**Sinclair Community College - Continuous Improvement Annual Update 2010-11**

**Program:** Communication

**Section I: Trend Data**

1. **Program Trend Data**

The following data represent the FTE counts for all COM courses:

FY 05-06: 991.9

FY 06-07: 1032.4

FY 07-08: 1081.6

FY 08-09: 1241.1

FY 09-10: 1481.2

The following show the number of graduates from all COM programs:

FY 05-06: 16

FY 06-07: 22

FY 07-08: 25

FY 08-09: 28

FY 09-10: 34

The following data reflects the number of students who are enrolled in COM programs (often identified as “majors”):

FA 06: 234

FA 07: 238

FA 08: 301

FA 09: 310

FA 10: 334

Program retention numbers (retained to department) are provided with a comparison to Collegewide percentages:

COM.AA Collegewide

FA 06 to SP 07: 60% 56%

FA 07 to SP 08: 62% 57%

FA 08 to SP 09: 62% 59%

FA 09 to SP 10: 65% 60%

Finally, course success percentages are provided for COM’s Top 45 courses, with comparisons to COM overall, the LCS Division, and Collegewide data:

COM 206 COM 211 COM LCS Collegewide

FY 06-07: 68% 73% 72% 69% 71%

FY 07-08: 69% 70% 71% 70% 71%

FY 08-09: 68% 69% 69% 71% 70%

FY 09-10: 65% 68% 67% 68% 70%

1. **Interpretation and Analysis of Trend Data** *Suggestions of questions that might be addressed in this section: What trends do you see in the above data? Are there internal or external factors that account for these trends? What are the implications for the program or department? What actions have the department taken that have influenced these trends? What strategies will the department implement as a result of this data?*

It appears that the trend data for the COM department and program are nicely aligned and represent significant accomplishments with comparative divisional and Collegewide data. Perhaps most notable in the data are the FTE counts, which show that the department’s enrollment has increased by 50% (from FY 05-06 to FY 09-10). This represents a significant increase in course offerings and resources required for those course offerings. The department has not seen a commensurate increase in full-time faculty or staff to support this level of enrollment growth. The department has clearly been able to do more with less. During this period of growth, the department has offered additional course sections at all of the Learning Centers and has offered ever increasing numbers of online sections.

While the overwhelming majority of students enrolled in COM courses are taking the course to fulfill the college’s General Education requirement, we also offer COM programs. The number of students enrolled as COM “majors” increased by approximately 45%, and the number of graduates with COM degrees has increased by over 100% from FY 05-06 to FY 09-10. Almost no student enters Sinclair pursuing the COM degree. Virtually all COM program students make that determination after having taken the required COM general education course. The increase in “majors” is aligned with the increase in overall students in COM courses, and seems to validate that our courses pique student interest in our discipline.

The dramatic increase in graduates is perhaps a reflection of careful course offerings and the increasing availability of online courses for our program students. This graduate rate, too, is probably reflected in the program retention data, which show improvements from SP 07’s 60% to SP 10’s 65%. These numbers are considerably above the college’s numbers, which also improved during that period, but went from 56% to only 60% during the same SP 07 to SP 10 time frame.

Finally, course success percentages suggest that all COM courses are in sync with the Collegewide data, and are a bit better than the LCS divisional data. The lower numbers of success for COM 206 and COM 211 (top 45 courses) are more in line with the LCS division, which is likely due to the “required” nature of many LCS courses (for Gen Ed and the OTM). It is hypothesized that those courses would tend to have a slightly lower success percentage than program courses.

**Section II: Progress Since the Most Recent Review**

1. What was the fiscal year of the most recent Program Review for this program? 2004-05
2. Briefly summarize the goals that were listed in Section IV part E of the most recent Program Review Self-Study (this section of the Self-Study asks “What are the department’s/program’s goals and rationale for expanding and improving student learning, including new courses, programs, delivery formats and locations”)?

Goals from our self study document included:

* Offer courses that reflect the changes and growth in the discipline, while recognizing the need to be good stewards of the college’s resources.
* A new course that will likely be added to our curriculum is Introduction to Communication Theory. It appears likely that this course will be approved into the Ohio Board of Regents Communication Studies Transfer Assurance Guide. When that happens, it would guarantee transfer of that class for our majors transferring to other state schools.
* Another course in the planning stages is a course in conflict and communication.
* The department is hesitant to offer additional courses targeted to communication majors if the number of communication majors does not increase. Our major courses, beyond those four courses required of all Communication majors, currently have lower than average class sizes. If the department had more students majoring in communication, additional Communication courses could be added to the curriculum.

1. Have these goals changed since your last Program Review Self-Study?  If so, please describe the changes.

All of the goals from our 04-05 self study and review have been accomplished. Specific changes to and identification of new goals will be generated during the department’s next self-study. Informal goals to improve course outcomes, to standardize more courses, to provide teaching materials to all faculty, and to ensure the hiring of well-qualified adjunct and full-time faculty are all goals regularly pursued by the faculty in the department.

1. What progress has been made toward meeting any of the goals listed above in the past year?

Because of semester conversion, it was necessary to reduce the total number of courses in our department. The courses with the lowest enrollment numbers were the courses the departmental faculty decided to eliminate.

