



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Note: Enter "NA" wherever data are not applicable or not available for the program under review.

Program Characteristics

Academic Program Name: **Communication**

Degree: **Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)**

Program CIP Code: 09.0999

School and Department: **Arts and Sciences/Department of Communication, Performing Arts, & Foreign Language**

Time frame for this review: **2016/2017 – 2020/2021**

Date of last internal review: **First Comprehensive Program Review**

Current date program reviewed for this report: Spring 2022

Program Goal Statement and Student Learning Outcomes

Program goal statement: The Bachelor of Arts in Communication is designed to give graduates a core knowledge of the communication discipline in terms of leading theories, historical perspectives on, and social influences of human communication. The major emphasizes written skills in academic and professional settings, oral communication skills, use of technology to research and communicate, intercultural awareness, and career development and readiness as well as broad knowledge of communication in organizations, various forms of mass media, rhetorical settings, and interpersonal contexts. Through a core curriculum of 12 hours in 1000- and 2000-level courses, 30 hours in upper-division courses, an additional 12-15 hours in upper-division communication, and a minor in a related discipline, the graduate prepares him- or herself for further study and/or entry-level communication-oriented positions in corporations, nonprofits, and schools.

Program outcomes:

Students who graduate from the B.A. in Communication will be able to either obtain employment in entry-level positions in communication-related positions and/or enter graduate or professional school.

Students who graduate from the B.A. in Communication will be satisfied with their program of study.

Student learning outcomes:

To develop graduates with an understanding and appreciation of ethical, societal, and legal issues involved in the uses of various communication media and various forms of interpersonal communication.

To develop graduates with effective academic and professional writing skills based on knowledge of audience, context, and genre.

To develop graduates who demonstrate effective public speaking skills.

To develop graduates who can understand and negotiate cultural diversity.

To develop graduates who understand quantitative and qualitative research skills and who demonstrate the ability to use technology to find valid information and to use correct citation methods.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

To develop graduates who have the ability to explain and apply appropriate communication theories to analyzing communication practice.

Brief Assessment of Previous Program Review

Outcome of previous program review (brief narrative statement).

The B.A. in Communication was approved by the Board of Regents in May 2016. Thus, this is the program's first official five-year review.

Information about ongoing improvements to the program is detailed below.

What improvements have occurred since the last program review or assessment?

The B.A. in Communication was approved by the Board of Regents in May 2016. Thus, this is the program's first review.

What changes or revisions have been made to the program, its curriculum, or its program/student learning outcomes since the last program review? Please include a follow-up discussion of the previous review's action plan.

The B.A. in Communication was approved by the Board of Regents in May 2016. Thus, this is the program's first official review. However, after its first five years, there are many changes, improvements, and assessments that can be summarized here.

Although the program has not yet grown to the extent we would have hoped, it is currently in a healthy place, with some challenges. We have made a few changes to the curriculum but have tried to keep continuity in the student experience. This continuity should be helpful to the students and advisors. The changes are as follows:

- Changed the name of the Business Communication concentration to Organizational Leadership Communication.
- Eliminated ENGL 3000 and replace with COMM 4001, Applied Research in Communication.
- Added new courses to the curriculum:
 - COMM 3405, Readings in Leadership & Communication
 - COMM 3700, Introduction to Video Production, elective and strongly suggested for all concentrations
 - COMM 3705, Introduction to Screenwriting, elective for all concentrations
 - COMM 3710, Content Strategy and Adobe Suite, elective for all concentrations
 - COMM 4001, Applied Research Methods, required in the ten-course core
 - COMM 4110, Conflict Management and Interpersonal Communication
 - COMM 4120, Principles of Health Communication, elective for all concentrations



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

COMM 4140, Mass Media and Pop Culture, elective for all concentrations

To balance these new offerings, we removed

- COMM 3200, Sports Communication
- COMM 3801, ePublishing
- COMM 3331, Nonverbal Communication
- COMM 3332, New Communication Technology

We have not taught Political Communication or Gender Communication in the six years of the program, but we have not at this time decided to remove them from the catalog because there might be demand or interest in them in the future.

These changes have been made primarily in response to employer needs and changes in the communication field, where adaptability to different technologies is highly valued.

Additionally, we have attempted to meet students' needs by offering five courses online and six as hybrid delivery.

Online: COMM 3301, 4380, and 4110; COMM 2000 and 1100. Also, COMM 1110 is offered hybrid, but that is Area B, not Area F.

Hybrid: COMM 4425, 4400, 4001, 3101, 4999, and 3700

In terms of changes to program and student learning outcomes, the faculty decided to change those in Fall 2021, but that action is not within the range of this review.

