with the three lower division required courses. This is the core that ALL communication majors share in common, and therefore would seem a logical site for assessment entry.

In the 2002-03 academic year in the required course in Interpersonal Communication (COM 200), a brief paper-and-pencil measure devised by Chen and Starosta (2000) called the “Intercultural Sensitivity Scale” was used to gauge the extent to which the COM 200 course enhanced students’ respect for, and interaction comfort with, people from diverse cultural groups. The initial results are highly positive (see Appendix F), with students averaging 4.7 (on five-point scales) across two sections (total n = 42) on increased “respect” for the values and behaviors of diverse others.

On two items from Chen and Starosta’s “Interaction Engagement” factor, which measure “enjoyment” of interacting with diverse others and “open-mindedness” toward them, the end-of-semester mean across two sections of Interpersonal Communication was 4.65. This score is above “Agree” and two thirds of the way to “Strongly Agree” on
these factors, indicating that one apparent outcome of the *Interpersonal Communication* course is increased acceptance and appreciation of culturally diverse others. In a world where "I'm normal, you're weird" often prevails when it comes to perceiving cultural differences, this would seem a healthy indicator that the COM 200 course is bridging across cultural differences and enhancing cultural respect.

In the *Public Speaking* (COM 251) course we have for the past five years in 75% of our sections had the students assemble portfolios of their semester's work. Included in this portfolio is a brief written narrative statement from the student at the beginning of the course as to what their personal goals are in the area of public speaking. At the end of the semester students are asked to indicate in writing the extent to which they have made progress toward their earlier identified goals. These narratives are replete with stories of success. Students write of becoming more confident in facing groups and delivering their thoughts, of becoming more organized in composing their messages, of becoming less restricted in their delivery. In-class observations by the instructor support these student self-observations of course success.

To formalize these self- and instructor observations, we have begun to use a standard communication apprehension measure (the "Personal Report of Public Speaking Apprehension") this Fall 2003 semester in three of the *Public Speaking* sections. Students' scores from early in the semester will be compared statistically with their end-of-semester scores on the same instrument; we predict that such comparisons will yield statistically significant differences from pre-to-post testing. From the pre-testing, we have found that 28% of these students rate themselves as "very high" in anxiety, and 17% report feeling "moderately high" in anxiety, for a total of 45% in these two categories (Appendix G). We will also do an item-by-item analysis of the 34 survey
instrument items to precisely pinpoint where improvement occurs and where it does not. This should help us refine our approach to the COM 251 course.

Another future step in this area of measuring public speaking progress would be for neutral judges to make blind judgments of videotaped speakers both at the beginning and end of the COM 251 course, and to statistically compare ratings between early and late speeches. We intend to make advances in this direction as time permits. In an overtaxed program such as ours doing such studies seems a luxury, in terms of time and energy, that we have not been able to afford.

The third course that we will be requiring as of the 2003-04 year, *Intro to Theories of Human Communication*, has never before been taught, so no assessment efforts have been applied. It would seem that the easiest assessment strategy for that largely cognitive course would be to administer a subject matter pre-test at the beginning of the semester, and to compare the results with a similar post-test four months later. We assume the scores will be significantly higher on the second administration, indicating substantial knowledge gains. We intend to do this the first time this course is offered.

We believe that in the next few years we will have accumulated outcome evidence of the effectiveness of at least our introductory lower-division required coursework. This seems the most manageable place to begin.

*Other Outcome Efforts:* We have sporadic current evidence of learning outcomes from other courses in our program, beyond the usual course evaluations, portfolio narratives and exam scores. From the *Introduction to Mass Communication* course we have before and after data (see Appendix H) that indicates that students are sensitized to certain issues raised in the course and that their attitudes are affected. This would
seem to be especially the case on the topics of "conglomerate ownership of the media," "hyper-commercialism related to movie promotion," "product placement in films," "media scholarship," "media portrayals of gender," and "media portrayals of race and ethnicity."

This 2003-04 year all of our faculty are being asked for the first time to specify three to five potentially measurable learning objectives in their syllabi, and to take whatever steps they reasonably can to address and assess progress in these target areas.

We also intend to conduct focus groups with our majors, seeking input as to how our program might better be arranged to meet their educational needs and desired learning outcomes.

