



**GROSSMONT
COLLEGE**

Six Year Program Review Report

2022-28

Communication

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2022-28

SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW. DEPARTMENT HISTORY & PREVIOUS PROGRAM REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Introduce the program review with a brief department history. Include a complete list of full and part time faculty. Describe any changes in staffing, curriculum, facilities, etc. (You may wish to cut/paste your previous department history and then add to it). Additionally, please list degrees and certificates your department offers.

Speech classes have been offered at Grossmont College since the college first opened its doors in 1961, and the Speech department was created when the college began officially forming departments three years later. The name of the department evolved over the years from the Speech department to Speech Communication and finally to its current name, the Communication department, a change that was adopted in 2001.

Throughout the years the department has been on the leading edge of curriculum development. We were the first department in the area to offer courses in interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, and interracial communication. One of the most widely used textbooks for interpersonal communication courses was developed by faculty members and authors Ron Adler and Neil Towne, using the course outline that our department had developed. This textbook, *Looking Out/Looking In*, is now in its 16th edition and has been used by well over a million readers. We have continued our history of innovation in the discipline with the creation of a new course, Comm 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness, which was approved by the Governing Board in 2018.

The department now offers five courses in a fully online format. COMM 124 Intercultural Communication and COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication were first offered in an online format in Fall 2008 and Fall of 2009, respectively. Comm 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness has been offered in an online format since Fall 2018, as noted above. COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication was first offered in a fully online format in Spring of 2022, and COMM 145 Argumentation is being offered in a fully online format for the first time in Fall 2022. We have historically contributed to the general education of all Grossmont College graduates, as well as students transferring to a variety of universities, including the CSU, by offering two courses that meet the Oral Communication GE requirement: Comm 120 Interpersonal Communication and Comm 122 Public Speaking. The inclusion of these courses in GE is a recognition of how crucial it is for individuals to be able to communicate effectively in face-to-face interaction and in public discourse in order to succeed in life.

Prior to our last program review, we were put on notice by CSU that they would stop accepting Comm 120 Interpersonal Communication to meet the Oral Communication GE requirement,

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because it was felt that there wasn't a strong enough student presentation component in this course. We successfully revised the course outline to retain CSU transferability to meet the Oral Communication GE requirement by including rhetorical theory and by specifying that the course included student presentations (something that had been true in practice for most instructors teaching the course, even though it wasn't specified in the course outline). The course was approved once again by CSU to meet the Oral Communication requirement when we updated course outlines in We are especially proud of our success in maintain this course as CSU transferable for Oral Communication, as we believe that having two distinct courses to meet the Oral Communication requirement gives students more choice in developing their course of study. Indeed, this class has become the preferred choice of most students for completing their Oral Communication requirement.

A significant development regarding the Communication degree occurred prior to our last program review. A statewide initiative created a new pathway for students seeking transfer from the California Community College system to the CSU system. Initially referred to as A.A.T. and A.S.T. degrees, and now referred to as the Associate Degree for Transfer, this pathway allows students to complete their community college degrees in a more focused and streamlined manner; moreover, it guarantees their admission to the CSU system. The Communication department was one of the first at Grossmont College to develop an A.D.T. degree, with the first students to receive the degree graduating in the 2013-2014 academic year. We continue to offer the A.A. in Communication, as well.

The department has a history of contributing to the college at large and to the community as a whole, largely through its Speech and Debate (Forensics) program. The Speech and Debate Team was instrumental in gaining favorable publicity for the college when the college was founded. The team has had continued success over the years, garnering numerous awards for Grossmont College, including a First Place team award at the 1996 Nationals Tournament. Roxanne Tuscany, director of the program, was awarded the prestigious Jack Howe award in 2000 by the Pacific Southwest Collegiate Forensics Association in acknowledgement of her leadership and service to the Forensics community in our region, and she was recognized by Grossmont for her contributions to the college and her dedication to her students by being designated as Distinguished Faculty member in 2009. In 2007, the team began to compete internationally by going to China where the team finished in 5th place in a world debate competition. The team has continued to travel internationally: in 2008, at the International Forensic Tournament in London, England; and, to China in 2010 and 2013. The team has also hosted visiting debaters from China, most recently in 2017, holding debates between members of the Chinese debate team and members of our own team for the entire campus community to observe. This is just one example of the team's involvement in events that are intended to stimulate campus-wide engagement; other examples include readers theatre presentations as part of the English department's Banned Books Celebration, and as part of Constitution Week.

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The Speech & Debate team has hosted an annual Griffin Speech & Debate Tournament on campus, hosting between 15-25 colleges and Universities each fall semester, which brings recognition and also helps fund the program through registration. This year was the 30th Anniversary of this tournament. The team also presents a Showcase each Spring semester, encouraging Communication students, community members to attend. Students on the team go to Argumentation and Oral Interpretation classes to give sample debates and performances. This past fall, one of our Speech and Debate students presented a speech for the opening of the Classified Staff's retreat. The team has also hosted high school competitions on campus, which helps to recruit students to Grossmont. Most recently we hosted a tournament in 2018.

At the Phi Rho Pi National Tournament in 2018, Professor Roxanne Tuscany was honored with a Service Award for her 30 years of service to the organization as Director, Coach, and Judge. In the years since our last review the team consistently increased its enrollment, maintaining approximately 17 team members until the COVID pandemic. Despite COVID, we were able to continue competing across the nation on Zoom. The classes were able to be coached online and we were able to continue hosting our Griffin Tournament online.

In 2020, we were able to achieve a longstanding goal of the department to add a second full-time coach to our faculty ranks with the hiring of Michael McHan, who has taken on the position as assistant coach. Michael's position will provide continuity for the team as Roxanne approaches retirement, ensuring that we will not have a gap in students' opportunities to participate in this activity. Moreover, we now have the opportunity to build the team even further, but we need to re-evaluate the LED for the course to reflect the time that is required of our new Speech and Debate coach.

Reflecting trends in enrollment in the college as a whole, the size of our faculty contingent has shifted over the years. The department initially had two members, and ultimately reached a high of ten full-time instructors in the 1990s. Our adjunct faculty ranks have fluctuated considerably, from a high of over twenty to our current complement of fourteen. For many years, we had seven full-time instructors, and we expanded to eight with the hiring of Michael McHan. There was a gap of fourteen years between the hiring of our last new full-time member, Dr. Jade Solan, and the hiring of Michael McHan. Tragically, we lost Dr. Jade Solan to cancer in September of this year, and it is our desire to return to at least eight full-time faculty members by adding a full-time instructor who can focus on COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication, as Dr. Solan did, and who can also assume responsibility for COMM 144 Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity, a class that Dr. Solan was originally hired to teach – a class she developed and championed with great rigor and sense of purpose.

The pandemic lock-downs that began in March of 2020 were especially challenging for our department to navigate. Most of our courses include student presentation components, and the Zoom environment is not ideal for presentation-based courses. In the 2020-2021 academic year, we decided that we could not offer COMM 135 Readers Theatre or COMM 144 Communication

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Studies: Race and Ethnicity – the former because we could not envision a way to engage in group performance on Zoom, and the latter because it was felt that the challenging subject matter required live engagement (there were also significant concerns about the possibility of that course being targeted for attack by Zoom bombers in particularly harmful ways). We were able to bring both of those courses back on campus in 2021-2022. In our other courses, we were able to find ways to make our curriculum work in the Emergency Remote Teaching mode in most cases, and we expanded asynchronous online offerings of COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication. As noted above, in the wake of the pandemic we also began offering COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication and COMM 145 Argumentation as fully online classes for the first time. Fall 2022 has seen the first substantial return to on-campus instruction for our department since Spring of 2020, and our on-campus students and instructors are thriving.

The deep COVID semesters of Spring 2020 through Fall 2021 also presented challenges for department cohesion, and we feel we navigated those challenges reasonably well. When Covid began, then-chair Joel Castellaw initiated Zoom meetings for faculty to share with each other on a weekly or monthly basis. Department Co-Chairs Roxanne and Victoria continued these meetings throughout Covid. The department met on a casual basis to discuss problems or frustrations as well as successes. This included both part-time and full-time faculty and it created a collegial atmosphere that enhanced the department experience for all who participated.

Throughout this self-study, we have been struck by the before-COVID and after-COVID experience. As you will see when you read various sections of this self-study, especially the sections that focus on data analysis, we lean rather heavily into the Spring 2022 numbers (and the Fall 2022 numbers where available). This emphasis is a result of us having the strong sense that things will never be the same as they were in the “before-times,” and that the deep COVID semesters are an anomaly from which few conclusions can be drawn. Only starting in Spring 2022 do we have any sense that we might be experiencing what the “new normal” is going to be like, which is why we have emphasized Spring 2022 so strongly in this self-study.

To conclude this section on our department history, we would like to look back to an accomplishment we drew attention to in our last self-study, and to share how we have built on that accomplishment. In 2015 the department engaged in the development of a Vision and Mission statement to focus our own efforts as a collegial community and to communicate out to the public about who we are and what we do. The Vision and Mission statement is the landing page for the link to our department on the college’s website.

Our Vision: Understanding each other through the tradition of human communication and dialogue.

Our Mission: The Communication Department at Grossmont College is a place where teaching excellence, student learning, and personal growth are priorities. We value and model the open exchange of ideas, respect for all persons, and the free expression of multiple points of view. We aim toward the greatest success in communication interactions

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within all personal, professional, and civic relationships, including those across and between cultures.

Building on these ideals, in 2021 we developed an Equity Statement for the department to complement our Vision and Mission. Our Equity Statement is:

Communication Department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

We acknowledge structural racism in our institutions and society and are actively engaged in an on-going learning process about discriminatory practices in fields of communication and academia.

We are aware that when social realities of unjust racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination occur, communication is necessarily involved. We also understand that communication is necessarily involved in finding ways to repair and transform the ongoing dilemmas of racial and ethnic injustice. Courses in the Communication Department address many topics relevant to concerns involving racial and ethnic inclusion, equity, and justice.

We seek to make tangible change that supports all members of the Grossmont community through student learning, research, creative work, and professional development.

We strive to build understanding, human connection, acts of compassion, and respect and dignity for those from all backgrounds, without discrimination or prejudice. We will lead by example and model the change we hope to see in current and future generations of students. Please join us. We welcome you to the Communication department at Grossmont College.

1.2 Your last program review contains the most recent Academic Program Review Committee Recommendations for the program. Describe changes that have been made in the program in response to recommendations from the last review including any activity proposals funded and what the results were. (Be sure to use the committee recommendations and not your own). Include the recommendations from the last program review in this section.

The recommendations we received from the Program Review Committee on our last cycle in 2017 were:

1. Improve your focus on SLOs. Suggestions include:
 - o Develop a strategy for ensuring consistent and ongoing dialogue in the department about SLOs (section 3.2).
 - o Work with the campus SLO coordinator and seek professional development on developing more meaningful assessments, such as those that combine indirect and direct measures. Direct measures would be your typical quantifiable test results whereas indirect measures would be student reflections on their learning, for example.
2. Work with the campus DE coordinator and/or seek other professional development opportunities to explore retention strategies for courses offered online (COM 124) - (section 2.5).
3. Develop & implement strategies to enhance retention & success of disproportionately impacted groups See goals and targets in equity plan (section 5.4)

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4. Work with your Dean to discuss strategies for requesting an additional FT hire [second coach for Speech and Debate Team, etc.] - (section 8.6.2).

Recommendation #1 regarding SLOs has been addressed through more consistent and active dialogue in department meetings regarding SLOs and the use of improved measures. Roxanne Tuscany has taken on the lead role in guiding our SLO efforts, attending multiple meetings with the campus SLO coordinator and attending professional development meetings to improve our SLO assessments. For more detail, see Section 3 of this report.

Recommendation #2 regarding retention strategies for COMM 124 Intercultural Communication has been addressed by allowing ample time for students to complete assignments, providing assignment rubrics, providing students with frequent reminders about assignments, creation of engaging assignments, and providing course content in multiple modalities, including readings, audio and video lectures, outlines, and incorporation of video content. Retention has gone up from a low of 69% in Spring of 2019 to retention above 85% in each semester since Spring 2020, and retention at or above 95% in Fall of 2021 and Spring of 2022.

