

# **Advancing Excellence: Toward a Second Century of Achievement**

## **The Strategic Plan of the Department of Communication University of Maryland**

May 3, 2002

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### **Preface**

Advancing Excellence: Toward a Second Century of Achievement: The Strategic Plan of the Department of Communication represents the efforts of the faculty, staff, and graduate students in the Department of Communication to prepare for the next five years. Appendix A outlines the process by which the Plan was developed.

Any planning process must confront a series of unknowns. In the case of the department, the most relevant unknowns include the state's economic health and commitment to the university, the university and college's commitment to the department, the availability of space on campus to be assigned to the department, and the opportunity of faculty in the department to receive offers from other universities and leave. Additional unknowns are the possible retirement of senior faculty, the possible failure of junior faculty to achieve promotion and tenure, as well as the possibility of significant new grants and gifts to the department.

Despite these unknowns, the department must plan for its future. It should be clear that the process of planning is more important than the resulting planning document, and that any plan needs to be reviewed regularly (as this plan will be; see section on implementation) and possibly revised, to take into account changes in the department's external and internal environments. For example, if the department hires a new faculty member in a given year, that hire's set of academic specialties should affect the specialties of the hires in subsequent years.

All the proposed initiatives in this Strategic Plan must integrate the department in the mission of the university and the College of Arts and Humanities. Reputational studies of Communication departments are likely within the next two years; therefore, every expenditure of effort and every initiative generated by this Plan must work to enhance the department's reputation on campus and in the discipline, and do so by enhancing the excellence of the department's faculty, staff, students, and programs. As a result, the work of the department's Reputation Committee and the Outreach Coordinator becomes much more important over the next two years.

The department has had the good fortune of celebrating its centennial during 2001; many of the centennial activities served to enhance the department's reputation. This Strategic Plan proposes additional reputation-enhancing events to take place over the next several years.

Many of the issues relevant to this Strategic Plan have been articulated for other purposes in the department's Self Study (Part One, <http://www.comm.umd.edu/internal/information/selfstudy1.pdf>, June 30, 2000; Part Two, <http://www.comm.umd.edu/internal/information/selfstudy2.pdf>, June 30, 2000). In addition, in December 2000, the department received the Report of the Internal Review Committee for the Department of Communication; on February 2, 2001, the chair submitted a Response to the Report of the Internal Review Committee for the Department of Communication; on May 2, 2001, the department received the Report of the External Review Committee for the Department of Communication; on June 13, 2001, the chair submitted a response to that report. On July 12, 2001, Dean Harris submitted, to the Provost, his Evaluative Report regarding the department, and, finally, on September 28, 2001, the Provost distributed his Provost's Report on the Periodic Review of the Department of Communication. Thus, this Strategic Plan has been preceded by extensive evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of the department.

### **General Strengths, Weakness, Threats, and Opportunities**

**General Strengths and Opportunities.** The department's strengths include the location of the university in the Washington metropolitan area, with its research facilities and corporate and governmental headquarters; its distinguished, active faculty; its dedicated and knowledgeable staff; the popularity of the undergraduate major; the ethnic, gender, and racial diversity of its undergraduate student population and the international diversity of its graduate student population; the great employment potential that the department's students have upon graduating; the department's culture of open communication among faculty, between faculty and staff, and between faculty and students; the department's effective internship program; and the recent initiatives in alumni relations and faculty grant applications.

The first listed strength is the department's location in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. This area is home to government offices, political headquarters, association headquarters, funding agencies, foundations, media institutions, the International Communication Association and the National Communication Association, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, Dumbarton Oaks, and other museums, libraries, and resources. Indeed, the Washington area is one of the centers of power of the United States and the world, as well as a major center for international and intercultural affairs. The availability and accessibility of the area's resources make the university attractive to potential faculty and graduate students, provide opportunities for professional development and employment, and foster several areas of research.

The department has great research opportunities, especially in the areas of global public relations, intercultural communication, political communication, health and risk communication, and social influence. Several research grants have recently been applied for or received (e.g., for the perception of the U.S. in Chinese newspapers, the perception of the credibility of the Food and Drug Administration advisory committee meeting process, the conditions and strength of effects of messages identified as fictional, and research and outreach activities associated with political advertising).

The culture of the department is marked by the faculty's strong commitment and dedication to research. This research ethic, supported by ongoing activity, creates an environment conducive to quality graduate

education. This year the department seems to have "turned the corner" in this regard: The number of active research teams that have combined the talents of graduate and undergraduate students with those of the faculty seems to be at an all-time high, and the number of publications and presentations at scholarly and professional meetings has concomitantly been increased. It is clear that the department now has a developed and strong research culture. That culture needs to be maintained and enriched.