We did offer a capstone course one semester under a 494 designation, but then when we attempted to get it formally introduced into the curriculum the then-dean declined to approve it, saying that it did not appear sufficiently rigorous. We will pursue discussions designed to clarify the role of a capstone course, and its suitability to our program.

We are incrementally advancing in the precise specification and measurement of learning outcomes, and will continue to make strides in this direction.

5. **Current Resources**

*Staffing.* As indicated, our faculty resources are minimal for the size, scope, and success of our program. We need more communication faculty, at all levels. This past semester one of our faculty members tried to handle a dozen directed study students (COM 399/499), a completely unwieldy number that does severe injustice to those students, the department, the university, and the professor, yet Communication majors
needed coursework. Another professor had over a dozen students, under the directed studies designation, go to the library and watch a 27-hour video series on "argumentation." These are not the sort of activities we want to pursue, but our impacted condition has demanded essentially undesirable emergency measures to move students through the program. Our waiting lists have 15 to 20 names on them, students are clamoring to get in our classes. We need additional faculty positions.

**Salary.** Compensation, of course, is another difficulty. Salaries in our department are among the lowest on the UHH campus. Faculty in our program by the time of retirement will never come close to the *starting* salaries of Business Administration or Computer Science faculty. The *average* salary for Communication full professors two years ago on the mainland was $67,000, according to CUSA; the one full professor in our Department of Communication today makes about 20% below that average salary. Compared with our UHH national peer group, salaries for associate and full professors across the board at UHH are at the 25th percentile, and falling. At the ranks of associate and full professor we are paid a full $20,000 less than our mainland peers (see Appendix I). When this reality is combined with the fact that the average UHH faculty member works approximately 50 hours per week, and lives where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation, de-motivating forces are set in motion. Faculty salaries are a high priority matter that needs to be addressed consistently and energetically by UH administrators and the state legislature if the high level of education that is currently delivered is to be maintained over time.

**Facilities.** Our offices in the Humanities Division are clearly less well furnished than is the case in other divisions, but they suffice. We do have mold problems with the air conditioning in Kanaka'ole Hall, however, and many faculty members and students
complain of allergic reactions. This environmental safety issue demands administrative involvement and attention.

Another problem we recurrently face is that classrooms are typically not designed with communication pedagogy in mind. We would often prefer to sit in a large face-to-face circle in our classes, and to periodically break into small groups; but in rooms where large desks are essentially unmovable, or where chairs are fixed to the floor facing forward, classroom dynamics are severely affected. Communication classes have particular needs that are not usually accounted for in classroom design plans. We have never been consulted by architects and planners as to pedagogical classroom design considerations from the standpoint of our Communication discipline.

Also, replacing or servicing classroom videocassette players and other technology is problematic in the classrooms we occupy, since the UHH Media Center faces its own financial and personnel constraints.

Support Services. Our back-up support services are minimal. For a faculty more than 70 who use the Humanities Division Office, there is one clerk typist, one secretary, and one part-time student helper (who has no computer), all of whom are busy performing important divisional tasks and upon whom we impose as little as possible, and never for the normal secretarial tasks. Essentially the help provided in the Division Office is limited to photocopying course materials and processing personnel paperwork. Our department receives $200 in the 2003-04 year to hire its own work-study student helper, but this amounts to less than sixteen hours of clerical help per semester. For a department nearly the size of the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management in numbers of majors (see Appendix J), this is an obvious limitation.
"B" Budget. Our annual "B" budget is $2,750. This is to cover photocopying, replacement computer cartridges, and other equipment, materials, or office furniture we might need ($600 of our "B" budget was used this year to pay for two-thirds of a new computer for our new-hire; the remainder was paid by the Humanities Division). While we sustain ourselves with this amount, it is obviously a minimal budget that in fact allows for little else but the duplication of course materials.

Chair Compensation. The chair of a department our size gets no release time, and historically has received a $75 per month stipend (raised this July 2003 by twenty-five additional dollars). This is less than supportive of anyone filling that office, and borders on being insulting. If one is a full professor there is little inducement to serve as chair aside from altruistic concern for one's program.

Library Holdings. The library asks us each year what journals from a provided list we would be willing to discontinue from our library's collection, if need be.

In sum, from an economic standpoint the university has been only as supportive as resources would allow, and for years this has meant that money has been a forefront issue and major impediment.

6. Chair's Evaluation (Ron Gordon)

Our Communication faculty consists of four tenured faculty (Catherine Becker, Iva Goldman, Ron Gordon, and Steve Miura) and a lecturer position (Nina Bremer, recently retired; Rayna Morel, this year).