Recommendation #3 regarding enhancing retention & success of disproportionately impacted groups was addressed initially through the department's participation in the 12 Gateway Initiative. Candidly, we must report that this initiative was not fully embraced by our faculty at first (with African-American instructors being particularly concerned that African-American students were being singled out). The strategy that seemed to take hold the most in the department in the initial years after our last program review was the adoption of Transparent Assignment Design as a global strategy to improve student retention and success.

Like the rest of the campus community and many in the state and the nation, we began a more urgent and focused effort toward equity following the murder of George Floyd in 2020. We engaged in robust discussions about equity and developed an equity statement for our department. We added a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion to course outlines, sought more inclusive texts for our courses, and added an equity focus to our SLOs. Many faculty engaged individually and on behalf of the department and the college as a whole in efforts such as Guided Pathways, Umoja training, and the President's Task Force on Anti-Racism. Our disaggregated success and retention numbers for disproportionately impacted groups are slightly better than those of the college as a whole, but like the college as a whole, we need to continue to strive for more improvement in this area.

Recommendation #4 regarding requesting an additional full-time hire to serve as a second coach of the Speech and Debate Team was addressed by persistently submitting a Faculty Staffing Request annually, and as noted above, we were ultimately successful in receiving approval for our request and hiring a new full-time instructor as a second coach for Speech and Debate.

Please attach your Program Review Committee Recommendations here.

[President Commendations and Recommendations Communication Spring 53117.pdf](#)

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SECTION 2 - CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

2.1 Describe how your course offerings have changed since the last program review. List any new articulation agreements, any added or deleted courses, and state why. Include new degrees and certificates. In Spring of 2018 the course outline for COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness was approved by the Governing Board, and we began offering the course in Spring of 2019. This course was developed by Professor Tina Perez through a sabbatical project. While the Health Communication focus has been part of the Communication discipline for well over a decade, ours is the first community college course that we know of that focuses on the Health Communication sub-discipline. The course was added to help introduce our transfer students to this area of specialization, which has become a popular area of emphasis in the Communication department at SDSU. The course also benefits Grossmont College's many Allied Health and Nursing students, who take the course to be better prepared to interact with patients and with other healthcare professionals. Here is the catalog description of this course:

This introductory course provides students the opportunity to study and to apply principles and practices of health communication in a variety of contexts. Students will explore ways in which we communicate about health, cope with health-related problems, and influence one another's health-related behaviors. Specifically, topics cover provider-patient interaction, health and identity, the role of culture in health, health literacy, health in the work place, support networks, empathy, listening, and health campaigns. This course benefits all students interested in communication studies. The overall goal for this course is to prepare students to communicate effectively in their roles as a health citizens, patients, personal and professional caregivers or healthcare providers.

COMM 126 has run consistently each semester since its inception, and it continues to attract a significant number of students from our Allied Health and Nursing programs., as well as Communication major interested in exploring this sub-specialty within the Communication discipline.

There have been significant changes to teaching modalities in our course offerings necessitated at first by the COVID pandemic, and now being seen as a feature of the "new normal." Beginning with the revised scheduling for Fall 2020 in the wake of the pandemic, everything in our department shifted online, mostly in Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) format. Starting in Fall 2021, we began inching our way back on campus, and we now have a combination of asynchronous online and face-to-face classes. The 2022-2023 academic year is an experimental year of scheduling, to see if we can bring back more of our face-to-face students. In an effort to accommodate students who want the on-campus experience, the college has allowed us to retain some face-to-face sections with lower enrollments, and that resulted in some very small class sizes in several courses. Nonetheless, we are encouraged, because students who have come back to campus are clearly thriving with the return to face-to-face classes. We have also seen an increase in demand for online

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sections for all of our classes that are being offered online. Where we have a combination of online and face-to-face classes for a given course, online classes are consistently filling first.

With the assistance of Maria Dee Aceves, we are currently working on revising the AA-T in Communication in line with an update to the statewide template for this AA-T.

2.2 Explain how diversity, equity, and inclusion is infused in the curriculum, course outlines of record, degrees and certificates. Explain how DEI within your curriculum supports student success.

Faculty work diligently to ensure that examples used in the classroom include representation of scholars and/or communicators from a variety of backgrounds in terms of the following characteristics: racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, education, language, and veteran status. We pay special attention when selecting sample presentations to show to students in our courses to ensure that the speakers in these sample presentations come from a broad range of backgrounds, including backgrounds shared by our students.

Our course outlines consistently emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Here are some examples:

- The catalog description for COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication references cultural influences as an area students must understand in order to improve interpersonal communication and communication skills. The course content for this course includes, “The effects of communication on perceptions and personal identities, including but not limited to those involving diverse cultural, racial or ethnic identities.” One of the SLOs for this course states that, “The student will distinguish between ineffective and effective listening skills with diverse people in various interpersonal interactions.”
- The catalog description for COMM 122 Public Speaking states that, “Special attention will be given to learning how to prepare, organize and deliver a speech to a diverse audience.” The course objectives state that the student will, “Engage in communication to effectively navigate various worldviews.”
- The catalog description for COMM 124 Intercultural Communication states that the subject of the course is, “the study of face-to-face communication between people from different cultural backgrounds, including those reflecting national or ethnic diversity.” The course objectives include that the student will, “Analyze and describe how culture influences communication,” and, “Compare and contrast one’s own culture and communication style with those from other cultures.” The course content for this course includes, “Cultural value patterns and their influence on communication;” “Biases, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination;” and, “Empathy in bridging and managing differences in intercultural interactions.” Note that for this course in particular, the examples provided are just a representative subset. Nearly all course objectives and aspects of the course content for this course infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into the course. The SLO for this course is, “Analyze interaction between culturally dissimilar individuals, applying concepts of intercultural communication.”

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- The catalog description for COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness includes, “Students will explore ... , the role of culture in health, health literacy, health in the work place, support networks, empathy, listening, and health campaigns.” The course content for this course includes, “culture and health.”
- The catalog description for COMM 135 Oral Interpretation of Literature includes practice in oral interpretation in “newer and more diverse modes of expression such as spoken word and other cultural forms of artistic expression.” The course content includes, “Evolution of diverse modes of expression such as spoken word and other cultural forms of artistic expression.”
- The catalog description for COMM 144: Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity reads: “This course provides both a theoretical and a practical exploration of communication, race, and ethnicity in the general context of U.S. culture. Attention is given to race and ethnicity in popular culture and to how contemporary and historical constructions of race and ethnicity influence everyday communication interactions. Emphasis is on developing communication competence in situations where perceived racial or ethnic difference factors into successful communication outcomes.” All of the course objects and all aspects of the course content for this course directly reference race and/or ethnicity. The SLOs for this course are, “a. Assess stages of majority and minority racial identity development displayed in specific case studies, and, b. Interpret the historical and contemporary influences of systems of racial categorization on people living in the U.S.”

Through our use of scholars and examples reflecting the broad diversity of our students, and by infusing DEI throughout our curriculum, we support student success by making it possible for our students to see themselves in our subject matter, fostering identification and inclusion for all students.

2.3 Faculty need to abide by Title 5 and ACCJC standards as directed by Ed Code to validate the content of courses and/or programs. Describe how your department reviews the courses (in relation to the program, if applicable) to ensure you are maintaining currency within your discipline.

During the period since our last program review, we reviewed and updated almost all course outlines in the department (thirteen out of the sixteen outlines in the department). For those courses taught by more than one instructor, a task force of subject-matter experts worked together to review, discuss, and revise, and their findings and recommendations were shared with the full department prior to a final vote on the modification. For those courses typically taught by only one instructor, that solo subject-matter expert reviewed and revised the outline before sharing and explaining changes with the full department prior to the final vote on the modification. Whether done in groups or by one individual, the process always includes a reflection on current trends in the field, both in terms of course content and in terms of pedagogy. Members of the department regularly attend professional conferences within the discipline, and when we work on course outline updates we reflect on and include new developments and current trends that we have been exposed to through conference attendance.

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2.4 Per the Board approval dates which outlines are out of date? Describe the plan and include the dates by which your department will submit to Curriculum Committee. (Please refer to the Program & Course Approval Handbook to the right)

The only two outlines in the department that are currently out of date are COMM 128 Global Communication and COMM 130 Fundamentals of Human Communication.

The department stopped offering COMM 128 Global Communication, which was essentially an online version of COMM 124 Intercultural Communication, many years ago, when we began offering COMM 124 itself as an online course. COMM 128 should be deleted. We will submit this course for deletion during the next curriculum cycle.

The department has never offered COMM 130 Fundamentals of Human Communication. This course was developed when we were under threat of losing COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication as an approved course to meet CSU transfer GE requirements for Oral Communication. COMM 130 was developed as a failsafe, to be able to have another alternative besides COMM 122 Public Speaking to offer students in meeting their Oral Communication GE requirement in the event that we were unsuccessful in retaining approval for COMM 120 to meet this requirement. We were ultimately successful in retaining the Oral Communication GE approval for COMM 120, so we never ended up with any need to offer COMM 130. Prior to the next curriculum cycle, we need to assess whether COMM 130 meets any needs for our students. If it does, we should update the outline and consider offering the course. If it does not, we should consider deleting the course.

2.5 How are faculty integrating current issues in course content? Consider environmental, societal, ethical, political, technological, and/or other issues when answering this question. Please provide specific examples.

Current issues are at the core of many of our courses, most notably COMM 122 Public Speaking, COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking, COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, COMM 145 Argumentation, and COMM 238/239/240/241 Speech and Debate Competition I/II/III/IV. In all of these courses, students undertake major assignments in which they explore current topics of social significance, creating presentations, projects, arguments, and debates about those topics. Instructors infuse examples from current issues throughout the curriculum of these courses in order to illustrate and demonstrate assignments for students. Here are some of the topics our instructors students have explored recently in these courses:

- New developments and initiatives in space exploration
- The impact of human activity on climate change, and efforts to confront the global climate crisis
- The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the international response to this crisis
- Each of the major U.S. elections that has transpired since our last program review
- The growth and influence of the Right in American politics
- The growth and influence of the Progressive movement in American politics
- Immigration policy in the United States and its consequences

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- The various economic cycles that have impacted the country and the international community throughout the period since our last program review
- The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on health, society, culture, education, international relations, and politics
- The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* and the impact of this decision on reproductive health rights and access nationwide and in the various states
- Criminal justice reform
- Social justice movements focused on the BIPOC community
- Social justice movements focused on the LGBTQ+ community
- Public policy as it relates to drugs and addiction
- Public policy as it relates to mental health
- Gun control
- Gun rights advocacy
- Religious liberty
- Information technology and its social and economic benefits and consequences
- Social media and its influence on society
- Youth activists and their influence on various public policy debates

In other courses in the department, current issues also become part of the class discussion and course assignments in other, more subtle (but no less meaningful) ways.

In COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication, instructors include current research about the impacts of social media on relationships. The role of gender in interpersonal communication is explored, and this discussion has been impacted greatly by recent societal shifts in our understanding and experience of gender. As these topics arise in class discussion, they are incorporated by our students in the reflective writing that is often assigned in this course.

In COMM 124 Intercultural Communication and COMM 144 Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity, current social justice activism focusing on culture, race, and ethnicity become a natural part of the discussion, providing examples to illustrate key course content, and being referenced by students in the reflective writing that is also part of these courses. In the online version of COMM 124 students are provided weekly videos concerning social, ethical, political, and cultural topics, and asked to discuss implications relevant to intercultural communication.

In COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness, current issues related to health and wellbeing are naturally infused in the discussion. This has been especially the case since March of 2020 with the COVID pandemic, the consequences of which have been a major focus of this course over the past two years.

In COMM 135 Oral Interpretation of Literature and in COMM 136 Readers Theatre, students are encouraged to use literature that has social significance for their performance assignments, and

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many of the issues enumerated above in the list of topics discussed recently in other courses have also been explored through literature in COMM 135 and COMM 136.

2.6 How do you maintain dialogue within your department about curriculum and assessment? What strategies do you have in-place that ensure consistency in grading in multiple sections and across semesters (e.g., mastery level assessment, writing rubrics, and departmental determination of core areas which must be taught)? Consider department practices, academic standards, curricular expectations, SLO outcomes, teaching tools, and course outlines.

