

COMM STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2017

Departmental Vision

The vision of the Department of Communication can be summed up in the phrase, “Research that makes a difference” and focuses attention on:

- Producing graduates who are able to understand, critique, and transform communication practices.
- Developing leading edge scholarship that has social impact and promotes positive change in institutions.

Aspiration

To be a Top 5 Department in the communication discipline. Recognized as a nationally and internationally competitive program in the current communication field that maximizes our strengths and core values. These include our undergraduate/graduate students, staff, faculty, and dedication to quality education and scholarship.

Goals

To accomplish our aspiration, we need to: (1) enhance high impact practices in undergraduate classes, (2) support career mobility for graduate students, (3) increase external grant submissions, (4) expand published research in high-quality research outlets, and (5) improve faculty retention and hiring practices.

Goal #1: Enhance high impact practices in undergraduate classes

Action Steps: Identify, label, and code current high impact practices in courses; identify and implement specific high impact practices and initiatives that are appropriate for the Department (e.g., undergraduate research: junior-year research seminar, senior-year work on faculty research); share knowledge of what are high impact practices including models and examples via Webinars or working lunches; align development of high impact practices with assessment; and increase capacity in study abroad programs aligned with undergraduate curriculum.

Primary Lead(s): Undergraduate Committee & Internationalization Committee

Indicators of Success: # of high impact practice points, # of students who report participating in high impact practices, # of and places available in integrated curricular study abroad programs

Goal #2: Support career mobility for graduate students

Action Steps: Develop recruiting practices that involve faculty using their professional networks to target students, personalize recruitment at local conferences, and prepare Go Bags for faculty to take to conferences and presentations; train students for research careers through high impact mentoring experiences such as writing retreats; conduct a systematic review of graduate curriculum to ensure students being prepared for the kinds of positions available; and host faculty workshops/discussions aimed at building mentoring capacity and teaching graduate seminars.

Primary Lead(s): Graduate Committee & Graduate Faculty

Indicators of Success: % of students who report working in a position that aligns with their career goals, % of students who report a desire to work in a research environment, # of article submissions

Goal #3: Increase external grant submissions

Action Steps: Develop funding mechanisms for faculty to attend special training sessions offered by agencies such as NIH and to provide summer support for grant writing that has specific deliverables (e.g., grant proposal submission); create network meetings with other CLA departments and the college research program staff, Sponsored Research Services (SRS), and other non-CLA departments, schools, and programs to identify potential partnerships for COMM, build capacity for writing successful grant proposals, and ensure adequate post-grant support.

Primary Lead(s): Grants Ad Hoc Committee

Indicators of Success: # of grant submissions, # or \$ of grants awarded, # of prestigious professional awards

Goal #4: Expand published research in high-quality research outlets

Action Steps: Create additional resources for faculty to pursue scholarly projects through co-teaching, on-line teaching, graduate and undergraduate teaching assistants, internal research funding (e.g., bringing in experts to review work), course release, writing/reading groups etc.; clarify standards for “quality” publications; and increase fund-raising effort to improve resource base for scholarship.

Primary Lead(s): T&P Committee & Advisory Committee

Indicators of Success: development of guidelines for “high-quality” research impact, metrics for assessing “high-quality” impact TBD after development of guidelines

Goal #5: Improve faculty retention and hiring practices

Action Steps: Create a formal mentoring program for T/TT and APT faculty that may include elements such as a 1st year senior mentor and peer mentor; fund lunch meetings for beginning and mid-career faculty to discuss professional issues; and provide mentor/mentee training.

Primary Lead(s): Department Head, Diversity Committee, & T&P Committee

Indicators of success: % of faculty who stay 5 years, % of offers accepted, scores on job satisfaction survey

Approved by the faculty October 7, 2015.