I have been pleased to be one of the participants in the gradual transformation of our program over the past 20 years, from a Department of Speech, to a Department of Speech and Communication, and, finally, to a Department of Communication. I remember when we had as few as nine (9) majors in the mid 1980s, and now we have
148, plus nearly three-dozen minors (up from eight in 1997). Our growth has been phenomenal to witness, though it has not surprised us. Today's students realize that studying human communication is vitally relevant to both their personal and professional lives, and eagerly seek what our program has to offer.

By all counts, using the standard criteria of program success, we are doing well: we have the largest number of majors in the Humanities Division, and about 50% more than the second-ranked department (see Appendix J); our classes are guaranteed to fill; our waiting lists are long; our SSH and FTE numbers are strong; our retention rates are at the 80th percentile (see Appendix K); our student record of achievement is noteworthy; our service learning activities are extensive; our faculty service and scholarly productivity is high; our teaching efforts are extremely well-received; our Communication faculty of five does the work of a faculty twice its size (Appendix L); our program's reputation is growing nationally (Appendix M).

Where do we go from here?

I believe the addition of more faculty positions to our program is necessary and appropriate. It is with great regret that we had to close our upper division coursework to non-majors during the 2002-03 academic year, and that again in 2003-04 we have needed to do so. Our majors and faculty are deprived of maximum diversity and interdisciplinary exposure when they can sit in UD classes that contain only COM majors, and certainly the UHH student body is deprived of the rich array of important upper division coursework that we offer. This is most regrettable for all stakeholders. Yet until we have access to additional faculty positions, we are certain that to open our UD classes to the entire university student community is to court disaster in terms of graduating our own majors (and minors) in a timely fashion. We are convinced that our
first responsibility must be to service those many students who have made a commitment to the Communication program.

The enactment of our new 2.5 entrance requirement to the major this fall should eventually help, as will the new requirement of two writing courses beyond English 100 in the Department of English. Yet we are under no illusion that these steps will solve our growth "problem," in which we have become the victims of our own success. We anticipate that our major will continue to draw increasing numbers of students, no matter what obstacles we place before them, even though we do no publicity or recruitment for our major or our courses. Word-of-mouth, and the intrinsic reputation and subject matter of our discipline, are our only recruiters, and the momentum continues to build.

Additional faculty positions are imperative if we are to meet the needs of our majors and minors, our service to the general education program, and our specialized service to nearly a dozen other university departments and schools.

7. **Broad Statement of Future Goals**

Not only do we need more lecturers for our lower division coursework, but we need two additional fulltime tenure-track positions added to our program to create more courses and seats for our majors, and to enable us to assess the feasibility of again opening our upper division classrooms to non-majors. One of these positions would be dedicated to developing coursework in the area of electronic journalism (internet, video, television and radio) and print journalism (newspaper and magazine).

The School of Communication at UH-Manoa houses an active journalism program, as do universities around the USA, while we lack such curriculum at UHH. As a remedial measure, in our department in Spring 2003 we offered an experimental section
of lower division "news writing" (cross-listed with English, under an experimental 294 designation), taught by Chris Loos of the Tribune Herald, which went extremely well. The course was taught one evening per week in UCB, with every student seated at a computer. The instructor was able to work on successive drafts of a story, projected for the entire class to see, that would then appear the next day on the front page of the Hawaii Tribune-Herald. We believe that the excitement for print communication that was generated in this class served its students well, regardless of the specific line of work they will go into.

We can see developing other cutting edge courses in what we might tentatively call "public interest" or "social responsibility" journalism (rather than "entertainment" or "sensationalistic" forms of "journalism"). We are particularly interested in courses that would allow local students to skillfully document their culture, their places, their peoples. We envision courses in oral history interviewing, documentary video production, photojournalism, internet and cable access television journalism, editorial writing, and so on. We imagine coursework that would require students to communicate meaningfully with larger audiences than they ever have previously, especially on important topics related to Hawai‘i and her history, her peoples, and their traditional values and practices. We urge administrative support of a tenure-track Mass Communication/Journalism position that focuses on public interest journalism centered on this place and its people and cultures.