The department has determined core areas that must be taught. These are clearly delineated in course outlines. Faculty also engage in dialogue about the various ways in which they cover these core areas and means of evaluation. Further, discussions surrounding the implementation and measurement of course SLOs has resulted in consistency in grading of areas related to the SLOs.

2.7 Referring to the Grade Distribution Summary graphs (in the reading pane to the right) comment on how your department patterns relate to the college and division.

The Grade Distribution patterns for the Communication department track very closely to the patterns for the college as a whole. For example, the department numbers for Spring 2022 for the department are 37% A, 21% B, 12% C, 4% D, and 11% F. The college-wide numbers for Spring 2022 are 37% A, 20% B, 10% C, 3% D, and 11% F. This close match between the department's numbers and the college-wide numbers is consistent across the data set. We also see a marked increase in A grades and a decrease in F grades for both the college-wide numbers and the Communication department numbers in Spring of 2020, and a slow and steady movement over the subsequent semesters toward a distribution more similar to the distribution at the start of the data set. This increase in A grades and decline in F grades in Spring 2020 is unquestionably a consequence of the college encouraging the departments during the initial pandemic semester to be more forgiving toward students that semester, as everyone was under extreme stress during the second half of the semester.

The Grade distributions show that the Arts, Languages, and Communication Division as a whole is more generous with A grades and gives a smaller percentage of F grades than either the Communication department or the college as a whole. In the ALC division, the Spring 2022 grade distribution was 42% A, 20% B, 10% C, 3% D, and 8% F. This pattern for the ALC division as a whole is also consistent throughout the data set. The ALC division may have this distribution because the Arts programs, including both the Visual Arts and Performing Arts programs, may self-select for students who have a higher level of excellence coming into the courses than students in other programs, including the Communication program.

2.8 For course-by-course graphs, provide an explanation for any courses with different grade/success patterns than others. This may relate to major's courses vs GE, first-year vs second-year or basic skills vs transfer.

Looking at the course-by-course graphs, COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication and COMM 122 Public Speaking track very closely to the department-wide numbers, a result that is not at all surprising since the offerings in these two courses make up the overwhelming total number of

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sections in the department; these two GE courses are most influential on the department-wide numbers.

COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking generally has a higher percentage of A and B grades than other courses in the department, with the combined A and B grades usually accounting for more than 75% of the total grade distribution in the course. This course self-selects for Communication majors in their final year of study, so students are particularly well-equipped to succeed in this course and are highly motivated to do well so that they can complete their program of study.

COMM 124 Intercultural Communication generally has a higher percentage of A grades than the department as a whole – as high as 65% A grades in Spring 2020, with 39% A Grades in Spring 2022. This is also a course that attracts a higher percentage of Communication majors who may be better equipped and more motivated to succeed. There is an unusually high percentage of F grades, though, in Spring of 2022 at 27%. Since this is an anomalous result, we can't draw any firm conclusions about the reason. This was the first semester that the class was back on campus since the start of the pandemic, and the low success rate was in the on-campus section, so it may be that some on-campus students simply weren't ready for the experience of being back in face-to-face learning.

COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health and Wellness generally has a lower percentage of A grades than the department as a whole, varying from 30% A grades in Spring 2019 to as low as 6% A grades in Spring 2020. There is a higher percentage of "Other" grades in this course than we see in the department as a whole – as high as 42% in Fall of 2020. Since the "Other" category includes grades of "Pass" for students exercising the Pass/No Pass option, it's clear that a higher percentage of students take this class as Pass/No Pass than we see in other courses in the department. Moreover, many of those students receiving a grade of Pass could have earned A grades if they had taken the course for a grade, further complicating the interpretation of the percentage of A grades in this course.

COMM 135 Oral Interpretation and COMM 136 Readers Theatre show similar patterns of higher than average A grades and B grades than the department as a whole, with the combined A and B grades usually accounting for over 75% of total grades. As with COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking, this is probably due to the fact that these courses self-select for Communication majors in their final year of study, with strong tools and high motivation for success.

COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, COMM 144 Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity, and COMM 145 Argumentation all have a higher distribution of A and B grades than the department as a whole, though typically not as high as some of the other courses mentioned so far in this section (usually the combined A and B grades in these courses are well above 50%, but not usually higher than 75%). Like the other courses mentioned so far with higher than department average A and B grade distributions, these courses typically self-select for Communication majors who are well equipped for success and motivated to succeed. These courses also do have a higher level of difficulty in terms of course content, which probably

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accounts for why the combined A and B grades don't typically rise above the 75% mark seen for some other courses analyzed above.

COMM 238/239/240/241 Speech and Debate Competition I/II/III/IV have very high percentages of students who receive A grades (as high as 100% in Spring 2020). The grading in these courses is completely different from the grading in all other courses in the department. This course prepares students to participate in Speech and Debate competition. It would be antithetical to fairness to tie grades to competitive success. Students in this course work with faculty to craft individual grading contracts specifying what events the students will work on, how many tournaments they will attend, and what their own goals are. As long as students fulfill their contracts and meet all of their goals, they are successful in terms of course grades. Since students are highly motivated and are working toward self-determined goals, students are highly successful in these courses.

2.9 Please describe how the department handles any unusual grading patterns. If you have any information that allows calibration of your grading data to external standards (performance of your students on standardized tests or licensing exams, transfer and/or employment success) please provide those to us and explain the connection.

The department has not observed any unusual grading patterns that we see reasons to address. The grade distribution patterns noted above in section 2.8 seem reasonable in light of the analysis provided in that section. We have no information that allows calibration of our grading data to external standards.

2.10 If applicable, provide a comparison of the retention and success rates of distance education (online) sections (including hybrid) and face-to-face sections. What are your department policies on course delivery methods? Is there anything in the data that would prompt your department to make changes?

Overall retention and success rates are somewhat lower in online courses than in on-campus courses in the Communication department. For example, in Fall of 2018 retention rates were 72% and success rates were 60% in online classes, while retention rates were 87% and success rates were 74% in on-campus classes. In Spring of 2022 retention rates were 83% and success rates were 67% in online classes, while retention rates were 89% and success rates were 76% in on-campus classes.

For the college as a whole, in Fall of 2018 retention rates were 79% and success rates were 62% in online classes, while retention rates were 86% and success rates were 72% in on-campus classes. In Spring of 2022 retention rates were 83% and success rates were 67% in online classes, while retention rates were 88% and success rates were 77% in on-campus classes.

So, in Fall of 2018, the department was somewhat behind the college as a whole in terms of retention and success in online courses, but by Spring of 2022 both the department and the college improved in retention and success for online courses, with our department numbers perfectly matching the college's numbers.

While there are still disparities for both the college and the department in retention and success between online and on-campus courses, our numbers have improved over the years studied, almost certainly because of the increased support provided for faculty in terms of training for

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teaching online courses and because of the increased level of student experience and proficiency in taking such courses.

2.11 If applicable, include the list of courses that have been formally articulated with high schools. Describe any articulation and/or curricular collaboration efforts with K-12 schools. Have your high school articulations agreements transitioned to “credit for prior learning” per the Title V changes? (Contact the Dean of CTE if you have questions).

Not applicable.

2.12 Please describe how the program ensures that articulations are current. Identify any areas concern or additional needs that your department has about articulation with four-year institutions.

We rely on the college’s curriculum committee chair and the articulation officer to keep us informed about any changes in requirements at four-year universities and to provide us with guidance about how to keep our courses and degrees current. When we update course outlines, we consult the CSU and UC Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers to ensure that we maintain GE transferability for our courses.

SECTION 3 – STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

3.1 Over the course of the last Program Review cycle, how has your department used the results of course level (referred to as SLOs or CSLOs) and Program level (PSLOs) learning outcomes assessments? Please respond to both prompts below.

3.1a: How have you used the results of CSLO assessments to inform adjustments in courses? How have you assessed (or how will you assess) the success of these adjustments?

Subsequent to our last program review, we continued to assess CSLOs on a regular cycle according to a six-year plan. We consistently found that students were meeting our CSLOs, so we did not make adjustments in courses that were informed by assessments.

As part of our work in support of the recent Accreditation cycle, we had more in-depth discussions about our SLOs, especially for our two core courses – COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication and COMM 122 Public Speaking. The outcome of those discussions was to make significant changes to our SLOs for these two courses. Those changes to the SLOs resulted in improvements to the course outlines, especially in terms of improvements to the equity focus of those outlines and a search for textbooks with a better equity focus and more diverse examples. We assessed our new COMM 120 SLOs in Spring of 2022, and the analysis of the assessment revealed that students are meeting the SLOs, so we did not feel that any additional adjustments to the course was needed. We are currently collecting data on SLO assessments for COMM 122 Public Speaking, and we will discuss the results of those assessments and implement changes if needed based on those assessments in Spring 2023.

We also assessed the SLO for COMM 136 Readers Theatre in Spring of 2022, and the analysis revealed that one aspect of the SLO was not being met. The SLO is, “Construct Readers Theatre scripts from existing selections of literature by utilizing principles of integrity to the author’s intent and balance among readers.” Students successfully constructed scripts utilizing principles of balance among readers, but there wasn’t a demonstrated focus on integrity to the author’s intent. This course is taught once a year in Spring semesters, so the next opportunity to make

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adjustments to the course will by Spring 2023. The instructor who teaches the course intends to bring in new material related to the issue of author's intent, to add more specific guidance about that principle to assignment instructions, and to add author's intent to the rubric for relevant assignments.

3.1b: How have you used the results of PSLO assessments to inform adjustments to degree and/or certificate programs? How have you assessed (or how will you assess) the success of these adjustments?

We did our first PSLO assessment in Fall of 2021, a PSLO assessment for COMM 122 Public Speaking and COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking, and the results affirmed that students are meeting the PSLOs, so there were no resulting adjustments to our degree program.

3.2 What general trends or patterns do you see as you review your department's analysis of its SLO and PSLO assessments since your last program review? (NOTE: You may want to provide a synthesis of responses to question 3.3 in your Annual Unit Plans.)

As noted above, the main trend that we have seen is that students generally meet our SLOs, so our SLO work doesn't generally result in changes. However, the discussions we had about COMM 120 and COMM 122 SLOs did lead to changes to the course outlines and textbook selections. While not a trend, the case of COMM 136 cited above will lead to changes to course materials, assignment details, and assignment rubrics.

3.3 What implications do these results have for your curriculum, both at the course and program level? What support (time, professional development, curriculum approval process, etc.) will you need in order to respond to these implications?

The implications for COMM 120 and COMM 122 SLO changes noted above were that we submitted revised outlines through curriculum, though we were scheduled to do that anyway. The changes to the course outlines for these courses that resulted from the changes to SLOs impact instructor course preparation, but course prep is a regular part of instructors' duties, so we don't see a need for additional support in this area.

3.4 What changes has your department made to its SLO and PSLO assessment cycles (aka the 6-year plan) (e.g., changes in timing of assessments to accommodate curricular changes, addition/deletion/revision of SLOs/PSLOs, intentional delay or acceleration of the collection of assessment results, etc.)?

As a charge from Accreditation, our department checked if our faculty all had our current SLO's in their fall 2020 syllabus. We discovered that the faculty was not in compliance. We discovered that some had a partial SLO or they had put in their own SLO's. We have now updated all our Comm 122 and Comm 120 SLO's and all our faculty are prominently including Grossmont's SLO's in their syllabi.

During this time we also realized that we were only assessing one SLO of 5 for Comm 120, every 6 years or so. Roxanne Tuscany attended the SLO workshops provided by the Accreditation team where she learned that we should probably be assessing these more often, possibly every 3 years and that our new 3 Comm 122 SLO's should be assessed together at the same time.

We have now created a new time line, which is every 3 years for all of our courses. (See attached files)

Fall 2021 the department revised Comm 120 and Comm 122 SLO's. The department spent several face to face meetings with part-time and full-time faculty reducing our SLO's from 5 to 3 for Comm

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122 and Comm 120. The discussions proved to be enlightening. We did the work that SLO's are intended for, and that was that we had the opportunity to actually share our current practices in our classes and come to some conclusions as to what we all agreed was the ultimate goal for each of our courses. We now have to continue the assessment work. Joan Ahrens asked Roxanne Tuscani to share this information in one of the Accreditation Presentations. Rather than just doing "compliance" work, we had the opportunity to have a productive dialogue about our courses and what we wanted for our students to know by the end of each course.