The B.A. in Communication is part of the Department of Communication, Performing Arts, and Foreign Language. It is one of four degree programs offered by the Department. During the review period of 2016-2021, the Department also offered an associate of arts degree in music, which was deactivated in 2020.

Nine of the twelve department faculty (thirteen of sixteen during the review period) teach communication at the 1000-level or higher.

Mr. Nick Carty (1110 and French, but none specific to the B.A. in Communication)

Ms. Kim Correll (1110 and Theatre, but none specific to the B.A. in Communication)

Mr. Jerry Drye (1110, 1100, 3400, 3425, 3350, 3500)

Ms. Cathy Hunsicker (retired Fall 2021) (1110, 2110, but currently none specific to the B.A. in Communication)

Dr. Clint Kinkead (1110, 2110, 3405, 3220, 4999)

Mr. Matt LeHew (1110, 3000, 3700, 3710, 4100, 4400)

Dr. Sarah Min (1110, 1100, 4001, 4425, 4110)

Dr. Tami Tomasello (1110, 2000, 3310, 4300, 4602, 4999)

Dr. Barbara Tucker (1110, 2110, 3301, 4999)

Dr. Marjorie Yambor (1110, 2000, 3001, 3100, 4180, 4200, 4000, 4140)

During the review period (2016-2021), the Department hired Dr. Marjorie Yambor, Mr. Matt LeHew, Ms. Kim Correll, and Dr. Sarah Min into tenure-track positions. During the review period we hired two lecturers for



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Communication classes: Ms. Amy Mendes (1110, 1100) and Dr. Kristi David (1110, 4380), as well as Mr. Chad Daniel (1110 and Theatre).

In 2019, one faculty lecturer, Dr. David, resigned; in 2020, two were dismissed for budget-related reasons (Ms. Mendes and Mr. Daniel), and in Fall 2021, one, Ms. Hunsicker, retired. Faculty credentials and future needs for faculty are discussed below.

During the review period, we used one faculty member part-time: Dr. Herbert Blankson. In 2022, we now hire four part-time faculty to teach Communication due to loss of full-time instructors.

Although the National Communication Association offers an honor society for Communication students (Lambda Pi Eta), none of our faculty are currently involved in NCA (it is expensive to join, holds expensive conferences outside of the Southeast, and does not offer much to members for the cost). We have not pursued this venue for students. Many of the Communication students are involved in the Film and Photography Club, which is active on campus.

The addition of the MAC lab in LIA 110 is a major coup for the Department. We have a lab assistant now who can oversee students while they work on class-, internship-, and industry-related video projects, and we will be able to teach Adobe Creative Suite classes in Fall 2022.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Enrollment						
Headcount	37	87	123	130	128	+246%
FTE	35.25	79.83	114.75	120.25	102	+189%
Enrolled Full-time	32	70	100	102	91	+184%
Enrolled Part-time	5	17	23	28	37	+640%
Female	21	48	61	65	68	+224%
Male	16	39	62	65	60	+275%
Alaskan Native/Native American/American Indian	1	0	0	0	1	0%
Asian, Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	0	1	1	2	3	+300%
Black/African-American	1	8	10	14	12	+1100%
Hispanic	8	22	31	39	42	+425%
Multi-racial	0	2	2	3	2	+200%
Undeclared	0	0	2	3	3	+300%
White	27	54	77	69	65	+141%

Comments on Student Demographics:

The Hispanic representation (42/128, or 33.5%) is on par with the College as a whole. A good number of the Hispanic students are studying film, which is providing more diversity for the Georgia Film Academy and eventually the industry in Georgia, and therefore more representation of Hispanics in film. At 9.4%, our representation of African American students is higher than the College as a whole. Female to male ratio (53%/48%) is somewhat more equal than in the College as a whole (60%/40%).

A 246% increase in students during the review period is strong, but our goal is a headcount of 200. The program is writing intensive and high impact and requires public display of competence. It is therefore not as attractive for all students. However, we could improve our recruitment methods and our apologetic for the value of a communication major to current DSC students who might be looking for a change.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Faculty Indicators of Program Quality	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
School (not Department) faculty teaching in program (EXCLUDING COMM 1110)						
Full-time program faculty	10	11	13	12	10	+0
Part-time program faculty	0	0	0	1	3	+300
Total program faculty	10	11	13	13	13	+40
Percent of program classes taught by full-time program faculty	100%	100%	94	95%	97%	0
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Male	3	4	5	6	7	+133
Female	7	7	8	7	6	-14
					Fall 2020	% Change
Alaskan Native/Native American/American Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian, Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	1	1	1	1	1	0
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0	1	+100
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi-racial	0	0	0	0	0	0
Undeclared	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	9	10	12	12	11	+21
Tenure Status (full-time faculty)	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
Tenured	5	5	5	5	6	+20
On-tenure track	2	3	4	5	4	+100
Non-tenure track	3	3	4	2	0	-300
Rank (full-time faculty)	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
Professor	1	1	1	1	1	0
Associate Professor	5	5	5	5	5	0
Assistant Professor	1	2	3	4	4	+300
Instructor/Senior Lecturer/Lecturer	3	3	4	2	0	-200



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Faculty Indicators of Program Quality

Highest degree (full-time faculty)	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
Doctorate	5	5	5	5	5	0
Specialist	1	1	1	1	1	0
Master's	2	3	3	3	2	0
Bachelor's	0	0	0	0	0	0
Associate's/Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Provide additional details, analysis, and comments regarding faculty indicators of program quality.