We believe with the Communication and Culture position that has already been granted, and the above possible position, we will have a small college undergraduate communication program of which the University can be proud, one that will continue to steadily grow well into the future.
January 5, 2004

Dr. Christopher Lu,
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
University of Hawai‘i at Hilo
Hilo, HI 96720

Dear Dr. Lu,

Enclosed you will find my report as external evaluator to the Communication Department of the University of Hawai‘i—Hilo.

I enjoyed my visit to your campus and my conversations with each person I met. The campus is beautiful!

As you will read in the report, the Communication Department has obvious strengths and areas for development. I do hope that the information contained in this report will be combined with the University’s own review information to form a solid developmental plan for the department. I believe the department and the administration can work together to form a department plan that will serve the students and the university even more effectively in the future.

If you have questions about the report or seek further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, I enjoyed talking with you, the other members of the administration I met, and the Communication Department students and staff. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Cordially,

Phil Backlund, PhD
backphil@cwu.edu
509-963-1852

CC:
Dr. Stephen Hora, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Keith Simmons, Humanities Division Chair
Dr. Ron Gordon, Chair, Communication Department
OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The Department of Communication has undergone dramatic growth and change in the past decade. After a significant re-organization of the departmental structure and curriculum in 1997, student interest in the department strongly increased, moving from less than 30 majors per year in the early 1990s to its present level of close to 150. In addition to the increased number of majors, the department has experienced a sharp increase in its service role to the university and in the number of students minoring in its programs.

This brief history helps explain the challenges now facing the department. Faculty growth has not kept up with the demand by students for courses. The department, in fact, is forced to close its upper division classes to non-majors—a situation that is not advantageous to the university or to its students. However, the administration has begun to address the need for increased faculty in the department. A fifth tenure track position in intercultural communication has been added to the department (however, with a corresponding loss of an instructor position) and a sixth position in media studies is now being considered. These two positions will help meet the student need, though they are likely to be insufficient to meet all potential demand. In addition to staffing, the department is challenged by issues of budget restrictions, faculty workload, and a nascent assessment process.

Despite these problems, the department is poised to assume a significant role in the university as a whole. The department should continue to develop programs in intercultural, organizational, and human communication, and continue to explore development in media studies. The department is uniquely situated (based on student demographics and physical location in Hawai‘i) to develop programs that could be internationally renowned.
The extent to which the department can meet these challenges will depend on supporting current efforts underway in the department, on new faculty hires, on a clarified mission for the department, and on the university’s continuing financial support for the department’s teaching, research, and service missions.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

The Communication program possesses numerous strengths. In general, these strengths fall into broad categories of service to students, service to the university, strength of faculty, and future potential.

1. **Positive changes since 1990:**

   The Communication Department has made great strides in developing an identity as a department. The curriculum has been significantly revised. This revision was based on a clear value-based view of human communication. The department’s course offerings have been altered to drop courses no longer needed, and to develop courses and a program of study that reflects standards developed by the National Communication Association. Course offerings also take advantage of the department’s unique cultural and physical location.

2. **Curriculum:**

   The curriculum achieves an effective balance between theory and application. Because of this balance, students appear confident in their ability to apply their knowledge and skills to virtually any professional and personal setting. As one student stated during the evaluation visit: “I am learning to communicate effectively with people anywhere about anything!” As noted above, program goals are similar to and drawn from learning objectives published by the National Communication Association. In addition to practical professional applications, the department curriculum is set to prepare students to enter virtually any graduate speech communication program in the country. Indeed, department graduates go on to graduate school at a rate higher than is typical for a department of this level.

3. **Students:**

   The faculty are to be commended for the students’ enthusiasm for the subject matter and the program. The students are highly complimentary of the support they receive from faculty and staff. This support is expressed in terms of advising for course work, discussion of career opportunities, and in
personal growth and development. Additionally, the students enjoy the course content and speak highly of the various instructors. Perhaps the dominant endorsement the students give the program is their confidence that with a Communication degree, they are well equipped for a wide range of career paths or graduate education. Students spoke at length regarding the level of assistance and personal attention they receive from faculty regarding course work and discussion of career opportunities. They mention that most faculty are easily accessible and devote the time necessary to meet their needs. Students, of course, did have suggestions and these will be noted later in the report. As described in the departmental self-study, communication majors have been disproportionally represented in honors designations, commencement speakers, and other activities on campus.