During the pandemic years, COMM 144 Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity, was not offered, so we got off-cycle on this course. We will be assessing this course in Spring 2023.

Other changes made are reflected in the current 6-year plan attached.

3.5 Please attach your assessment schedule from your Department Documents - Program Review folder.
[COMM SLO assessment schedule.docx](#)

3.6 What do the results of your SLO work tell you about the progress you made toward your program goals? How will they inform your teaching moving forward?

The results that consistently affirm that students are meeting our SLOs tell us that we're meeting our goals with respect to SLOs. The improvements made to COMM 120 and COMM 122 outlines through our discussion of SLOs help us to focus and further commit to equity goals that were already in place. The improvement intended for COMM 136 in Spring 2023 is illustrative of how SLO work can inform our teaching moving forward, by identifying key areas where we need to improve course materials, assignment details, and rubrics.

SECTION 4 - FACILITIES AND SCHEDULING

4.1 List the type of facility spaces your department/program utilizes for instruction. This can include on-campus, off-campus, and virtual.

We use classrooms with movable seating, media technology, recording technology, and, in some cases, raised platforms at the front of the room. While it may seem at first glance that regular classrooms generally meet our needs, we have found that this is not always the case. In particular, because of the importance of small-group activities and in-the-round discussions to the work that we do with our students, we have generally found classrooms that are long and narrow to be less accommodating to our teaching style than classrooms that are closer to being a perfect square. Our Speech and Debate students require a squad room that is used as a combination practice room, team meeting room, and research lab.

We do teach online, so having adequate Learning Management Systems and support for those systems is vital to our students' success.

4.2 Are the spaces listed in 4.1 adequate to meet the program's educational objectives?

No

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If you checked 'yes', please explain how your department/program utilizes facility space so your department can meet its educational objectives. Please provide an explanation of specific facility requirements of your program, and how those requirements are being met.

n/a

If you checked 'no', please explain how your department/program is not meeting its facility space needs to adequately meet its educational objectives. Please provide an explanation of specific facility requirements of your program, and how those requirements are not being met.

Our three dedicated classrooms don't fully meet our scheduling needs. We have offered four or five sections per hour from 8:00am to 5:00pm, so we have frequently needed an additional one or two classrooms, and those that are available aren't generally configured in such a way as to meet our needs. None have the recording equipment that we need (it should be noted that some of our courses emphasize a presentation component more than others do, and we do try to prioritize scheduling in our dedicated classrooms for those courses in which the ability to record students' presentations is most beneficial, but we are not always successful in doing so). Some don't have movable seating. Most are of the long-and-narrow sort, rather than the closer-to-square configuration, and most don't have raised platforms (it should be noted that the raised platform is helpful to some of our courses, but not to all of our courses; those that benefit most from the presence of a raised platform are those that include a significant amount of student presentations).

The need for four or five classrooms per scheduling time block did, of course, diminish during the COVID-impacted semesters. In the first semester we were back on campus, we had to use larger rooms to facilitate social distancing, but those rooms weren't as conducive to our specific teaching styles. Some instructors requested microphones, due to the large room sizes, and student presentations were more challenging at times, due to the distance between the audience and the speakers.

Now that we are significantly building back our on-campus presence, we are already beginning to schedule face-to-face classes in up to four rooms in some scheduling time blocks, and we anticipate continuing to increase face-to-face offerings, foreseeing a time in the near future when we do once again need five classrooms that meet our specific instructional needs at hours of peak student demand.

The three dedicated classrooms that we have in Building 24 are old and in deteriorating condition. A pipe burst in one of the walls, flooding the floor. Ceiling tiles are shedding material in a way that can make it look like it's snowing in the room. The carpets have deep stains that reappear quickly after the carpets are cleaned. In short, our classrooms are dingy and unattractive.

The recording technology in our dedicated classrooms is outdated and not currently being used. Instructors are taking care of recording on an ad hoc basis, mostly through the use of phones. We could be more consistent and equitable in our practices related to recording of presentations if we had current technology that could be used for recording installed in classrooms. We have checked out the set-up that is installed in HyFlex classrooms, and we are not convinced that this is the technology that we need. It seems pretty buggy.

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Ongoing problems with heating in the 200 complex create challenges for us. In the cold months of the 2021-2022 academic year, generators were brought into the complex to assist in providing heat to our buildings. These generators were very noisy, and they also spewed fumes that wafted into our offices and classrooms. This winter, the heating problem was solved without the need for these generators, but we do not know whether this year's fix is sustainable for the future.

The current squad room for the Speech and Debate Team is in a building that is expected to be demolished in the near future, and we do not know what swing space will be available for our Team and the instructors who support the team when the demolition happens.

4.3 What proactive steps have you taken with regards to facility and scheduling to improve the ability of your department to meet the educational objectives of your program and ensure that students can complete their program in a timely manner?

We have participated in a Task Force that has been developing plans for the 200 complex. This Task Force has had several iterations off-and-on for over fifteen years. At one point, the Task Force plans included a new building for Communication to include five classrooms configured to meet our needs, a Speech and Debate squad room, and office space for our faculty. The most recent iteration of the plans, developed in the 2021-2022 Academic Year, had four classrooms configured to meet the needs of our department, as well as a squad room for the Speech and Debate Team and offices for faculty.

The realization of the plans for the 200 complex is still likely several years out, at best. In the meantime, we continue to use classroom space in other parts of campus in order to schedule enough sections to meet our students' needs and enable our students to complete their program in a timely manner, even though those spaces are not optimal for our needs.

It is possible that the demolition of Building 21, where the current Speech and Debate squad room and coaches' offices are housed, will take place before the demolition and replacement of Building 24, where the rest of our faculty offices and dedicated classrooms are housed. There could be a significant lag between the loss of the current Speech and Debate squad room and coaches' offices and the construction of new facilities that will bring the Speech and Debate squad room and coaches' offices into one space alongside the rest of the offices and classrooms that the Communication department uses. We will need to work with the college to ensure that adequate swing space is secured for the Speech and Debate squad room and coaches' offices, whenever Building 21 comes down, as well as for the rest of our faculty offices and dedicated classrooms, whenever Building 24 comes down.

4.4 Identify and explain additional needed technological and equipment resources that could further enhance student learning in the spaces listed in 4.1.

As noted above in our response to 4.2, our recording technology is outdated and no longer in use, and we have yet to identify a replacement system that would meet our needs. We also think that it's worth exploring the use of digital displays to replace projectors and screens to bring the display of presentation aids up to date for faculty when delivering instruction and for students when giving presentations.

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4.5 Are faculty and staff support services meeting your program's needs? Consider the following support services: Information Technology, Business Services, Printing, Bookstore, Maintenance, CAPS (Campus & Parking Services), and any other support services important to your faculty and staff.

The most commonly used staff support services as reported by our faculty are Information Technology, Printing and Duplicating, Maintenance, and the Bookstore.

Faculty had positive things to share about Maintenance and IT, with one respondent reporting that, "Maintenance and IT are huge helpers because there is always something that the classroom needs. One respondent praised Printing and Duplicating as going "above and beyond for the campus!" Regarding Genie Montoya in Business Services and Janet Carter in the ALC Division office, a respondent wrote, "Both are absolutely amazing! Such a pleasure to work with and very helpful. Big shout out!"

The one area of support that the survey results found lacking was Food Services, with one respondent noting that, "On-campus food options are very scarce. I've had a lot of students complain that it is hard to find healthy (or any) food options on campus."

4.6 Are students trying to access your program impacted by the facility spaces listed in 4.1?

Yes

If you checked 'yes', please explain how students are being negatively impacted by unmet facility needs experienced in your department/program. Please provide some specific examples.

Because our recording equipment is outdated and no longer in use and recording of student presentations is being handled on an ad hoc basis, not all students are able to benefit by having presentations recorded. Providing students with opportunities to see their own presentations enables a more complete understanding of instructor feedback on students' areas of strengths and weaknesses. Because use of group work is sometimes limited by classroom configuration, students don't always get the benefit of cooperative learning.

If you checked 'no', please explain how your department/program is actively managing its facility space needs to meet its educational objectives and provide student access to your program. Please provide some specific examples.

n/a

4.7 If applicable, please include any additional information you feel impacts your program/department regarding facilities, scheduling, faculty, and classified staff support services that were not included above. We have a significant concern regarding scheduling related to the way the faculty teaching load is set up for the classes that make up our Speech and Debate team.

In Spring 2020, Dr. Michael McHan was hired as an Assistant Coach for the Speech and Debate team. Ensuring that the Assistant Coach would have an adequate proportion of the total teaching assignment devoted to Speech and Debate was discussed prior to hiring but was not initially implemented when Michael began teaching for us in Fall 2020. Michael began working with the Speech and Debate team in 2021 without the assignment actually being part of his teaching load. Later, in order to provide him with at least a partial assignment related to Speech and Debate, a decision was made to take a .20 portion of the total assignment for the Speech and Debate classes from Head Coach Roxanne Tuscany and include it as part of Michael's teaching assignment. While this solution was not ideal, Roxanne initiated this arrangement so that at least part of Michael's teaching load would be for Speech and Debate.

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Technically, these two instructors are team teaching this class. In a normal team-teaching arrangement, each instructor teaches some class meetings, while the other instructor teaches the remaining class meetings. Roxanne Tuscany and Michael McHan are actually both present and actively teaching at all times during the Speech and Debate classes, as well as during the coaching hours that are part of the lab hours for these courses. They both spend considerable prep time getting ready for the class. They also both travel to tournaments with our students.

The creation of the Assistant Coach position for Speech and Debate was a commitment by the college to provide more opportunities for our students by enhancing our coaching staff. Currently, the instructional load for the Speech and Debate classes is being shared by the Head Coach and the Assistant Coach, with the Head Coach receiving approximately a .40 and the Assistant Coach receiving .20. When the new position was created, however, it was never envisioned that the Head Coach's load would be reduced; the Head Coach is essentially giving up .20 of her customary load for Speech and Debate so that we are at least able to give the Assistant Coach something.

Moreover, it was never envisioned that the Assistant Coach would only receive .20 for Speech and Debate teaching and duties, since the number of semester hours required by the Assistant Coach for the Speech and Debate team far exceeds the correlated workload for a .20 employment.

Considering the necessity of the Assistant Coach for the success of the Speech and Debate team, changes to the total load for the Speech and Debate classes need to be implemented urgently. We believe there should be a total load of 1.0 for Speech and Debate, with the load being split so that the Head Coach receives a .60 assignment, and the Assistant coach receives a .40 assignment for Speech and Debate.

We believe that Athletics may serve as a possible model for how to achieve equitable compensation for our Assistant Coach, and we are interested in examining how the coaching duties and load are set up for our Athletics teams. We also want to examine how load for Speech and Debate is set up and compensated at other colleges with two or more coaches for Speech and Debate. We have learned that the total load for Speech and Debate at Mesa, for example, is 1.40. Mesa has a Head Coach at .60 and two Assistant Coaches at .40 each.

SECTION 5 – STUDENT EQUITY AND SUCCESS

5.1 What are the identifiable patterns with regards to overall trends in enrollments in your department? Explain what is causing these trends (e.g., campus conditions, department practices). Once you have identified and explained your enrollment patterns, then address what your department has done/is doing to address identified issues. Examples of any changes you made to manage enrollment are encouraged.

Enrollment has declined in the Communication department from 2,058 in Fall 2018 to 1,492 in Fall 2022 – a decrease of 28%. Over the same period, enrollment in the college as a whole declined from 49,198 in Fall 2018 to 33,710 in Fall 2022 – a decrease of 31%. Enrollment in the Arts, Languages, and Communication Division declined from 9,105 in Fall 2018 to 6,378 in Fall 2022 – a

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decrease of 30%. The declines in enrollment in the Communication department are part of a college-wide and division-wide trend, driven by a combination of factors including demographic trends, economic trends, and the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on higher education. The Communication department has fared slightly better than either the college as a whole or the division as a whole. It is noteworthy that for all three – the department, the college, and the division – Spring 2022 was the nadir across the data set, and enrollments in Fall 2022 showed improvement. We hope this is the beginning of an upward trend for the department, the college, and the division.