The department's new Center for Political Communication and Civic Leadership (CPCCL) has the strong potential of becoming a significant focus for research, outreach, and training involving political discourse in the United States. The Center is planning a full range of programs and is seeking support designed to fulfill its mission of uniting "research, education, and public engagement to foster democratic communication by a diverse people." Faculty in several research areas will be able to contribute to and benefit from the success of the Center. Up to this point, neither the College nor the Campus has provided financial support for the Center.

Yet another strength is the department's outstanding colloquium series, which makes the university and disciplinary communities aware of the department and provides opportunities for student networking as well as for campus outreach.

Another strength is the university's strong, complementary academic programs in fields such as American Studies, Business and Management, Classics, English, Government and Politics, History, Journalism, Psychology, Public Affairs, Sociology, and Women's Studies. These programs help in the recruitment of the graduate students and faculty, and they support the department's research endeavors.

The diversity of the department on multiple dimensions is also a significant strength. This diversity is found in the department's research methods and in the academic background of the faculty. The department has strength in being theoretically grounded across a variety of theoretical perspectives, and in having expertise in the key methodologies of the discipline: quantitative, qualitative, historical, and critical. Additional diversity is found in the previous academic and work experience of the graduate students, and in such standard kinds of student diversity as are assessed by student nationality, gender, race and ethnicity, and age.

General Weaknesses and Threats. The intellectual mission of the department requires that the faculty teach and engage in research in the areas that it determines are essential for understanding, generating, and utilizing the knowledge of the discipline, and that capitalize on the faculty's expertise and the department's strengths. To teach an intellectually respectable graduate and undergraduate curriculum and to engage in significant research require that the department's ratio of students to permanent faculty and the department's resources be comparable to other departments in the College of Arts and Humanities. These are the department's most pressing needs.

The major threat to the department's success, and its current weakness, is simple. In the Response to the Internal Review Committee (May 2, 2001), the chair stated that

The department's most central concern is its inadequate faculty size. . . . [M]ost of the department's difficulties reflect the inadequate size of the department's tenured and tenure-track faculty . . . .

[T]he [Internal Review] Report comments that because of the limited number of faculty, class sizes are too large. The size of the faculty is inadequate to our research, teaching, and service needs.

\* \* \*

[T]he major departmental problem is not the successful service activities of the faculty, but the department's inadequate number of tenured and tenure-track faculty. Although the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities and the University Provost have strongly supported the hiring of additional faculty members for the department, the growth in the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members has not

kept pace with the growth in the number of majors. Furthermore, even prior to the recent growth, the number of departmental faculty was too small for the department's obligations.

Evidence for the insufficient number of faculty members can be shown in several ways: Based on this year's Data Indicators Book (found at <https://www.oirp.umd.edu/ExecRepts/DIB/2001/index.html>), the department's student credit hours per full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty (excluding chairs) was 386, as compared to the College average of 270, and its ratio of unduplicated headcount undergraduate majors per FTE tenured and tenure-track faculty (excluding chairs) was 85, as compared to the comparable College (including Communication) statistic of 12. These data evidence a crisis, one that is a serious threat to the continued health of the department. The inadequate number of faculty means that

- class sizes are larger than they should be, which reduces student-faculty interaction and the number of class writing assignments, which, in turn, make it more difficult for the faculty to provide guidance and recommendations for students for fellowships, graduate programs, and careers\*;  
[\*However, class sizes have been systematically reduced, from a median class size at the 400-level in AY1999-2000 of 60, to 48 in AY2000-2001, to 45 in AY2001-2002, and to 40 in AY2002-2003.]
- it is more difficult for the department's faculty to have the time necessary for research activities because of the chronic and extraordinary demands of teaching and departmental service;
- the department's graduate teaching assistants have more course sections to teach, and more students per section, than their peers in other Communication programs and in other programs on campus, which, in turn, reduces their ability to finish their degrees expeditiously and to conduct research, and makes recruitment of graduate students more difficult.

The insufficient number of faculty means that no tenured or tenure-track faculty teach courses below the 300-level. It also means that the department often must search for temporary instructors at the last minute; the knowledge of these temporary faculty with regard to university, college, and departmental policies and procedures is often limited, making the day-to-day functioning of the department more difficult. This last-minute hiring also causes stress for our students because they generally cannot know from year-to-year who their teachers will be, and they cannot rely on most teachers to provide continuing mentorship. Thus, Communication undergraduates know the faculty less well than do their peers in other majors, and faculty members will know their students less well; the faculty's ability to write effective letters of recommendation for graduate school and for jobs is thereby impaired.

The small number of permanent faculty limits the ability to create an optimal environment for research. In every department faculty members in different research areas vie to develop their own area; this competition is not a problem when each area is relatively adequate and has resources that allow for its success. If the inadequacy of the number of faculty causes acute and corrosive competition across the department's research areas, the well-being of the department will be significantly jeopardized.