4. Faculty:

The faculty are dedicated to the students of the department and to providing a solid educational experience for them. Faculty see themselves working together effectively as a team. Within the limits of university resources, the faculty are making advances to include more technology into the course offerings where needed and appropriate. The faculty is to be commended for its willingness to tackle the issues confronting it. Scholarship and university service appear to be somewhat unevenly distributed across the faculty.

Both the faculty and the students commented on the culture of the department. Through its course offerings, class size, and values associated with relating to the students, the department faculty have developed a unique culture characterized by an open and accepting communication style, close relationships between faculty and students, and a celebration of the diversity of the department. Both faculty and students believe it important to maintain this culture. Faculty see recent discussions over class size and a budget driven pressure to increase class size as having potential to damage the department's developed identity and to the university's retention efforts.

5. Departmental leadership:

Current department leadership is respected at all levels of the university. Student interviews reveal the extent to which the department chair responds to student questions and needs. The department chair is viewed as going the extra mile on many occasions to assist students. Meetings with the division,
dean and vice chancellor enforced the department chair’s reputation. He is seen as optimistic, fair, and competent. One aspect that most impressed this evaluator was the department chair’s determination to see this program through rather difficult times toward excellence in spite of inadequate compensation and release time for his responsibilities. He is committed to the program’s success and to enhancing the program and its contribution to the University’s mission.

6. Recognized service within university:

The department provides a substantial number of service courses to other programs within the University. The department has six courses that satisfy three of nine credits required in Humanities. In addition, a number of departments either require or suggest as options a wide range of departmental courses. This speaks well regarding the department’s value on campus and the recognition that the knowledge/skill taught in department courses is valuable to all students.

7. Potential future strengthening of intercultural communication and mass communication/journalism:

Departmental leadership has identified these two areas of future development that match both the department’s strengths and the University’s needs. The department’s unique location clearly supports the development of a focus on intercultural communication. The demographic mix of the student body, the proximity to Asia and the Pacific Islands, in addition to the rapidly developing needs for better communication between cultures, make this program emphasis a natural for the department. This reviewer strongly encourages this development.

The department also has an opportunity to develop a professional program in mass communication and journalism. The current body of courses offered by the department focuses on critical analysis and media literacy. The lack of a set of practical skills-oriented courses in electronic and print journalism provides the department a natural opportunity for development in this area. This development, however, should be planned carefully as start-up costs could be significant.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

1. Department mission:

   This reviewer believes that the department needs to define its mission and goals more sharply. Effective strides have been made recently to revise the curriculum, but a more carefully articulated mission and goal set will help focus future plans. This clarified mission is necessary for future development in four critical areas—allocation of faculty time, future faculty hires, curriculum focus, and assessment of educational programs.

2. Allocation of Faculty Time:

   As is true in many universities, department faculty feel over-worked and under-appreciated, and are somewhat frustrated in their relationship with the administration. Three points stood out in this area through conversations with faculty and administrators.

   A) The faculty believe they have made efforts to tackle the issues the department faces but feel these efforts are under-recognized by the administration. At the same time, the administration believes it has listened to the department and attempted to meet its concerns (the new hire in intercultural communication, for example) and similarly, believes that they have not received sufficient recognition and credit from the department faculty. Recognition on both sides of efforts made would be a positive step.

   B) The lack of a focused mission statement has the effect of dispersing faculty time both in courses taught and in scholarship. Department faculty have generated a number of good ideas ranging from intercultural communication to health communication to interpersonal communication to professional communication. However, given limited resources, the faculty cannot tackle all these ideas. The department thus needs to address the question of curriculum breadth versus curriculum depth. Is it better to offer a limited number of courses in many areas, or should the department focus on a more restricted range? Given the fiscal realities of the situation, a more limited focus seems a more prudent line of action and one that is more likely to serve the needs of the university more effectively.

   C) The third area is more sensitive. I came away from my interviews with the view that not all the department faculty are equally committed to the department. It is not my place to explore the events
that lead up to this current state of affairs, but I must comment on it. Whatever the reason, this less than
equal commitment across all four faculty negatively impacts the department's ability to fulfill its mission
and to serve its students. I need to point out that this fact is not lost on the students or on the
administration. The department faculty and the administration should hold meaningful conversations to
explore this issue.