We managed enrollment through this difficult period by endeavoring to schedule as efficiently as possible, and we are proud that our fill rates are consistently higher than those of the division or the college as a whole. We also managed enrollment by adding asynchronous online sections of COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication, COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, and COMM 145 Argumentation to meet student demand. In the recent re-building semesters, in response to high numbers on waitlists for COMM 120, we proactively worked with the division office and the VPAA to add more sections of this course during the enrollment period to capture student demand.

5.2 Examine your enrollment data, disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity. For any of these student groups in your department with enrollment data at lower or higher proportions than college-wide numbers, describe what factors you think are causing these patterns

There are no groups in the data available with lower or higher proportions in the Communication department compared to the college as a whole. This is not surprising, given that the overwhelming number of sections in our department are classes that fulfill a general education requirement that all students must complete in order to matriculate.

5.3 Discuss trends in student success and retention overall in your department and explain these trends (e.g., campus conditions, department practices). Has your department explored the ways that its policies and practices (e.g., scheduling, late adds, grading, office hours, etc.) might inadvertently serve as a barrier to student equity?

Our overall success and retention numbers track very closely to those of the college as a whole. College-wide success numbers hover just above and below 70%. Communication department numbers are slightly higher in the earlier semesters in the data set, averaging about 74% in the first two years in the data set, but they match the collegewide numbers exactly in the final two terms in the data set. Retention rates for the Communication department track very closely to the collegewide numbers throughout the data set, rarely varying from the collegewide numbers by more than one or two percentage points.

We have a long-term practice in the department of scheduling in our department in a way intended to support all students, making sure to schedule courses throughout the day and into the evening, scheduling Friday-only classes, and adding more online classes more recently. We have endeavored at times to accommodate late adds, but our experience is that the college administration strongly discourages this practice. The widespread use of rubrics in the department, and the sharing of rubrics with students, hopefully breaks down barriers to student

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equity. Faculty endeavor to schedule office hours at times convenient to students, and many of our part-time faculty take advantage of the district's program for paid office hours for part-time faculty. As we have transitioned back to on-campus learning, many faculty are making Zoom appointments available to students during office hours to provide more flexibility for students.

5.4 Examine the success and retention data disaggregated by gender, age, and ethnicity. For any groups that have success rates in your department at lower or higher than college-wide describe what factors you think cause those patterns. Provide examples of any changes you made to improve student success/retention, especially for groups that have equity gaps.

Success rates for African American students in the Communication department were 56% in Fall of 2018 and 63% in Fall of 2022. The lowest success rate across the data set was 53% in Fall 2021, and the highest success rate was 65% in Spring of 2019. Success rates were generally higher for African American female-identifying students than for African American male-identifying students, though there was a significant change in this trend in Spring 2022, when success for African American male-identifying students was 77%, compared to 55% for African American female-identifying students.

Retention rates for African American students in the Communication department were 84% in Fall of 2018 and 80% in Fall of 2022. The lowest retention rate across the data set was 69% in Spring of 2020, and the highest retention rate was 84% in both Fall of 2018 and Fall of 2019. Retention rates were generally higher for African-American female identifying students than for African American male-identifying students, though this trend shifted in Spring 2022, when retention for African American male-identifying students was 94%, compared to 72% for African American female-identifying students.

Compared to the college as a whole, success rates for African American students were slightly better in the Communication department in most semesters, including at the end of the data set in Spring 2022, where the department success rate was 63%, compared to the college-wide success rate of 59%. Retention rates for African American students matched very closely in the Communication department as compared to the college as a whole.

There is a greater disparity between success and retention for African American male-identifying students as compared to African American female-identifying students in the Communication department than there is in the college as a whole. In the Communication department, there is as much as a 20% higher success rate for African American female-identifying students as there is for African-American male identifying students (Fall 2020) and as much as a 15% higher retention rate for African American female-identifying students (Fall 2019). College-wide disparities between the two groups are in the low single digits throughout the data set.

This analysis shows that African American students in general fare slightly better in terms of success in the Communication department than they do in the college as a whole, and that these students fare about the same in terms of retention in the Communication department as they do in the college as a whole. However, there is a significant gender disparity in the Communication department for African American students, where female-identifying students typically fare much

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better than male-identifying students. There is a remarkable shift in the data in Spring 2022, however, where our success and retention for African American male students improved dramatically. While this is encouraging, data from a single semester are not enough to establish a trend. While we are hopeful that some of the equity efforts we have engaged in, such as the use of Transparent Assignment Design, equity enhancements in course outlines and texts, and increased use of diverse examples, are starting to pay off for our African American male-identifying students, we will need to wait to see the numbers for Fall of 2022 before we can say with confidence whether we have made a significant and lasting difference for our African American male-identifying students.

Our African American male-identifying students are the only group where we saw a significant difference between the college-wide numbers and the department's numbers.

5.5 How does your department use student engagement strategies in the classroom? Describe specific examples (see example-resource document) aimed at encouraging students to become actively engaged in the learning process in their classes.

Several faculty in the department attended special workshops on Transparent Assignment Design that the college held a few years ago as part of professional development, and we engaged in discussion and showed department-centered examples of Transparent Assignment Design in department meetings. Since then, the principles of Transparent Assignment Design have been widely adopted in the department, and sharing resources regarding Transparent Assignment Design has been part of onboarding for new part-time faculty. These practices were also reinforced as part of the Canvas training that all faculty undertook in 2020 as we transitioned to remote learning as a result of COVID-19.

To provide more specific examples of the use of transparent design, we can turn to the online versions of COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication and COMM 124 Intercultural Communication. Instructors who teach these courses embed transparent design in the construction of the course syllabi, learning management system, and curriculum. Assignment descriptions, including duration of required videos in some cases, for the full semester, are provided in advance via a detailed course schedule. Students know before the semester starts all the work that is expected and related due dates (allowing weeks to months in advance to complete), so that they may plan personal and academic schedules accordingly.

There is a significant amount of formative, rather than summative, feedback given to students as part of student presentations in class, and that feedback is often peer feedback. Sometimes this feedback is provided orally immediately after presentations, with the instructor facilitating peer input to ensure that it stays positive, supportive, and focused on course principles. Other times the peer feedback is given in writing. In many of our courses, ungraded workshop sessions take place as part of the development of student presentations. In these workshops, students may practice a portion of a presentation and/or engage in brainstorming, and fellow students and the instructor provide input and ideas to help the student work out various aspects of their presentations.

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There is a significant amount of project-based learning in our classes. Students engage in group projects in COMM 122 Public Speaking, COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, COMM 145 Argumentation, and COMM 240/241 Speech and Debate Competition I/II/III/IV, just to name a few. These projects often involve working together to analyze a current social or political issue and to use critical thinking methods to propose solutions or solve problems. The end result is usually a presentation in which students share their findings with the class.

To provide a more specific example of project-based learning, we can turn to COMM 122 Public Speaking, where project-based learning is used for student engagement. Some instructors have students engage in a group speech with four students, using a "stock issues" format for outline construction and delivery. Stock issues format takes a relevant social or political issue and requires the group of students to research the significance, inherent barriers, solvency, disadvantages and advantages of the solvency, of the selected topic. Students are provided with a 2–3-week period to complete this project, with frequent instructor oversight and guidance.

5.6 Explain how the program incorporates opportunities for student engagement outside of class time and/or in collaboration with other departments (e.g. interdisciplinary course offerings, learning communities, internships, research projects, service learning, or participation in community events, tournaments, competitions, and fairs) to enhance student learning.

In the majority of our communication courses students are encouraged to participate in the Speech and Debate team's Griffin Invitational tournament, as either competitors or student helpers. Extra credit is offered. This provides both Communication and non-Communication majors an opportunity for student engagement and learning about the communication discipline.

5.7 If state or federal licensing/registration examinations govern the program, please provide data and comment on student success trends.

n/a

5.8 If your program offers a degree or certificate in the college catalog, explain the trends regarding the number of students who earn these degrees and/or certificates, including any changes that you have made to increase awards. Refer to "Degrees and Certificates" data.

Headcounts for Degrees and Certificates in "Old Reports" shows the following number of Grossmont Communication degrees: 49 in Spring 2018; 15 in Fall 2018; 37 in Spring 2019; 11 in Fall 2019; 55 in Spring 2020; 6 in Fall 2020; 26 in Spring 2021; 7 in Fall 2021; and, 22 in Spring 2022. The total Communication degrees over the period are 228. These numbers are combined numbers for the regular A.A. degree and the A.A.T. degree; the A.A.T. makes up the overwhelming majority of the degrees.

While the robust numbers in the earlier years of the data set have declined, this is no doubt impacted by the overall trends in enrollment. We do see a steeper percent decline in our degrees than in overall enrollments, however, and this is concerning. We believe that we're seeing a decline in Communication majors, and that this is driven by the pandemic years and the switch to remote learning. Many of our students become Communication majors when they take their general education Communication course, discovering that they love our discipline and feeling a sense of enthusiasm for our subject that is generated naturally in our face-to-face classes, but that may not be as inspiring in our online classes. We are seeing improvements in on-campus enrollment in our

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courses, and we are hopeful that this trend will continue, boosting interest in the Communication major.

5.9 If you have any information on what students in your department go on to achieve after they leave Grossmont, please share that with us. For example, are students offered employment, do they successfully transfer to a 4-year institution? What careers do they pursue? What are starting salaries in that field? Do you know if they gain employment in their field of study? What impact did Grossmont have on their lives?

Our degree-earning students generally transfer to a four-year university to earn at least a B.A. in Communication. Our students have successfully transferred to SDSU, UCSD, Cal State San Marcos, and Point Loma Nazarene University, just to name some prominent local examples.

Representative careers that our Communication majors pursue include public relations, human resources management, sales, customer service, health education, primary and secondary education, business, corporate training, law, ministry, social work, and community relations (some of these fields require additional degrees beyond the B.A. in Communication). Starting salaries can range from the \$30K range to \$80K or more for those careers requiring more advanced degrees.

We know of non-Communication majors from our courses who have gone on the work in IT (networking, software and hardware engineering), data analytics, teaching, health occupations of all sorts, corporate sales, interior design, instructional design, plumbing, social work, human resources, athletic coaching/player development (one former students was an associate coach for the Lakers!), publishing, ministry, retail and restaurant management, and tourism.

Whether they are Communication majors working directly in related fields, or non-Communication majors engaged in other careers, all of our students are able to apply principles from our courses to their chosen fields because of the broad applicability of our discipline

SECTION 6 - STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

6.1 In what ways does your program inform students about student support services?

The Communication department itself does not have any systematic practices for informing students about Student Support Services. Most instructors do emphasize support services through their individual efforts (see 6.2 below). As part of onboarding, we provide new instructors with sample syllabi that include information about Student Support Services, especially the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC).

6.2 Which student support services do your faculty promote and why? How do you and your faculty engage with student support services? Do you highlight the ability to access student support services directly from Canvas?

Many instructors include information about Student Support Services in syllabi, and some include direct links to these services in the electronic versions of their syllabi and in their Canvas shells. Instructors also emphasize these resources in class discussion, especially during the first week of classes. Instructors pay special attention to making sure that students are aware of the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) and the importance of connecting with the services provided

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by the ARC early in the semester so that accommodations, including testing accommodations if needed, can be arranged.

6.3 How are part-time faculty informed about student support services? Do they include student support services in their course syllabi and make students aware of the Canvas button?

As noted above in 6.2, new instructors are provided with sample syllabi that include some of these resources. Resource files with information about Student Support Services that are sent to the department chair or co-chair by Academic Affairs, the Academic Senate President, or the Chair of the Council of Chairs and Coordinators are forwarded to all faculty, including part-time faculty. We have not made a systematic check of part-time faculty syllabi or Canvas shells to confirm whether students are made aware of the Canvas button.

6.4 To determine which services students are informed about and accessed by the students in your program/department please employ the survey emailed to you by the APR chair(s) one semester prior to writing.

6.4 does not appear to ask for any response. See 6.5 below.

6.5 Analyze the results from your student surveys. What services are most and least utilized? In what ways can you promote more engagement in the support services offered? How might more use of student support services improve student success and engagement?

