

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

### MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT 2003

INTRODUCTION. Major Field Assessment is a chronological process which involves the evaluation of student skills and opinions at all levels from freshman year to graduation and beyond to determine their needs and progress and to suggest ways in which the process might be improved. Because of the changing needs of the students, the university and society in general, Major Field Assessment must be a continuing process, and it is, therefore, important that the program set up by the Communication Department be able to accommodate change with a minimum of stress. The Department believes that the program described below will accomplish these desirable goals.

MAJOR FIELD ASSESSMENT COURSES. After considerable, sometimes rancorous, debate the Communication Department authorized a series of three 1-hour classes which will be required of all majors in the department. These classes will be included in the 2003-2004 catalogue, which is due within the month. Although some fine-tuning may be required, the Department believes that, properly augmented, these classes will fully satisfy all SACS requirements for the implementation of Major Field Assessment for undergraduates in the Communication Department.

- A. COMM. 101 (1 hour). Required of majors during their first thirty hours of college classes. The purposes of this class are to assess the knowledge and attitudes of the students at the beginning of their college careers and to prepare them to progress in an orderly fashion toward graduation and employment, or to a graduate school. The tests will be kept on file so that

they may be compared to later tests, including those given to graduating seniors.

- B. COMM 198. (1 hour). Required of majors after thirty hours. This class will evaluate the progress of the students toward graduation, emphasize practical experience, including internships, and make certain that they are developing practical skills that will aid them in their profession.
- C. COMM 498 (1 hour). Required of majors after ninety hours. This is a capstone course designed to measure the students' progress on his orderly march toward graduation. Among other projects, the students will take the departmental exit examination, -prepare curriculum vitae, take the GRE, if appropriate, and perhaps get a job.

THE DEPARTMENT TODAY. The results of the 2001-2002 Exit Survey show that graduates from the department are well satisfied with the quality of their education. The survey includes 62 graduates with a BA in Communication and 3 graduates with a BA in Communication Education. We believe that the exit survey is effectively measuring the attitudes of undergraduate and that only minor emendations, largely dealing with changes within the department, need to be made at this time.

In addition to the 36 exit survey questions required of all graduating students, BA graduates in communication also have an additional number of questions, numbered 37 to 53, designed to assess the opinions of graduates in communication concerning the strengths and weaknesses of their education.

Mixing dole with gladness, we note that the departure of Theatre from the department and the entrance of journalism will require some revisions of the departmental

exit questions for Communication These revisions will be submitted for the 2003-2004 questionnaire. Specifically, questions dealing with theatre will be dropped and questions dealing with journalism will be added.

Graduates in Communication Education take the University survey; the additional survey questions for graduates in Communication; and an additional 9 questions, numbered 45-53, largely concerned with problems of secondary teaching. In the 2001-2002 academic year, there were 3 graduates in Communication Education. In the current academic year, there are none. Because of the small number of graduates in Communication Education, the results may be considered tentative and not necessarily representative. No changes in the Communication Education questions are being considered at this time.

**MULTI-CULTURAL PERSONS.** The Communication Department is acutely aware of the fact that rapid means of communication have shrunk the world to an extent which often seems alarming to those outside the Department, and there is hardly a class which does not negotiate the difficulties presented by this new dispensation. Classes in speech, including business and professional speaking, nonverbal communication, film, and especially Intercultural Communication (Comm 410 / 510), are all vitally concerned with cultural and global perspectives. The members of the department believe that they were, and continue to be, in the vanguard of University recognition of the problems and opportunities presented by the new world of multiculturalism.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL EVALUATION.** The Master of Arts in Communication was only recently approved by the Board of Regents and has, as yet, no graduates. Instead of an exit survey, a comprehensive examination will be required of all graduates.