We have a sufficient variety of specialties within the faculty at the present time. They are well trained in their areas. Media studies (LeHew, Tomasello, Yambor), Interpersonal (Min, Drye), and Rhetoric (Kinkead, Tucker) are represented. For those no longer employed, Dr. David was in Media Studies and Ms. Mendes in Rhetorical Studies. Three of the doctorate-holding faculty have Ph.D. degrees in Communication-related subjects, and one faculty member is in the dissertation phase. Two faculty were tenured in the review period. One of our tenure-track faculty is Asian-American, although the rest of the faculty is Caucasian.

Our part-timers have been helpful, too. Mr. Ryan Reece has taught Introduction to Screenwriting (COMM 3705) and Dr. David taught COMM 4380, Law and Ethics in Communication, online during the review period. Currently, Dr. Blankson has taught Principles of Health Communication (4120) online and Ms. Marieke Keller is teaching 4380 online.

Faculty scholarly output is probably best described as present but on the low end. Dr. Yambor presents regularly in the broadcasting field and had two publications in media studies in important publications, a book chapter and a journal article. Mr. LeHew has had several presentations in communication and media studies. Ms. Tomasello has engaged with undergraduate research on three occasions with her COMM 4602 students, presenting at a state conference. Mr. Drye, Dr. Min, and Dr. Kinkead have done the same at least once and have presented their own work at times. Dr. Tucker has had several presentations, a book chapter, and an article. Dr. Kinkead had an article as well. These publications and presentations have been in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Communication, and Communication Pedagogy. During the review period, Mr. LeHew, Ms. Mendes, and Dr. Tucker served on the Executive Board of the Georgia Communication Association, and Dr. Tomasello, Dr. Min, Mr. Drye, and Dr. Kinkead attended its conferences. Dr. Tucker and Mr. LeHew belonged to and attended Southern States Communication Association, a significant regional organization. Dr. Tucker also serves as Secretary of the Regents' Advisory Committee for Communication programs and on the Academic Advisory Committee for the Georgia Film Academy.

Service records of faculty are another indication of quality. Our involvement on campus could be higher but is not an area for concern; service to the community is important as well. Along with assigned committees (such as Senate, Academic Programs and Promotion and Tenure committees), they work with Student Services (Mr. Drye); Teaching and Learning and student success (Mr. LeHew, Dr. Tucker). Dr. Tomasello worked with a “reading with dogs” program at East Lake Elementary; Dr. Kinkead coaches youth sports; Dr. Tucker teaches ESL to refugees; Dr. Yambor works with humane societies.

One important aspect of our faculty is the production of *Exploring Public Speaking*, which has sections by Ms. Amy Mendes, Mr. Jerry Drye, Ms. Amy Burger of Roberts Library, Mr. Chad Daniel, and Ms. Cathy Hunsicker. Dr. Barbara Tucker is the editor. The book is now used at over 295 institutions and is a leading Open Educational Resource in public speaking; it is the first one that appears in a Google search.

Faculty tend to teach 4-7 different subjects either every year or on a rotating basis: Yambor (7); Tomasello (7); Kinkead (6); Min (5); Drye (6); LeHew (6); Tucker (5). Some of these are taught in different modes of delivery as well.

Departmental student evaluations for upper-division courses are generally average or higher than average with no patterns of concern in terms of classroom engagement or competence. The average for all Communication classes was 4.5, for example, in Fall 2018, 2019, and 2020. We do experience occasional resistance from students, especially since the pandemic, about attendance, rigor, and participation requirements. We take our responsibility for workforce development and graduate school preparation seriously.

Communication Department faculty were very present on campus during the 2020-21 year despite COVID. None changed their classes to online without permission.

As chair, Dr. Tucker is not satisfied with our level of faculty advising, and this subject is a concern across campus. We advise for Interdisciplinary Studies, which can be very difficult due to DegreeWorks discrepancies and the needs of transfer students. Specific training for departmental faculty has been developed, and the importance of advising has been emphasized in personal discussions; consequently, there have been improvements overall in how many students contact me with concerns regarding advising. Dr. Tucker mentors and trains new hires individually in advising (Dr. Min, Mr. LeHew, Ms. Correll, and Dr. Blackburn). Dr. Tucker also took over the assignment of advisees from Ms. Kathy Payne so that faculty would be paired with a student interested in their specialty or strength and to ensure equal loads.