The services that students report using most are Tutoring, Library Resources, Counseling, and the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC). The services that students report using the least are the Student Health Center and Success Coaches. Ninety-two percent of students reported that they were aware of the services they have accessed prior to taking the Communication course in which they responded to the survey. This suggests that the college as a whole is doing an excellent job of making students aware of support services.

We could promote more engagement in support services that the college offers by taking a more systematic approach as a department to ensuring that all faculty in the department are encouraged to include information about the services in their syllabi, in Canvas, and through course announcements.

SECTION 7 – ON-CAMPUS/OFF-CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

7.1 Please download the grid provided to the right, complete the form and upload here. Include faculty and staff involvement on and off-campus.

[COMM Program Review Section 7 FINAL.docx](#)

7.2 Please provide an overall reflection on your department's activity displayed in your table and highlight the activities your department thinks contribute most to our college's Strategic Plan.

Faculty in the Communication are actively engaged in the development of their own teaching, their overall professional development, service to the college, and service to the community. We are significantly involved in professional development and in campus leadership related to the college's goals of: Educational Excellence, through increased equitable access; Innovation and Effectiveness, through scaling-up successful programs and services; Operational Excellence, through strengthening of college-wide communication and collaboration, as well as increased

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opportunities for professional development and continuous learning on equitable and anti-racist best practices; and, Community Collaboration, through strengthening community engagement.

SECTION 8 – FISCAL & HUMAN RESOURCES

Fiscal Resources

8.1 Describe any patterns in enrollment; maximum enrollment and % fill in the program since the last program review. What are typical section maximum sizes (capacity) for your courses and what dictates those caps? Have you changed the number of sections offered and/or section sizes in response to changes in demand? If so, what effect has it had?

Our Enrollment numbers for Fall 2018 show Enrollment for the COMM department of 2,058 and a Fill rate of 91.71%. Our Enrollment numbers for Fall 2022 show Enrollment for the COMM department of 1,492 and a Fill rate of 87.56%.

Enrollment numbers for the Arts, Languages, and Communication Division for Fall 2018 show Enrollment of 9,105 and a Fill rate of 84.61%. ALC Enrollment numbers for Fall 2022 show Enrollment for the Division of 6,382 and a Fill rate of 78.25%.

Enrollment numbers for Grossmont College as a whole for Fall 2018 show Enrollment of 49,198 and a Fill rate of 83.15%. Grossmont College Enrollment numbers for Fall 2022 show Enrollment for the college of 33,722 and a Fill rate of 75.55%.

Analyzing these data, we see that since Fall 2018, Enrollment in the Communication department has decreased by approximately 27.5%, while the ALC Division Enrollment has decreased by approximately 30%, and Grossmont College has decreased by approximately 31.5%. So, the declines in enrollment in the Communication department have been part of a Division-wide and college-wide trend, with the department doing somewhat better than the Division and the college as a whole.

Moreover, the Communication department has exceeded both the Division-wide and college-wide statistics in terms of our Fill rate from the beginning to the end of the data set. Even in the good times, we scheduled more efficiently than the Division and the college as a whole, and we have responded to declining enrollment trends by being proactive and scheduling efficiently; we have changed the number of sections offered in response to changes in demand, and the effect has been overall strength in our efficiency relative to the Division and the college as a whole.

Class maxes in Communication are 30 for all courses except Speech and Debate, which is 24 total across the courses that support the activity. The 30 class max is set as a contractual max necessary to ensure that there is adequate time for student presentations in our courses – a key component of all Communication courses. The Speech and Debate maxes are set somewhat lower to ensure that there is adequate individual coaching time for each student.

8.2 Describe and explain any patterns in Earned WSCH, FTEF and Earned WSCH/FTEF since the last program review. Please explain changes in FTEF due to changes in faculty staffing levels. For courses/sections with low Earned WSCH/FTEF explain their importance in the program and measures the

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department/program has taken/plans to take to improve efficiency and/or balance low and high efficiency offerings and/or maximize course % fill.

Our WSCH in Fall 2018 was 7,047.76. WSCH in Fall 2022 is 4,608.56. This is a function of the overall college-wide trends discussed and analyzed in section 8.1.

FTEF in Fall 2018 was 15.17. FTEF in Fall 2022 is 11.82. This is not due to faculty staffing levels, however. It is due to the declines in Enrollment discussed and analyzed in section 8.1.

Our earned WSCH/FTEF was 416.33 in Fall 2018 and is 379.14 in Fall 2022. While we haven't fully rebounded here, we are up significantly from the low point of 345.50 in Spring of 2022. When looking at our WSCH/FTEF numbers, it is important to keep in mind that our lower class maxes mean that our max possible WSCH/FTEF is 450. Comparing our numbers to the college as a whole, the college-wide WSCH/FTEF is 389.99 for Fall 2022. Given our lower class maxes, we believe we compare very favorably to the college as a whole in WSCH/FTEF. We also exceed the ALC Division-wide number of 353.89 for Fall 2022.

Courses in the department where we see WSCH/FTEF numbers lower than the department average include COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking, COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health & Wellness, COMM 135 Oral Interpretation of Literature, COMM 136 Readers Theatre, COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, COMM 145 Argumentation, and COMM 240/241 Intercollegiate Speech & Debate Competition. All of these courses are significant and important to our course offerings, and we have taken steps to improve how we are managing enrollment in these courses. COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking is a course taken by Communication majors to fulfill degree requirements and is part of the preparation for the major at SDSU. We have long offered one section of this course each semester, but we are offering it only in Fall in the 2022-2023 academic year; we plan to offer only one section again next year, and to do so in the Spring semester, which makes more sense for a level-two course. COMM 126 Communication Studies: Health & Wellness is a course we are deeply committed to offering one section of each semester, as it is taken by students in Allied Health & Nursing programs, supporting these students in developing as professionals. COMM 135 Oral Interpretation of Literature and COMM 136 Readers Theatre are both taken by our Communication majors to meet degree requirements. We have long offered one section of each of these two courses once per year, in opposite semesters. Because they are the most performance-oriented courses in the department, they were significantly impacted by the online teaching modality of the deep-pandemic semesters (indeed, we chose not to offer COMM 136 Readers Theatre in Spring of 2021 because we did not believe it could be taught well in Emergency Remote Teaching/Zoom mode). COMM 135 Oral Interpretation of Literature did significantly better in Fall 2022 than it did in Fall 2021. We expect that COMM 136 Readers Theatre will do better in Spring 2023 than it did on its re-launch in Spring 2022, especially with the announcement that the college's mask mandate, which impeded performance components, has been lifted for Spring 2023. We have been responding to the downward trends in COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication and COMM 145 Argumentation by reducing the total number of sections of each of these courses offered each semester and by converting

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some sections to asynchronous online modality. This has yielded positive results in terms of improvement in WSCH/FTEF for COMM 145, though we did have another dip in COMM 137 in Fall 2022, and we may need to revisit the number of sections being offered in that course for Fall 2023. Both COMM 137 and COMM 145 are taken by Communication majors as part of their degree sequence, and they are both also used by non-majors to meet their Critical Thinking GE requirement for transfer to CSU. The lower WSCH/FTEF numbers for COMM 240/241 Speech & Debate are a function of the lower class maxes for these courses (18 for 240 and 6 for 241), so these courses will always appear anomalous in this data set.

While we do recognize that the WSCH/FTEF numbers for some of our courses are lower than the overall numbers for the department, this typically occurs in courses that are part of the degree sequence. We believe the challenge we are experiencing in WSCH/FTEF is a function of the overall declines in enrollment that were exacerbated by the pandemic. We believe that as more and more students become comfortable with on-campus learning again our number of majors will rebound, as will the enrollments in the courses taken by our majors. Moreover, we believe that the robust WSCH/FTEF numbers for COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication (416.57 in Fall 2022) and COMM 122 Public Speaking (417.17 in Fall 2022) significantly offset the lower numbers that some of our other courses experience.

8.3 For money that you get from the college and/or from Perkins funds as part of your budget, is this amount adequate? What is this money used for to operate your department? If it is not adequate, please explain how additional funds would be used to improve student learning and success.

The regular department budget goes primarily to supplies and travel. Supplies include such items as printer cartridges for faculty office printers and basic office supplies not available through Printing Services. We provide additional support for employee conference travel beyond what has been available through college-wide funds, since discipline-specific professional development is a high department value. Our regular department budget seems adequate to meet our needs. The department's Forensics (Speech and Debate) budget goes to purchase supplies needed by the team and to support travel by students and faculty to the tournaments where they compete, as well as registration fees for those tournaments. The current budget limits the number of students we are able to prepare and take to State and National competitions. An increase in the Speech and Debate budget, now that we have added a second full-time coach to the staff, would enable more students to reach their aspirations of participating in top-level competition. This experience would increase students' engagement with the activity and with the team. Students with top-level competitive experience also are recruited by four-year universities, some of which offer scholarships to students who participate in this activity.

8. 4 If your program has received any financial support or subsidy outside of the college budget process (grants, awards, donations), explain where these funds are from, how they are used, and any other relevant information such as whether they are on-going or one-time.

Our Speech and Debate faculty coordinate the annual Griffin Speech and Debate Tournament. Registration fees paid by the twenty-or-so colleges and university that attend not only cover the

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expenses associated with running the tournament buy also provide a surplus that goes into a trust fund for our team. These funds help to supplement the budget referred to above in section 8.3.

Human Resources

8.5 How are you ensuring that part-time faculty are included in fulfilling the college's strategic plan and goals? How do they contribute to department level goals and objectives?

We encourage part-time faculty to use Flex Week department meetings to meet part of their professional development obligation, and we often focus those meetings on topics and activities related to the college strategic plan and goals. For instance, when workshops were being conducted college-wide on Transparent Assignment design in support of Educational Excellence, Completion Culture, and Innovation & Effectiveness, we duplicated content from those college-wide workshops at our Flex Week department meeting, and we shared specific application of Transparent Assignment design principles to Communication courses. When we developed our department's Equity Statement in support of our college's Vision and Mission, we used the department's Flex Week meeting to engage in the dialogue that created the department Equity Statement.

We also support part-time faculty members in participating in college-wide initiatives that support Educational Excellence, Completion Culture, and Innovation & Effectiveness. As noted above in Section 7, Jen Gueniot, one of our part-time faculty, has been engaged recently in the Umoja Faculty Institute and the Grossmont Athletics learning community. This came about because the department was asked by Athletics to participate in these initiatives, we put a call out to both full-time and part-time faculty to see if there was interest in participating, and full-time faculty members who were interested ultimately deferred to our part-time faculty member to afford her the opportunity to be part of this initiative.

8.6 How do you onboard new faculty (both full- and part-time)? For example, part-time faculty handbook sample syllabi, official course outline, assessment strategies, culturally responsive teaching methods, faculty resources and student resources.

All new faculty receive the official course outlines for courses they are teaching, as well as sample syllabi and sample assignments. The department has a department Canvas shell that all faculty are invited to join that information on our SLOs, copies of our course outlines, resources for remote learning, and information on using Self-Service. We use Flex Week department meetings to expose all faculty, including new full-time and part-time faculty, to culturally responsive teaching methods.

8.7 What faculty and/or staffing changes do you anticipate in the next cycle considering retirements?

It is likely that within the next cycle there could be as many as three retirements of full-time faculty. Many of our part-time faculty are also near retirement age or are teaching for us as their post-retirement jobs for supplemental income, and we could see significant turnover in our part-time ranks during the next cycle. We also lost our esteemed full-time colleague Dr. Jade Solan to cancer in September of 2022.

8.8 What plans do you have to submit for tenure track faculty via the Staffing Committee or the Annual Unit Plan?

We have submitted an application for a tenure-track position to replace Dr. Jade Solan, who we lost to cancer in September of 2022 as noted above in question 8.7. As anticipated retirements of full-

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time faculty come to pass over the next several years, we intend to submit applications for tenure-track replacements in each instance.

8.9 Download the table to the right, fill it in, and upload here. Please list non-faculty positions that are responsible to your program (by title rather than by individual name). This list should include classified staff as well as work study and student workers. Indicate the FTE/hours and where funding comes from for these positions. Add or delete rows to the table as needed.