Improvements continue to be made for the department’s courses and curriculum. Additional changes to COM 211 have occurred as a result of assessment discussion during the quarterly speech meets. For the online sections, the addition of “automated” messages through Angel provides regular contact with students regarding drop and withdrawal deadlines and course due dates.

Specifically for COM 206 (the college’s fourth largest course, by enrollment), changes to the rubrics for the case studies were made, embedding them after each question to allow the student to more closely review answers’ adherence to required criteria, prior to assignment submission. Also, new case study assignments were developed. Variations in number of tests and frequency of case study assignments have been pilot tested in face to face and online sections of those courses, to assess ways to improve student learning outcomes.

For COM 278 (the program’s capstone course, which is completed in an independent study format), improvements included: revising the evaluation rubric; adding an essay which asked students to discuss their acquisition of the program learning outcomes; the addition of an Angel master course enhancement for all sections, which includes utilization of the “Automate” feature to automatically send students emails regarding their progress toward deadlines and reminders about portfolio submissions.

For COM 211 and COM 206 (the courses which are routinely taught by adjunct faculty), master course enhancements and faculty communities have been set up to provide faculty with standardized course content as well as teaching ideas.

1. What Recommendations for Action were made by the review team to the most recent Program Review? What progress has been made towards meeting these recommendations in the past year?

Our goals from the review meeting were to:

* Review and revise program learning outcomes to improve measurability and clarity
* Develop and implement ongoing processes for the assessment of student learning,
* Improve recruiting and training of part-time faculty
* Investigate making the BIS PowerPoint course a prerequisite to COM courses if this skill is expected of the learners; avoid duplication of content taught elsewhere.

These goals were all met prior to the past year. The second and third bullets are part of our continual process and progress in those areas was identified in section d (above).

**Section III: Assessment of Outcomes**

The Program Outcomes for this program are listed below. **At least one-third of your program outcomes must be assessed as part of this Annual Update, and across the next three years all of these program outcomes must be assessed at least once**.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communication Arts** Program Outcomes | In which courses are these program outcomes addressed? | Which of these program outcomes were assessed during the last fiscal year? | Assessment Methods  Used |
| **1)** Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, evaluate, and apply basic communication theories. | COM 206 and COM 278 |  | * COM 278 essay and submitted work * COM 206 case studies |
| **2)** Analyze communication interactions that take place in our society. | COM 206 and COM 278 |  | * COM 278 essay and submitted work * COM 206 case studies |
| **3)** Analyze technologically mediated messages and their effects on individuals and society as part of the communication process. |  |  |  |
| **4)** Communicate effectively with others in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking situations. |  |  |  |

a) For the assessment methods listed in the table above, what were the results? What changes are planned as a result of the data? How will you determine whether those changes had an impact?

Data collected from capstone assignment rubrics showed that, out of 100 points, the average score was 88 (out of 100 points).

Data from the case studies were not analyzed quantitatively; rather, responses were discussed among faculty to identify gaps and improvement opportunities. Case studies are constantly being revised based on input from faculty.

b) What other changes have been made in past years as a result of assessment of program outcomes? What evidence is there that these changes have had an impact?

Course assignments, exams, and content are regularly reviewed and improved in an effort to improve student learning. These processes have become part of the culture of the Communication department faculty.

Our continued improvements in trend data suggest that our changes are at least not scaring students away ☺, since our numbers continue to increase. Student survey data also validate student perceptions of the value of the course and course outcomes.

c) Describe general education changes/improvements in your program/department during this past academic year (09-10).

Faculty discuss expectations related to general education and most of the emphasis is clearly on oral communication competencies, however, issues related to writing competencies are routinely evaluated for all assignments. Grading criteria and expectations are identified in rubrics for course assignments.

The general education surveys have been embedded into the Angel Master Course for the capstone course.

**Section IV: Improvement Efforts for the Fiscal Year**

1. **FY 09-10:** What other improvement efforts did the department make in FY 09-10?  How successful were these efforts?  What further efforts need to be made? If your department didn’t make improvement efforts during the fiscal year, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the department over the last year and how the department plans to address them in the coming year.

Attempts were made to reduce the cycle of lower enrollment courses, to ensure a solid average class size. This seemed to be successful, as average class size increased as follows:

Fall 08: 18

Fall 09: 19

Fall 10: 20

Additional efforts were made to increase the number of sections in online delivery and at the Learning Centers. In all cases, numbers in 09-10 were higher than in 08-09.

A Communication Pathway for Tech Prep students was developed in conjunction with area high schools and the Director of Tech Prep. High school faculty are contacting our faculty for curriculum assistance, which suggests this will be a successful partnership.

1. **FY 10-11:** What improvement efforts does the department have planned for FY 10-11? How will you know whether you have been successful?

The 2010-2011 focus has been on course selection and curriculum development for semester conversion. Determination about success will be based on student enrollment numbers beginning in Fall, 2012.

Additional improvements, as outlined in the previous sections of this document, will continue to be pursued during 2010-2011.

Questions regarding completion of the Annual Update? Please contact the Director of Curriculum and Assessment at 512-2789 to schedule a time to review the template and ask any questions.