Since the BOR now requires efforts with student success to be part of faculty evaluation, advising will be a component of our efforts, as well as HIPs and lowering DWFs. Five departmental faculty taught Perspectives in Fall 2021 (Mason, Drye, Blackburn, Hunsicker, and Tucker), two of whom were full-time Communication faculty and one part-time Communication faculty. Several faculty use documented HIPs.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

The B.A in Communication has not grown as fast as we would have liked, so not all growth and expansion goals have been met. Dr. Tucker wanted to add a concentration in Health Communication; so far we have only taught one class in it. The existing concentrations are doing well in terms of enrollment, but we will propose eliminating the Generalist concentration in April 2022 because we believe it has outlived its usefulness. The Film Concentration is strong. Our relationship with the Georgia Film Academy is key to who we are. The new MAC lab is going to be very popular, and we will start a graphic arts class in Fall 2022, taught by an adjunct.

Future retirements will mean replacing faculty. Mr. Carty now teaches a 5/4 load of COMM 1110 (since the College is no longer offering French), so his retirement will mean a replacement with at least a lecturer, but preferably tenure-track doctoral faculty. Dr. Tucker will probably retire in 2026 or sooner and will need to be replaced with a Ph.D., and someone will need to replace her as chair. These positions will definitely need filling because of the core requirement of COMM 1110, plus the fact that 3301, 2000, 1100, and 2110 are used by other majors as part of their curriculum. We are lean right now, as are some other departments.

Student Input	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Change
Mean ACT score	20.14	19.64	20.28	20.18	19.93	-.21
Mean SAT score	897	920	915	908	917	+.20

If applicable to your degree program, provide any additional external quality assurance data/information or results (e.g., professional accreditation results, National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], market rankings, etc.).

The Bachelor of Arts in Communication is not accredited by any specialized accrediting agencies, nor are there market rankings for this program at this time.

<i>Indicators of Measures of Quality</i>						
Student Output	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
Exit scores on national/state licensure (If applicable)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Graduating majors' mean GPA	3.26	3.14	3.34	3.27	3.37	+3.4%
Employment rate of graduates/Entering graduate professional programs	66%	100%	31%	52%	12%	-44%



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Number of students entering graduate/professional programs	0	0	2	1	0	+0%
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In regard to employment rate, these figures are based on surveys at the end of the capstone. Usually by 6-12

<p>1. Through the entry-level positions in communication-related positions and/or enter graduate or professional school.</p>	<p>80% of graduates will be employed in a communication-related field or be accepted into graduate school within one year of graduation.</p>	<p>As of June 1, 2021, 17/19 in the 2020-21 cycle had submitted their surveys. In regard to those 17, the following results were indicated by the students at their point of graduation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One accepted to graduate school. Two had found employment related to communication. Five were applying to or considering graduate school. Two were in jobs unrelated to communication. Ten were investigating and/or applying for jobs related to communication. <p>Some students marked two categories. At this point, 0-6 months after graduation, only 4/17 have met the target. That does not mean they are unemployed, but based on the data we have, the graduates of this AY are not meeting the 80% target.</p>
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		<p>As for 2019-20 graduates, on June 3 Barbara Tucker contacted them via social media (LinkedIn and Facebook) to see what was going on in their careers.</p> <p>Despite COVID, the news was rather good for the 15/16 for whom information was found.</p> <p>One in church ministry and started a business.</p> <p>Four in some kind of customer service representative position at MFG Chemicals, UNUM, Walgreens, and Medical Services.</p> <p>Four in management positions in businesses.</p> <p>Two working as optical technicians.</p> <p>One working in HR at Unum and doing very well.</p> <p>One a parapro in Whitfield County Schools.</p> <p>One a video editor.</p> <p>One a butcher (same job he had in college); however, in Feb. 2022 he became employed in social media.</p> <p>I would say 13 of these 15, or 86%, are in jobs related to a communication major.</p>
<p>2. Graduates will express satisfaction with their program of study.</p>	<p>70% of the graduates will rate their program of study as "good" or "excellent" and "met expectations" or "exceeded expectations."</p>	<p>On the survey graduates completed at the end of their capstone experience, 16/17 students rated the overall quality of the program good or excellent, 94%, a slight increase from the previous year (92%); 14/17 students rated the quality of the program in meeting their personal goals good or excellent, 82.4%. This is about an 18% decline from the previous year's percentage of 100. 17/17 (100%) students stated the program met or exceeded their expectations; 11/17 (65%) stated it exceeded expectations. One student in the Fall 2020 class dropped out, and one student in the Spring 2021 COMM 4999 class did not finish until Summer 2021.</p>