3. **New faculty and new programs:**

The department will have a new faculty member in intercultural communication—a very positive
step. Another potential hire is in the area of professional media. This hire should be approached with
more caution. The goals of developing a professional sequence in journalism or developing something
like an academy for creative media are worthwhile goals. Yet neither of these goals are without costs.
One cannot just hand a student a camera; it would take a significant number of cameras, support
equipment, and editing bays to support any program in visual communication. If the program develops
effectively, it is unlikely that one faculty member would be sufficient to support the program. My home
department has four faculty who devote the majority of their time to journalism and video communication
in serving thirty-five majors. A new program in this area will need careful long-range planning.

4. **Assessment:**

As noted above, the department needs to further refine its educational mission and then develop a
system of measuring progress toward that mission. In addition, the department needs to articulate more
clearly student learning outcomes for undergraduate programs and develop a more comprehensive
program outcome assessment procedure that results in data useful to program improvement. This is
critical, especially in light of the impending WASC accreditation review. Discussion of the department's
mission as well as a review of policies of similar departments in peer institutions should facilitate
clarification of objectives and outcome measurement. The department has begun to develop some course
embedded assessment procedures, but these need to be expanded to assess student growth and change
over the course of the instructional program. The issues of breadth versus depth applies to this issue as
well. Assessment is clearly easier when an instructional program is sharply focused. However, a sharp
focus can limit the richness of diversity in a program. There is no magic formula here. Faculty at many
universities, including the reviewer's own, have found the conversations related to assessment both interesting and fruitful. The conversations can improve cohesiveness both of faculty and an instructional program, and can ultimately deliver a better education to the students.

The department has developed a capstone course for its majors. Apparently there was some initial disapproval on the part of the administration related to the course content. As a former associate dean who was responsible for curriculum change review, I can see at least one of their points—giving credit for the graduation evaluation is probably inappropriate. That said, the capstone course can play a significant role in the department's assessment program. As educational outcomes are more sharply defined, assignments can be developed (in addition to the ones listed) that assess student progress.

An effective assessment program can also provide information to administrators that the department has a rigorous program. In my conversations with administrators, some reported that the students see the department as "easy". A friendly, open department can also be a rigorous department—the two are not antithetical. However, the department needs to provide more evidence of rigor. An effective assessment program can provide that evidence and improve student learning.

5. **Budget, facilities, and salaries:**

The university clearly has funding issues, and administrators are under pressure to do more with less. This obviously affects individual departments like the Communication Department through increased stress and pressure to increase class size. Faculty cited salaries as a demotivator, and indeed, salaries are below peer institutions in a high cost location. Chair compensation is also inadequate. The recent change in stipend from $75 per month to $100 per month helps, but only slightly. A great deal is expected of the chair for not much compensation. Some release time would be in order, and that would necessitate hiring a part-time faculty to teach the class vacated so that the program would not suffer.

Some departmental facilities also need attention. Chairs in the older classrooms appear to date from the 1950s. While some efforts are being made to increase the availability of technology in the classrooms, more is needed. Some classrooms experience mold problems. The department will need a video lab if that course of action is pursued and a public speaking lab would also greatly support department courses.
Memorandum of Understanding
2005 Program Review
Communication Department
College of Arts and Sciences
May 6, 2005

Members of the Communication Department faculty, the Division Chair of Humanities, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences met with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on May 6, 2005, to review and discuss issues resulting from the Communication Department program review of Fall, 2003. The self-study report by the Communication Department (on file) and the report by the external reviewer (on file) were the basis for the discussion. Summary points and an action plan for the Communication Department follow.

Part I. Summary Points

• The Communication Department has undergone dramatic growth in the number of majors since 1990, increasing almost 400% in those years (to about 150 from 30). It also serves greater numbers of students in service courses and numbers of students who choose to minor in Communication.

• Faculty growth has not kept up with student numbers, so upper division courses in Communication have had to be closed to non-majors over the past few years.

• The Communication curriculum has been revised to increase its identity, focus its efforts, and to meet the standards developed by the National Communication Association. The most recent faculty member has been hired to address the emphasis of intercultural communication.

• Students in the program tend to be enthusiastic about the program, their courses, and the support of the faculty. They also identify a culture of closeness between faculty and students as significant in contributing to their satisfaction with the program.

• Past leadership of the department has been viewed as excellent by students and administrators.

• This department has worked hard to support the Service Learning component of the campus and has incorporated many Service Learning projects throughout the community into its curriculum and projects.

