

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON


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December 10, 2008

**Revised**

To: Phyllis M. Wise  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
Douglas J. Wadden  
Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Planning  
Office of the Provost

From: James Soto Antony   
Associate Dean for Academic Programs  
Juan Guerra  
Associate Dean, Graduate Opportunity and Minority Achievement Program

Re: Department of Communication 10-Year Review

At the meeting of March 20, 2008, the Graduate School Council met with Sandra Silberstein, (Professor of English) Chair of the committee that reviewed the Department of Communication B.A., M.A., M.C. and Ph.D. degree programs, and with the then Department Chair, Gerald Baldasty (Professor of Communication), Lisa Coutu (Lecturer and Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Communications) and David Sherman (Director, Students Services in Communication). Judith Howard, Divisional Dean for Social Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, and John Sahr, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, were also in attendance.

The program review process included a charge meeting on October 2, 2007, between members of the review committee and administrators involved in the review. The site visit, held on October 29-30, 2007, included the external reviewers, Erica Austin (Professor, Edward R. Murrow School of Communication) of Washington State University, and Noshir Contractor (Professor, Communication, Industrial Engineering and Management Science) of Northwestern University.

On March 15, 2002, the Board of Regents of the University of Washington approved consolidation of the Department of Speech Communication and the School of Communications into a new Department of Communication, and the merger was effective July 1, 2002. At the same time, the Regents authorized the Department to offer a new Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy degree programs in communication. These degree programs were approved on a five-year provisional status with a review to occur in 2007-2008.

Additionally, the Master of Communication degree program which was offered by the former School of Communications was retained by the Department of Communication.

At the March 20, 2008 Council meeting, Professor Silberstein outlined findings and recommendations from the Review Committee Report (submitted December 14, 2007). The committee recommended continuation of the M.A. and Ph.D. degree programs as well as the M.C. in Native Voices and in Digital Media, and that the next review to occur in ten years. Additionally, the committee recommended that the Department decrease the undergraduate major enrollment, which the College of Arts and Sciences supports. The Department has a strong research faculty, with four of its eight research programs highly ranked nationally. The committee noted the Department's teacher-oriented culture and its commitment to diversity as a core principle. Due to attrition and the apparent lack of a "strong research culture" at the M.A. level in preparing students to matriculate to the doctorate, the committee urged consideration of a joint M.A./Ph.D. admissions process for students whose goal is the doctorate. Students are currently admitted to the master's program and then required to reapply for the Ph.D. program. The committee suggested the Department consider ending the M.C. for Communication Professionals or expand the program beyond mid-level professionals.

The Graduate School Council unanimously supported the review committee's recommendation for continuation of the Department's undergraduate and graduate degree programs with the next review in 2017-2018. The Council acknowledged the Department's overall quality and commended Professor Gerald Baldasty for his excellent job as an administrator and leader in the successful merger of the Department of Speech Communication and the School of Communication into the Department of Communication. The Council expressed concern about faculty maintaining a balance between research and their service commitments. The Council acknowledged the impact on the Department of the large undergraduate enrollment and supported the committee's recommendation to reduce the number of undergraduate majors.

We concur with these recommendations and comments.

- c: Gerald J. Baldasty, Interim Vice Provost and Dean, The Graduate School
- Ana Mari Cauce, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
- Judith A. Howard, Divisional Dean, Social Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences
- John D. Sahr, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
- David S. Domke, Professor and Acting Chair, Department of Communication
- Jacob K. Faleschini, President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate
- Communication Review Committee
- Graduate School Council
- Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School