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

		<p>In regard to quality of specific areas: Overall quality of instruction: Average (1), Good (9), Excellent (7). Quality of the program in meeting your personal program objectives: Average (3), Good (7), Excellent (7).</p> <p>In regard to the learning of college-level competencies: Critical Thinking: Slightly increased (1); Moderately increased (6); Significantly increased (10). Written communication: Moderately increased (6); Significantly increased (11). Oral communication: Slightly increased (1), Moderately increased (2); Significantly increased (14). Research Technology: Did not increase (1); Slightly increased (1); Moderately increased (6); Significantly increased (9).</p> <p>Awareness and sensitivity to persons of other cultural backgrounds: Did not increase (1); Slightly increased (2); Moderately increased (6); Significantly increased (8).</p> <p>Understanding and appreciation of ethical, societal, and legal issues involved in various forms of mass media and interpersonal communication: Slightly increased (1); Moderately increased (9); Significantly increased (7).</p> <p>Understanding of theoretical basis of communication. Slightly increased (1); Moderately increased (9); Significantly increased (7).</p>
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COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Therefore, at least 50% or more of students reported significant increases in critical thinking, written communication, oral communication, and research technology; at least 82% reported moderate increase in all learning outcome areas. The highest significant increase was in oral communication; the lowest significant increase was in understanding theory and in understanding ethical, societal, and legal aspects.

Describe the extent to which students have achieved current student learning outcomes during this program review cycle (most recent year).

During the 2020-2021 academic year,

Student Learning Outcome	Target	Assessment
1. To develop graduates with an understanding and appreciation of ethical, societal, and legal issues involved in the uses of various communication media and various forms of interpersonal communication.	80% of students will achieve 80% or better on the reflection paper (on ethical stance in communication in COMM 4999) based on a rubric with components on critical thinking and writing style.	In COMM 4999, a hybrid class taught on the main campus in 2020-21, 95% of the students (19/10) earned 80% or better on a paper about their ethical stance on a communication issue. Furthermore, 100% (20/20) earned a passing grade on the IRB quiz.
2. To develop graduates with effective academic and professional writing skills based on knowledge of audience, context, and genre.	#1 In COMM 3301, a required course in the major, 80% of students will earn at least 80% or better on three assignments (reports, memos, letters, and/or proposals) appropriate to specific audiences and contexts.	In AY 2020-21, 17/19 of the graduates met this target, 89%.
	#2 In COMM 4999 (Senior Seminar in Communication), a	In AY 2020-21, 19 of 19 graduates completed this measure at the

	required course in the major, students will compose a conference-level academic paper; 80% will achieve 80% on the assignment.	80% or better level. One student in the capstone course did not graduate.
3. Oral communication: To develop graduates who demonstrate effective public speaking skills.	In COMM 4999, a required course in the major, students will present a conference session on their capstone research.	In the AY 2020-21 cycle, 19/19 graduates met this target by earning 80% or better on their formal presentations of their papers. The average grade was about 91%
4. Students will recognize appreciate cultural differences.	Eighty percent of students will earn 80% or better on a paper on the understanding of perceptions and stereotypes in culture in COMM 4425.	Of the nineteen graduates in the 2020-21 AY, eighteen earned an A or B in COMM 4425 (94.7%).
5. To develop graduates who understand quantitative and qualitative research skills and who demonstrate the ability to use technology to find valid information and to use correct citation methods.	#1 100% of students will earn 80% or better on the secondary research, citation, and formatting portions of the rubric for the capstone paper.	In COMM 4999, 16/19 students met this target, in that they met the standard of using 15 scholarly sources correctly, and documenting them correctly in their final capstone papers. That is 84%.
	#2 Students will conduct interviews, surveys, focus groups, or other data-gathering processes to explore a significant question in the capstone paper in order to verify, refine, test, or understand current research.	All graduates in this cycle performed qualitative or quantitative original research to complete their capstone project.
6. To develop graduates who understand the communication process as it exists in interpersonal and mediated forms and can explain the foundational	100% of the students will use a theory of communication in their capstone paper and achieve 80% on the use of it, with the instructor using a rubric for assessment.	This target was met at the 100% level. It is a requirement for the conference paper. All graduates (19/19) met this target.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

theories of the discipline
in both forms.

Indicators of Measures of Quality

If available, provide additional information and/or results of other indicators of quality related to student output such as completer satisfaction surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, stakeholder satisfaction surveys, completion and continuation rates, attrition rates, starting salaries of graduates, etc.