• The department has received commendation across the campus for sponsoring the annual Diversity Symposium, giving both faculty and students a chance to present research on issues of diversity.
Part II. Plan of Action

1. The department will continue its work to refine its mission. The mission needs to focus the energies and curriculum more succinctly than what has been accomplished so far. It is not possible to address all nine areas of skills and knowledge identified at the Hope College Conference; therefore, a few areas need to be identified as areas of expertise and direction for the department. Care also must be taken that whatever pressures there are to develop a media/journalism focus, these pressures need to be balanced against the realities of the UH Hilo budget.

2. The VCAA will support continued growth in the department by hiring one new faculty member for every new 500 SSH's generated.

3. If the department chooses to emphasize the area of Media/Journalism as a major area of focus, it needs to address the cost of such a program by turning to external community resources as well as to university financial resources.

4. At another time more appropriate for this type of discussion, the department and the administration need to resolve the issue of total faculty commitment to the mission and direction of the department.

5. The department must continue its efforts to assess the learning outcomes of its majors. A good beginning step has been taken, but progress in assessing student outcomes must occur before the next visit of the WASC accreditation team in 2008. The department faculty should be prepared to answer the question, “What body of knowledge can you guarantee your graduates know?” The department should re-visit the capstone seminar course originally offered as a 494 course in order to capitalize on its obvious assessment potential.

6. The administration is aware that the department could use more lecturers, but there is simply not enough money to hire them in the current budget. Also, increased compensation for department chairs will not happen unless the Division Chair system disappears. The department can consider a course release for the department chair.
From: Catherine Becker
To: Kenith Simmons
Cc: Faculty of Department of Communication
Sent: August 17, 2006
Subject: Status Report regarding the six steps in the Plan of Action from Program Review

Items Completed or in process:

I) In August 2005, all members of the Communication Department faculty attended an off-campus all day retreat that accomplished the following objectives:

A. We examined our mission, curriculum, and student learning objectives.

1. Mission:
   a. We formed a subcommittee to revise the Departmental Mission Statement (Miike, Gordon & Becker).
   b. We will submit the new mission statement with curriculum changes to faculty senate for review by October 1, 2006.

2. Curriculum
   a. We decided to focus the curriculum around areas of faculty expertise, unified by our common interest in intercultural communication.
   b. We eliminated the Com 151 course and replaced it with Com 100 to accommodate more introductory students.
   c. After a series of discussions throughout the fall semester of 2005, we agreed to have students take 3 required courses: Interpersonal Communication (Com 200) Public Speaking (Com 251) and Communication Theory (Com 270).
   d. We are eliminating the requirement that students take upper division in three areas of concentration. This change will allow the faculty and student to focus more.
   e. We also agreed to implement pre-requisites and advanced courses in the following areas: Intercultural Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Media Writing and Organizational Communication.
      1) The organizational communication sequence is dependent on the successful hire of a new faculty member.
      2) We are currently in the process of recruiting this faculty member.
   f. We agreed to convert six courses to a Distance Learning Format including those that will be taught by the new faculty member.
The Department is in the process of planning a Media Writing Certificate Program in conjunction with the English Department.

1) This program is being designed to use current resources with minimum cost.

2) If successful this program could be converted to DL.

The Department will also make the appropriate changes in the requirement for minors. These will be submitted with the package.

The Department formed a subcommittee to create a policy regarding minimal requirements for its 494 courses (Miike, Goldman, Miura). This policy will be in effect beginning in Fall 2006.

3. Student Learning Objectives
   a. Department will develop more focused student learning objectives based on revised mission.
   b. These objectives will be submitted to the Faculty Senate along with mission and curriculum changes.

II. Department has been appointed one new faculty member and is the process of searching.

   A. In the meantime, a temporary position has been created and filled.
   B. This will allow the department to begin to open its course to non-majors.
   C. The proposed curriculum changes will allow the department to generate more SSH’s by providing more seats in our introductory classes.

III. The Department is not pursuing a Journalism Program at this time.

   A. However, we are planning to begin to meet student demand by offering a media writing certificate.
   B. The program will use current faculty and lecture resources by partnering with the English Department.
   C. If successful, the media writing certificate program can be converted to DL and paid for the Distance Learning Outreach.
   D. If approved coordinator for the Media Certificate Program will be appointed. Seeking external resources for this program can be part of their duties.

IV. The Department has resolved the issue of faculty commitment via the retreat and changes in program as listed above.