[8.9 Non Faculty Position Chart.docx](#)

8.10 Briefly describe the duties for each position. Include a discussion of any changes in terms of non-faculty staffing and describe the impact on basic department function and/or the success of students in the program. Are current staffing levels adequate in non-faculty positions? If not, do you plan to submit a request to the staffing committee?

Question not applicable, as we have no classified staff in our department.

8.11 How many of your faculty are receiving reassigned time? What projects are they involved in? In what ways does this impact your program?

Denise Schulmeyer had reassigned time as Academic Senate President during part of the time under review and has since returned to her regular faculty role.

Victoria Curran has reassigned time for work with AFT, and Michael McHan has reassigned time for Guided Pathways.

We are able to cover classes adequately through the use of our adjunct faculty.

The department benefits from the projects that these faculty members have been involved in in much the same way that the faculty and the college as a whole do. Having a strong Academic Senate President ensures that participatory governance is functioning effectively and that the faculty voice is being heard. Support for AFT helps to ensure that faculty working conditions are optimal, and this contributes to faculty job satisfaction, which ultimately helps students (happy teachers are better teachers). Participation in the development of Guided Pathways will help to ensure that students are able to find the departments and paths that will best serve their own goals. All of these projects are necessary, and we are proud to be part of them.

SECTION 9 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Summarize program strengths in terms of the current Strategic Plan (2022-2028).

On the goal of Educational Excellence, we have healthy numbers of students who earn the ADT, the AA, and who transfer to a four-year institution. Moreover, we contribute to learning and timely completion of students' educational goals for all Grossmont College students by ensuring that they are able to complete their Oral Communication GE requirements for graduation and for transfer.

On the goal of Completion Culture, the Communication department is usually as strong or slightly stronger than the college as a whole in terms of student retention and success.

On the goal of Innovation & Effectiveness, we actively engage students in exploration and discussion of current issues affecting society, we use recent innovations like transparent assignment design that help all students to succeed, and we create assignments that engage students in collaborative learning.

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On the goal of Operational Excellence, our department members are highly engaged in the college as a whole in areas such as shared governance, equity work, faculty leadership, and the development of Guided Pathways.

On the goal of Community Collaboration, our department members are highly engaged in community work in a broad range of areas, including the arts, civic organizations, public service, and youth mentorship.

9.2 Summarize opportunities to improve in terms of the current Strategic Plan (2022-2028).

While we are proud of the work we have been doing to close equity gaps, we know that like the college as a whole our progress is not as far along as we would like it to be.

We also are aware that we need to find a fix for our technology problems related to recording of student presentations, as students benefit greatly from seeing their own work.

We need to ensure that we maintain program offerings to enable students to complete their degree and transfer goals, which may at times necessitate protection of classes with lower enrollments.

9.3 Describe any concerns that may affect the program before the next review cycle such as addition of new programs, external changes, funding issues etc.

The biggest concern over the next cycle will be expected turnover of full-time faculty due to retirement.

We also have a need for the district and the college to identify the funding needed to replace the 200 complex which houses our program.

As we continue to implement our two-coach model for our Speech and Debate team, the purpose of which is to provide more opportunities for student to participate at competitive levels, we will need to seek increases in the budget for Speech and Debate to support student and coach travel to tournaments.

9.4 Make a rank ordered list of program goals for the next six-year cycle based on the current Strategic Plan (2022-2028).

1. Maintain strong faculty staffing levels for the department as retirements occur in the coming years to ensure program integrity and the ability of the program to meet students' degree and transfer goals.
2. Develop specific and concrete strategies to close equity gaps for all students, and especially for our African American male students.
3. Finish the implementation of our two-coach model for our Speech and Debate team by identifying ways to increase the total load assigned to the Speech and Debate courses so that it equates to 1.0 (.60 for the Head Coach and .40 for the assistant coach).
4. Continue to participate in the Task Force for the remodel or replacement of the 200 complex, ensuring that Communication classrooms, offices, and the squad room for Speech and Debate meet our students' needs.
5. Find a durable solution to the challenge of consistently making the recording of student presentations available for all instructors.
6. Continue to review and update course outlines within five years of their most recent Board approval, and delete inactive courses.

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7. Continue to implement a cycle of SLO assessment that includes the use of SLOs as part of a continuous cycle of improvement.

2022-28

Answer: Section 1 - Overview

Questions: Section 1 - Overview

Can you tell us more about your Transparent Assignment Design and how it's improved student retention and success? How have you been able to track this?

We haven't been tracking this as a department, but instructors who have begun using Transparent Assignment Design report that it results in a higher percentage of students understanding and succeeding with assignments. Some sample assignments using Transparent Assignment Design are appended at the end of this supplementary report.

Answer: Section 2 - Curriculum Development and Academic Standards

Questions: Section 2 - Curriculum Development and Academic Standards

2.7 Grade Distributions:

There were a decline in F grades in Spring 2020, this reflects the results of the beginning of the pandemic. The college was encouraged to be more forgiving. Could you be more specific as to the types of exceptions you made towards the end of this semester? Why did this create an increase in A's and not stay similar to past spring semesters? Too forgiving? Thank you! (SM)

What a singular time that was. Many faculty members do not recall with any degree of clarity what went into their thinking at the time and how they made decisions during the greatest crisis and disruption that we have experienced in our lifetimes. We don't fault anyone for not being able to reconstruct how they made decisions three years ago as they pivoted on the fly from teaching classes that have a high degree of student interaction and numerous live presentations that are key components of students' grades to classes where, for many, all of the joy of what we do was sucked out of the room.

Some faculty members did recall a few specifics:

"For Spring 2020, the main exception provided is students were permitted more leniency with submitting late work."

"In Spring of 2020, I found students tended to 'up' their game more than my needing to be more forgiving (tho I was in circumstances that required it). I recall one evening in my COMM 144 [Communication Studies: Race and Ethnicity] course after the class had ended (it went from 3:30 to 6:45, I believe), students stayed on Zoom after class for

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nearly two hours just to chat with each other – both about the class and other things (like TikTok! Haha).

“COMM 136 Readers Theatre was just on the verge of students presenting their first Readers Theatre projects when the lockdowns took place. These projects could not be presented on Zoom as envisioned; key components of these projects that could have contributed to “A” grades for students, such as staging and ensemble effect, were unrealizable on Zoom. If students are deprived through no fault of their own of the opportunity to demonstrate skills that can contribute to earning ‘A’ marks, it makes sense to err on the side of grace rather than err in the other direction.”

2.8 Grading Contracts:

COMM 238/239/240/241 have students create a grading contract with their instructor. Can we see a copy of this? This is another method of assessment that can be celebrated and shared with other departments. Thank you! (SM)

From Roxanne Tuscany: “Forensics is a unique course, so it may not be helpful to others. However, here is what we do. I meet with each student and discuss their goals for the semester. They tell me the events that they want to learn about, practice and compete with for the semester. They also decide what level of coaching they want to be coached at. The student will then work to complete those goals for the semester, and will receive an A, if they succeed. The students are able to adjust their contract with the instructor throughout the semester, as long as they communicate this with the instructor.”

2.10 Online retention/success

Your department is trailing the college and division in both retention and success as you noted in your analysis. There has been support to improve our online courses, especially during the pandemic but since then has your department made attempts to increase these rates? Teaching online is challenging, and it doesn't serve all courses but there are some gains to be made in those courses you can teach online. Do you have any interest in increasing these rates and what sort of professional development would someone in your department benefit from? Thank you! (SM)

Do we have any interest in increasing our success and retention rates in our online courses? Of course we do. Indeed, as noted in our self-study, we have been increasing the numbers and, by Spring of 2022, the department numbers matched the college numbers. The Fall 2022 data are now available, and we have once again improved our numbers and are now doing better than the college as a whole. Success rates for Fall 2022 for online courses: College-wide, 65%; COMM department, 69%. Retention rates for Fall 2022 for online courses: College-wide, 84%; COMM department, 88%.

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Here are some additional reflections on this question from various department members.

From Michael McHan: "Yes, since the pandemic some of our faculty who are more experience teaching online courses have increased the number of online courses they teach. Additionally, some of our faculty attended the online teacher training Grossmont provided toward the beginning of the pandemic. *Question – are we wanting to further increase the online courses we offer? If so, I think there would be a lot of interest within our faculty to teach them."

From Denise Schulmeyer: "I don't teach online currently, and I don't know how helpful and relevant it is to compare disciplines in terms of online retention and success. The Communication Department has improved our online course retention/success rates over the years. I know that faculty across the disciplines feel that their discipline is unique, and we are no exception. In all honesty, I'm not convinced that online learning is appropriate for many disciplines. For years I have been asking my students if they have ever taken an online course that they felt was a better learning experience than a face-to-face course. Of the thousands of students I've asked this of, only one student answered in the affirmative, and it was a wine tasting class in which they were able to actually swallow the wine instead of spitting it out. Yet, students do take online courses. Why? Not because it's a superior learning experience, but because of life circumstances. Recall for our recent accreditation we were not reaccredited initially partly because of lack of RSI in our online courses. (We are hardly the only campus denied reaccreditation due to this issue.) This shows how challenging it is to create interactive experiences in online courses. I would also argue that the bar for RSI is also too low to create a truly exceptional online learning experience. In my face-to-face courses I strive to create opportunities for students to achieve the Durkheimian "collective effervescence" that is the foundation of human communication. How to do that online is a challenge. I think that the best professional development is discipline specific. For us, the Western States Communication Association annual convention is a good place to learn about communication-specific online pedagogy, but funding is an issue. Additionally, and unfortunately, the state of California keeps adding states to the no travel list, thereby cutting off valuable professional development opportunities. Lastly, in addition to discipline specific PD surrounding online instruction, Grossmont College needs another Dawn Heuft and a dedicated tenured instructional designer."

From Victoria Curran: "I know that in my late-start 12 week courses I struggle with retention. I suspect this is primarily because, despite my warnings, students don't fully anticipate what it means to take on a 3-unit class after they've already developed a habit for the past four weeks that gets disrupted by taking on a new class. Every week I send out reminder emails about due dates, I personally message every student who is late to submit work, I regularly reach out to students who appear to be struggling and meet with them during office hours. I'm absolutely interested in increasing these rates. PD around improving online retention would be great. I sometimes wonder if I have too much work for them (I know it's more than some online courses I've been in) but the state requirement is 8-10 hours lecture/study/prep and I'm coming in at the low end at best."

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From Joel Castellaw: "I began teaching online for the first time in Spring 2022, and I'll be honest, I wasn't sure it was going to work for COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication, even though we already had offered the class in this modality with one of our adjuncts teaching it. I found that it did work, even the big group project, largely because I found ways to get students to engage with each other at a pretty deep level through the use of Discussion Boards where the prompts focused on having students connect course concepts to their lived experiences. Nevertheless, students do drift off, and even with frequent announcements, reminders, and individual outreach by me as an instructor, some of them just don't come back. I am hopeful that the college's new initiative to make available peer review of online courses by instructors who really excel at online teaching will help those of us who opt in to benefit from the experience of others.

Answer: Section 3 - Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Questions: Section 3 - Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Excellent work on SLOs and excellent commitment! It's an ongoing process, slow and steady wins the race :) so to speak. This department is commended for steady, mindful progress on SLOs.

Q: What are your future plans for assessing program level outcomes? If you used mapping, was that process insightful about your programs?

We are still working to complete all our new SLO's assessments, so it will be a little while before we are able to begin to discuss the program level outcomes.

We have begun mapping, but we have not had the opportunity to discuss

Answer: Section 4 - Faculty & Staff Support Services and Facilities

Questions: Section 4 - Faculty & Staff Support Services and Facilities

4.1 When it comes to the preferred classrooms, do you keep a list of the best classrooms to instruct particular courses in?

We have three classrooms that were designed for our use. On an as-needed basis we were with the Master Class scheduler to identify additional classrooms most well-suited to our needs.

4.2 In 4.1 it was stated that Communication "use classroom with movable seating, media technology, recording technology..." but here in 4.2 it is stated, "None have the recording equipment that we need..." Based on this information, would you say Communication does have facility spaces for instruction or that it does not have facility spaces for instruction?

We make do with what we have, but what we have is inadequate. It really is important to be able to record student speeches. Students gain so much from being able to see recordings of their own presentations, and from an instructor equity standpoint it really is necessary

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that the equipment for creating these recordings be provided by the college, ideally as part of classroom equipment.