Based on a survey of graduates regarding their employment, conducted in Fall 2021, of students who reported their salaries, the average was \$36,500. They ranged from below \$10,000 to the \$50-60,000 range. All our graduates are required to have a LinkedIn account and connect with Dr. Tucker; however, not all are willing to keep up with that social media platform. In this survey, there were 22 respondents. Graduates are working at Shaw, Rivermont Electric, the North Georgia Electric Membership Company (NGEMC), Freight Waves Logistics, Dalton Public Schools, Creative Crash Social Media, J103 Radio, RUIS Group (Atlanta), WTCI PBS station in Chattanooga, in the film/TV industry, Chik-fil-A, UNUM, Morris and Dean Law Firm, MGF Chemical, Rak Outfitters, Creative Theory Agency (Washington, D.C.), Brandon Brown Productions, and others.

In February 2022, Dr. Tucker was able to contact six employers regarding recent graduates (during or prior to Spring 2021): Yesenia Figueroa, Asmara Holmes, Sawyer Locke, Sandra Tapia, Aaron Hadden, and Austin Patten.

These employers represented

- Creative Theory Agency, Washington, D.C.
- WTCI in Chattanooga
- RUIS Group, Atlanta
- Shaw Industries (local)
- Morris and Dean Law Firm, Dalton, GA (local)
- NGEMC (local)

All gave positive to very positive reviews; some did note that knowledge of Adobe products would be a good addition to the program, which we are doing.

Graduate school has not been a priority for graduates. Only one student has earned a graduate degree (Jeanette Martinez, MFA Screenwriting from UGA). Others indicate they are considering it, and one last year indicated she was accepted to grad school. Graduate work is not that important for professionals in Communication in their entry-level careers or immediately after college, unless they desire to be in academia; experience and skills are considered more important for entry-level positions. However, we could do a better job of introducing students to the options available.

Describe efforts undertaken to achieve and maintain curricular alignment within the program and currency to the discipline.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Since the second year of the program, we have maintained an Advisory Board of industry professionals. In 2021 we started one for the film program. We hold a meet and greet with the students each year. The main things we learned from the advisory boards:

- Good writing is a priority. Almost all of our upper-division classes require several writing projects, either career-related or academically driven.
- Adobe Creative Cloud and video production knowledge is very important, along with the programs students can learn at the Georgia Film Academy (AVID Pro Tools, etc.).
- Graduate work should wait until students know their real career interests and whether it is valuable to their goals and careers.
- A communication professional needs to be multi-skilled as far as content creation—photography, videography, website development, social media, writing, etc.

Because of our relationship with the Georgia Film Academy, students who have attended there (over 60 by Spring 2022) are able to learn on state-of-the-art, industry-standard tools. This is an advantage we would not be able to offer students otherwise. Attending GFA is a sacrifice for students; however, all but a handful who have attended have finished their program there (18 hours, or three classes).

Indicators of Measures of Viability

Internal Demand for the Program	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	% Change
Number of students enrolled in the degree program	37	87	123	130	128	+246%
Number of students who applied to the program (if applicable)						n/a
Number of students admitted to the program (if applicable)						n/a
Percent of classes taught by full-time faculty	100%	100%	94%	95%	97%	-3%

Describe additional details as deemed appropriate.

As mentioned earlier, the program, although attracting an adequate number of students, has not grown as much as we would have liked. In Fall 2021, there were 13 incoming students with Communication declared as their major. (Those wanting only to attend the Film Academy have the quicker route of the A.A. General Studies Film Pathway program.) Thirteen is not sufficient to sustain the program, given current retention rates. Fortunately, we do get a significant number of students who change their major from business or other subjects to Communication. We welcome them and try to smooth the pathway for them, but we do require a foreign language as part of our intercultural emphasis. We do not want them to think Communication is an “easy” major, especially since we require two research classes and knowledge of SPSS. No specific data on transfers into the program is available, but it is probably as much as those who declare Communication as a major in their first year.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

We also have a number of majors who have transferred from the AA in General Studies Film or Theatre pathways. We will continue to recruit from those groups.

Doing this CPR has made it clear that, despite efforts in the past, our program is not as well advertised as it could be. The college recruiters have been met with, but they do not actually talk about individual programs. The next option is to talk with high school teachers. We can start with Ryan Reece, of course, at Coahulla Creek, and move on from there.

In addition, advertising where our graduates are working is crucial. The answers to the old question “What can you do with a Communication degree” have not settled into our students’ brains. Getting more graduates back on campus to talk to freshmen and upper-division students is a useful approach.

Indicators of Measures of Productivity

Graduation	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% Change
Number of degrees conferred	3	1	21	16	19	+533.3%
Total student credit hours earned	167	145	133	128	125	25.1%

Describe any institutional-specific factors impacting time to degree.

We have designed the program, the course rotations, and the pathways so that a student can graduate in four years, with summer school needed in most cases. Many students change to a Communication major after their first year, decide to do an extensive internship, or put off going to the Film Academy, and those actions might delay their graduation by a semester or two. Students who are unsuccessful in one or more core courses will be put back a year. The core (required) classes in the major are offered every year, at least once. The chart above indicates that the total credit hours earned decreased to close to what is recommended for a bachelor’s degree.

Evidence of Program Viability

Based on evidence from **ALL** of the above information, data, and analysis, discuss whether continued resources should be devoted to this program. This discussion must be evidence-based. Your comments should consider external factors and address questions such as the following: Are your students getting jobs? What is the job outlook for graduates? Are students prepared for the jobs they get? How is the field changing? Are program faculty members in contact with employers and getting back feedback on graduates’ job performance? Do employers state or suggest a need for changes in the program?



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Students are getting positions in the field although not always immediately. The positions are there, but some choose to go in other directions career-wise. Others find it necessary to move away from Dalton to find the opportunities. Film is an example; a student should understand that if they want to be in the film industry they will need to relocate to Atlanta, Columbus, or Savannah.

The job outlook, based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, is as follows:

“Employment in media and communication occupations is projected to grow 14 percent from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations, and will result in about 151,500 new jobs. Demand for media and communication occupations is expected to arise from the need to create, edit, translate, and disseminate information through a variety of different platforms.”

Surveys of employers indicate the graduates are prepared but need more graphic arts and Adobe Creative Cloud experience; we are addressing that. The field is changing to require multi-skilled graduates, and graduates should expect to multi-task and expand their skillsets accordingly.

One area that we have not pursued with much rigor or success is journalism. Journalism has changed significantly as a career field, and positions are not abundant. If a student desires to pursue journalism, radio, or television, we encourage early and frequent internships, and we have connected with several outlets for them to do internships in the region. We do not teach any journalism classes *per se*, but we do teach journalistic skills in 3301, 3101, and 3000.

Faculty members, other than Dr. Yambor and Dr. Tucker, do not regularly stay in contact with employers. Dr. Yambor is in charge of internships. Faculty do attend the advisory committee meetings.

Although in the first two years (2016-17, 2017-18) we graduated only four majors, graduation numbers have been consistently around 20 from 2018-19 and onward. In 2021-22 the number of graduates will be 13; however, we have averaged well over 10, the University System of Georgia’s expectation, since AY 2018-19. It should be noted that we have a number of minors in Communication, and the Interdisciplinary Studies students take a number of our courses. We are consistently concerned as a faculty about rigor and student achievement of academic and industry expectations. Some think a Communication major is “easy,” but it is a rigorous social science curriculum.

Program Strengths and Weaknesses

Based upon this review, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?

Strengths:

We have a strong faculty with expertise in diverse sub-disciplines of Communication. During the pandemic, they were present on campus. They also develop relationships with students.

Students are apprised of experiential learning opportunities (mostly internships) on a weekly basis. Undergraduate research is also available. All students take a capstone course; collaborative learning projects, service learning, and writing intensive experiences are or have been a part of many classes. Diversity is built into our curriculum. Faculty evaluations average 4.5.

We have revised outcomes in Fall 2021 based on changes in industry, the discipline, and best practice.

We have two advisory committees, so we are able to learn a good deal from local employers and professionals.

Our Georgia Film Academy connection is a huge plus. The Georgia Film Consortium and the Academic Advisory Board have worked diligently to ensure SACSCOC looks on the relationship approvingly. So far, other institutions in the Consortium have passed through their SACS reviews without undue attention coming to the relationship between the institution and the GFA. The students also give the program high marks.

Some graduates are in good positions, even in other regions (FL, MD). They are willing to come back and talk to students and keep up with the professors on social media. We have instituted an eportfolio requirement and altered the curriculum to focus on skills employers want without taking away theoretical perspectives and rigor.

The new MAC production lab is an incredibly strong addition and something we have been working on for years. We will encourage all students to take COMM 3700 (Introduction to Video Production). Additionally, we will offer an introduction to graphic arts course in Fall 2022, and possibly continue that regularly. As mentioned earlier, employers want those skills.

Each year we have high ratings of satisfaction from graduates.

Weaknesses and concerns:

We are not always attracting the strongest students, and some enter without understanding the level of rigor required in the field.

Students are not choosing to do for-credit experiential learning opportunities as much as they should (all should; only about ten per year do now). If the students complete internships for credit, we can track and assess them. If students choose to do internships outside of the credit system, we often do not know about it. For example, one casually informed me that he had completed an internship at Mohawk in Fall 2021, but not for credit. That would have been an excellent contact for us at the time.