It's also important for our rooms to have a raised floor at the front that spans the entire width of the room. For presentations, the raised floor makes the speaker the focal point, improves how well the speaker's voice carries, and, most important, makes it possible for the speaker, regardless of stature, to make meaningful eye contact with all members of the audience. The three classrooms that were designed for use by our department (24-263, 24-268, 24-269) all have this feature, but when we have to schedule classes in other rooms, we don't usually have this room feature. The few other rooms on campus that were built this way are larger lecture rooms, and classes with larger class maxes rightly take scheduling priority for these rooms.

The room size and configuration of the classrooms that were designed for our use make group work challenging (and we use a lot of group work), and the size and configuration also presents challenges because the screen for projecting media covers almost all available dry-erase board space when the screen is lowered, limiting instructors' ability to use both teaching tools simultaneously.

4.2 It sounds like your classrooms are not dingy and unattractive but are lacking serious regular maintenance. Have the issues been brought up to administration? If so, what have their responses been?

Carpets are cleaned once a year, but they have so many deep, old stains that the "ghosts" of those stains reappear within weeks of cleaning. The ceiling panels in 24-269 have been raining small flecks of debris; this has been brought to the attention of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations, and they have looked at the problem, but the problem persists. The rooms haven't been painted in many years and they are, indeed, dingy (come and see for yourself, if you'd like). Years ago during one of the many false-starts at a remodel or replacement of our building, outside consultants observed that the lighting in the rooms isn't even considered adequate for task lighting by then-current standards. We assume the outside consultants reported this to administration, but the lighting and the rooms remain as they are.

4.7 Why are instructors Roxanne Tuscany and Michael McHan, both actively teaching at all times during the Speech and Debate classes if they should be sharing the responsibilities?

We tried to address this whole issue back when the position of our second coach for Speech and Debate was initially approved. We wanted to have the details worked out prior to recruitment. But then-VPAA Mike Reese told us just to get the new person hired, and that these details would be worked out later.

The classes that comprise the Speech and Debate team (COMM 238/239/240/241) are lecture/lab/studio/activity classes. The lecture portion takes place during the scheduled weekly class meeting on Tuesday evenings. The lab/activity/studio hours include a portion of the Tuesday evening class meeting, but most of those lab/activity/studio hours are

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additional arranged hours that take place outside of the regularly scheduled class times and include one-on-one coaching sessions, coaching in small groups, additional team meetings outside of the scheduled class time, and participation in Speech and Debate tournaments. The whole idea behind adding a second coach to our Speech and Debate teaching staff was to make more coaching available so that students would have more opportunities to grow and improve. We can't achieve this benefit by simply taking the same number of additional arranged hours that Roxanne was doing on her own and dividing them between Roxanne and Michael.

Even the regularly scheduled weekly class meeting of the Speech and Debate team is not like a traditional lecture that can be evenly divided. Rather, speech and debate requires both coaches to instruct the full duration of the class period, and then some. Students need to be coached individually, as their events are personal to them, and also at times with both Michael and Roxanne together to receive feedback on their events. This is why most Speech and Debate programs have 4+ coaches. As it is, Roxanne and Michael out of necessity have to meet with students for many hours beyond what we are scheduled for.

Speech and Debate involves several different types of competitive events: traditional platform speeches such as informative speaking and persuasive speaking; various forms of oral interpretation of literature, some of which are individual, with others being done in pairs or in groups; events where students are given topics and construct and deliver speeches against the clock, such as impromptu and extemporaneous speaking; and, debate. Some students specialize in just one or two of the different types of events, while other students endeavor to tackle the full gamut. Dividing the events between the coaches is a common strategy for speech and debate teams. Roxanne generally focuses on individual speaking events and Michael focuses mostly on teaching debate events. We meet once a week for our "official" class, and this class can last 3-4 hours. Both Michael and Roxanne are meeting with students to learn and practice speeches for the full duration of this scheduled class time. Additionally, there is usually a second day, weekly, for practice sessions that last another 2-4 hours. We also travel 4-5 times per semester for competition. Competitions last Friday through Sunday and involve 12+ hour days. In the Spring we travel to a national and international tournament that are both around a full week in duration. As coaches we are responsible for coaching our team and judging events for the tournament. Each of these days are also 10-12+ hour days. Moreover, Michael and Roxanne also meet with students over winter and summer break. Needless to say, coaching speech and debate is a very time consuming responsibility.

Finally, Michael's compensation as assistant coach is below just about any other assistant coach who works in a similar role, across the numerous community college speech and debate programs we compete with.

4.7 Have the stated concerns regarding the Speech and Debate Head Coach and Assistant Coach been brought before the Dean? What has their response been to this?

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The pay inequity has been discussed with the last three deans, Joan Ahrens, Joel Castellaw, and Vanessa Fountain. Joan and Joel were unsure how to proceed with requesting equitable compensation for work performed. It was stated that there used to be a form/formal process for these types of request, but neither dean was sure what happened to this process. The current Dean, Vanessa Fountain has been made aware and Roxanne recalls that it was requested that we revisit this conversation toward the end of the SP23 semester. Michael is desperate for this to be resolved urgently as his commitment and required hours spent as the Assistant Coach far exceed his compensation.

Answer: Section 5 - Student Equity and Success

Questions: Section 5 - Student Equity and Success

5.1 Enrollment rates

Great job keeping your enrollment trending upward. You mentioned changes that were made to offerings like asynchronous online sections for COMM 120, 137, and 145. Are these changes still available? How has the return to campus adjusted these offerings? Thank you! (SM)

We are continuing to offer asynchronous online sections of COMM 120, COMM 137, and COMM 145. We have worked with the Dean and the VPAA to add online sections of COMM 120 during the weeks immediately preceding the start of the semester in response to large waitlists for these sections.

5.2 Enrollment disaggregated

You mentioned not having major differences between ethnic groups or age demographics in your courses. Is this true for your higher level offerings as well? Courses like COMM 238/239/240/241? Thank you! (SM)

Our response noted that it wasn't surprising that our breakdown closely matched the college as a whole and that this wasn't surprising since the overwhelming majority of our sections are GE courses that all students must take. We're not sure that what the phrase "higher level offerings" is driving at (while COMM 238/239/240/241 have 200-series numbers, they are classes that all students can enroll in, and the only class we offer that is a sequenced course is COMM 123 Advanced Public Speaking).

If we remove COMM 120 and COMM 122 from the enrollment statistics, we still end up largely conforming to college-wide trends, with somewhat lower percentages for Hispanic/Latino students and somewhat higher percentages for White students. If we look just at the courses that meet no GE requirements and are most commonly taken only by COMM majors (COMM 123 and COMM 238/239/240/241), the variance is definitely more striking, with lower percentages of African American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latino students and higher percentages of White students. One possible explanation for these trends is that the Communication major

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itself might be less attractive for some reason to students of color. Perhaps Counseling faculty are steering students of color into other majors. Or it could be that fewer students of color are attracted to the Communication major because of feelings of greater affinity in departments with a more diverse faculty cohort than the Communication department currently has.

5.4 Is there another reason why there is more info on African Americans as opposed to other groups (age/sex/ethnicity)? Is there any other info/data prevelant to other groups regarding success and retention?

The prompt for question 5.4 asked us to comment on “any groups that have success rates in your department at lower or higher than college-wide.” We saw disparities for African-American/Black students in the data, but we did not see disparities for other groups. If you believe we missed some that we should have commented on, please point out where we may have missed.

5.6 Are there any other opportunities for student engagement offered aside from participating with Speech & Debate? If so, could you please list and explain how students benefit from it.

Some instructors in both COMM 122 Public Speaking and COMM 137 Critical Thinking in Group Communication assigned projects that include community service learning. One example is students who held a Hawaiian themed fundraiser on campus where they invited H&L barbecue onto campus and had hula dancers. All proceeds went to Ronald McDonald house. Another group of students held a blanket drive then went downtown and distributed them to unhoused individuals (that presentation was a tearjerker). Another group fixed up a dog park in East County. One group got 2 flags donated to their group, had them signed by children at an elementary school, and brought them to a Veterans Hospital on Veterans Day.

5.8 Degrees and Certificates pre-pandemic are commendable, however, how significant or detrimental is online learning (DE) to regaining the numbers in degrees and certificates (pre-pandemic)? Online learning is essential to accommodating students for various reasons, yet what can be done to improve this? Is there anything being done to address the decline in communication majors, either at departmental/or college level?

We believe that many students become Communication majors because they take COMM 120 Interpersonal Communication or COMM 122 Public Speaking and have a really great experience with the course because of the sense of community that often develops in these classes. The online modality for COMM 120 impedes this. It also seems that post-pandemic, more students are opting for COMM 120 than for COMM 122. We definitely need to find ways to attract more students back into face-to-face sections of COMM 120 and to work with Counseling to steer more students back into COMM 122.

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Answer: Section 6 - Student Support Services

Questions: Section 6 - Student Support Services

6.1. Is there are reason why there is no systematic way to inform students about available student support services on campus?

While the department doesn't qua department communicate directly to students about student support services, individual department members do such things as include information about student support services on syllabi, quiz students about the syllabus to motivate students to actually read the information there, advise students on an individual as-needed basis about available support services, and include information about student support services in their Canvas course containers.

Answer: Section 8 - Fiscal & Human Resources

Questions: Section 8 - Fiscal & Human Resources

8.2 Patterns in efficiency

NOT A QUESTION. I'd like to thank you for your in depth analysis of in this seciton as whole. Program Review is a platform used for departments to take time for an in depth analysis of their program and the efficiency of it. I agree with you that while the WSCH/FTEF is low comparitively to the college and at times to sections offered in the past, that this is not a reflection of inefficiency. You have taken the correct steps with improvement in mind through the last few semesters. All programs suffered during the pandemic and consequences are still being seen as we make our way back to campus but we are on the mend. Thank you! (SM)

8.6 Part time faculty

The time during flex week is a great jump start for part time faculty. Can you think back to the most recent part time faculty that you onboarded, were there efforts to check in with the instructor to ask about thier progress with their classes? I think back to when I was first here and wondered if anyone remembered I was new to this campus. Thank you! (SM)

In the onboarding of the most recently hired part-time faculty member, the department co-chair who took primary responsibility for adjunct faculty periodically checked in with that new faculty member via email and text and frequently sent articles relevant to the course the new faculty member was teaching.

Questions: Section 9 - Summary and Recommendations

9.3 How many faculty are due to retire in the next cycle?

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We respect the right of each individual faculty member to make their own decisions about the timing of sharing their retirement plans, so we can't give a definitive answer to this question. Based solely on demographics, there could be as many as six out of the current seven full-time faculty members retiring during the next cycle.

9.4 (#4.) Is there a "task force" for the remodel of the 200 complex? When does it meet and how does one find out about it?

Yes, the task force exists and meets on an intermittent, as-needed basis. Meetings of this task force are typically announced by Loren Holmquist. The next meeting of the task force will be in May, 2023.

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE SUMMARY EVALUATION

The committee recommends maintaining this program. Following are the committee’s specific commendations and recommendations.

The Program Review Committee commends the department for:

1. Employing methods to improve enrollment leading to fill rates higher than those of division and college as a whole.
2. Commitment to equitable teaching strategies and scheduling, leading to high rates of student retention.
 - a. Utilizing student created grading contracts, allowing multiple revisions, etc.
3. Commitment to and success with the Speech and Debate Team for over 30 years. CONGRATS!
4. Updating Comm 120 to meet the transfer requirement for CSU

The Committee recommends the following:

1. Continue working on course level SLOs and assess program level outcomes.
2. Work with your dean to secure adequate and equitable compensation for your Assistant Debate Coach.
3. Create a more structured on-boarding process for new part-time and full-time faculty.
4. Create a process by which all faculty advise their students about student services (Syllabi, announcements, etc.). Update list of student services each semester.

College President

Department Chair

Academic Program Review Co-Chairs

COMMUNICATION
DATA TABLE

Academic Year	Fall		Spring	
	% Fill	WSCH/FTEF	% Fill	WSCH/FTEF
2018-19	92.0	417.7	89.6	396.8
2019-20	89.8	394.8	89.2	388.5
2020-21				
2021-22	70.8	306.0	69.0	284.6
2022-23	84.8	361.5	88.1	381.4