Budget cuts are contracting elective offerings that would be important to the students' preparedness.

Faculty will need to address student success more, advising more, and experiential learning/HIPs more.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Retirements in next four years will happen.

Dr. Tucker has only met with faculty once per semester to discuss in-depth issues with the program, which is not enough.

Recommendations for Follow-Up and/or Action Plans (if needed)

Issue/Concern:

We should continue to maintain relationships with local organizations and business with a view to responsiveness to employers' needs

Specific action(s):

In order to stay current with industry standards, we will need to update and maintain the MAC production lab and order equipment and engage part-time faculty to expand offerings

Expected outcomes:

To offer COMM 3700 each semester and COMM 3900 (currently special topics, but it will be added to catalog in Fall 2022) Introduction to Graphic Arts, at least once a year.

Time frame for achievement:

2023.

Person(s) responsible:

Chair, Mr. LeHew, Mr. Mike Largent

Resources needed: n/a

Issue/Concern:

Retirements of Nick Carty and Barbara Tucker

Specific action(s):

Replace positions and make argument for the need.

Expected outcomes:

Positions will be replaced and filled.

Time frame for achievement:

2023-2026

Person(s) responsible:

Randall Griffus

Resources needed: Salaries



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Issue/Concern:

We should continue to build enrollment in the B. A. in Communication program and look for more venues for engagement.

Specific action(s):

1. Network with high school teachers in area
2. Discuss with recruiters to see if we can visit with them at school fairs in the future
3. Create a small flyer for distribution

Expected outcomes:

10% improvement yearly in number of incoming students declaring Communication as major and 10% improvement in transfer students (from other programs).

Time frame for achievement:

Ongoing

Person(s) responsible:

Faculty, Chair

Resources needed: At this time, none.

Issue/Concern:

Low engagement in internships (for credit; some students do them without taking COMM 4000).

Specific action(s):

Bring in graduates to talk about internship value

Continue to advertise the internships, but make efforts to do so orally (in class) and through flyers

Expected outcomes:

Strategic Plan action items indicates 50% per year improvement. This year's goal was 9-10. Next year (2022-23) should be 14-15, but that is actually a low target.

Time frame for achievement:

Ongoing

Person(s) responsible:

Faculty, chair

Resources needed: n/a

Issue/Concern:

Advising. The faculty are not self-sufficient and come to me with questions they should be able to answer about advising. My desire that students be advised correctly overrides my insistence they be self-directed.



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Specific action(s):

Faculty will be encouraged to set advising as a goal related to Momentum and the new student success requirements in Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure review. Due to efforts over the past two years, they are taking it more seriously overall. The College as a whole should take training of faculty more seriously especially in regard to policy changes. Dr. Tucker will survey the faculty about what they need to advise better.

We have begun offering advising workshops for students in 2021-22.

Expected outcomes:

Higher self-efficacy among faculty about advising and higher evaluations by students on their adviser SmartEvals.

Time frame for achievement:

2022-23

Person(s) responsible:

Faculty, chair

Resources needed: n/a

Issue/Concern:

The administration and chair will need to consider who the next chair of the Department will be upon Dr. Tucker's retirement.

Specific action(s):

Beginning in 2022-23 AY, pursue discussions with Dr. Hicks about who the next chair will be. Also, faculty will need to take on some of the duties in the Department and Dr. Tucker will need to delegate and train. For example, these areas need to be addressed: program assessment; connection with the Georgia Film Academy; internship and external relations (Dr. Yambor is working in this areas now); advising mentoring; representative to the RAC for Communication, among others.

Expected outcomes:

Someone will desire position and be adequately trained for it.

Time frame for achievement:

2023-2026

Person(s) responsible:

Barbara Tucker, Bruno Hicks, Randall Griffus

Resources needed: Salaries



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW



COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Prepared by: Barbara Tucker

Signature Barbara Tucker Date: April 4, 2022

Dean's Approval:

Signature: Tanya Byron Date: 04/04/2022

Approval of the Chair of the DSC Comprehensive Program Review Committee:

Signature: Mary M. Adams Date: 4/4/2022

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) Categorical Summation:

Check any of the following to categorically describe action(s) the institution will take concerning this program.

Program MEETS Institution's Criteria

Program is critical to the institutional mission and will be retained.

Program is critical to the institutional mission and is growing, or a high demand field, and thus will be enhanced.

Program DOES NOT MEET Institution's Criteria for continuation.

Program will be placed on monitoring status.

Program will undergo substantive curricular revisions.

Program will be deactivated.

Program will be voluntarily terminated.

Other (Please elaborate):

VPAA Signature: Bruno Hicks Date: 4/4/22

Bruno Hicks, Ed.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dalton State College