The structurally based over-commitment to teaching and departmental service has several effects in addition to those cited above. For example, it makes it more difficult for untenured faculty members to do what is necessary for tenure and promotion; as stated above, it means that class sizes are relatively large, so that extensive writing projects are eliminated from the curriculum. The overall effect of this problem is that the department's reputation suffers. The department is committed to research that significantly adds to human knowledge and human well being, to teaching that opens minds to this knowledge, and to service that promotes our discipline, profession, and community. The structurally based over-commitment to teaching and departmental service works against the research reputation of the department, and thus, indirectly, even works against effective teaching and service.

The lack of a sufficient number of faculty, and the department's small number of faculty members as compared to other Communication departments at peer institutions, are impediments to the department's reputation. The College of Arts and Humanities strategic plan makes this point as well:

[O]ne of the surest lessons apparent from the 1993 National Research Council rankings was the direct correlation between size and prominence of ranking. (Pursuing Excellence, the Strategic Plan of the College of Arts and Humanities, February 26, 2001)

Another departmental weakness is its poor ratio of junior to senior faculty members. In the College of Arts and Humanities, about 80% of the current tenured and tenure-track faculty members are tenured; in the Department of Communication, the comparable proportion is about 60%. The lower proportion of tenured faculty means that it is more difficult to recruit faculty and graduate students: The department's scholarly reputation hinges on the research of a small number of faculty, few of whom have had long academic careers sufficient to develop national reputations. The heavy teaching and service loads in recent years have hampered the department's ability to secure tenure and promotion of faculty members. In fact, the time between our most recent positive promotion and tenure decision, in 2000, and the previous one, in 1978, was an agonizing twenty-two years.

In addition to the inadequate number of faculty and the small proportion of tenured faculty, there are concomitant inadequacies in the department's operating budget (the department's instructional budget per credit hour taught is currently \$87, as compared to \$188 for the College, including Communication), its technology infrastructure (the lack of up-to-date computers and essential software, video recorders, video cameras, computer projectors, printers, overhead projectors, etc.), the number of its support staff, its space for faculty, staff, and graduate assistant offices and laboratories, and its furnishings for graduate assistants. These are also clear threats to the department's ongoing efforts to achieve distinction among its peers; to various extents the Report of the Internal Review Committee for the Department of Communication and the Report of the External Review Committee for the Department of Communication make these same points.

As departments grow, some new strains may appear: First, departments often undergo Balkanization, or the creation of subgroups that are mutually distrustful. Second, departments often reduce the number of community-wide activities and, concomitantly, lose a sense of community. Third, there is the perceived loss of personal influence as departments get additional faculty and staff and become more bureaucratic. To some extent, all three strains have appeared in the department.

The Balkanization tensions that appear related to departmental growth include debates over choosing specialties for faculty hiring and arguments over indicators of prestige and influence; the tensions pit the "old timers" against the "newcomers" and the specialties that these groups represent.

Second, a larger department means that conflicts arise regarding "community" versus "society." When this department was small, many social events took place, and many involved resources (e.g., food) being provided and shared by the department—the community—members. In its current instantiation, such events are now treated as possibly onerous service obligations, the hallmark of a formalized society. If community is valued, the department will need to come to grips with this tension.

The third tension due to departmental growth is between the need for division of labor versus the desire for full involvement in decision making. As the department gets larger, there will be pressures to involve a smaller proportion of individuals in the day-to-day administrative operations of the department. This tension—bureaucracy versus full and equal involvement—may result in negative perceptions and resulting feelings of ill will.

The department must have research foci that are important to the discipline and that can be promoted for their excellence. At the same time, there must be coherence. Many Communication departments have imploded or exploded as a result of schisms between specialties, and some departments, including this one, grew as spin-offs from previous units. The department functions as a unit when it seeks resources from the

university; on campus and off campus, its reputation is as a unit. The department's tremendous needs require that it continues to work together as a unit. And, most importantly, its intellectual and research strengths come from the synergy of the faculty across the academic specialties.

Some changes in the department's procedures may be inevitable due to its increased size. One example of a change already in place is the department's Undergraduate Studies Office, currently consisting of three staff members and three graduate-student undergraduate advisors. This office definitely reduces the burden on individual faculty members in many, many ways, but in doing so it distances the faculty from many of the day-to-day problems and joys faced by the department's undergraduate students.

There are many other weaknesses the department has, and to some extent shares, with the campus: the level of graduate assistantship stipends is low; faculty salaries, especially at the junior level, are low compared to those in the discipline; support for faculty and graduate student travel is poor; the number of university fellowships is small; and the number (currently zero) of endowed department faculty chairs is low. Amelioration of each of these problems is one of the department's long-term priorities. Those priorities that can be addressed by the department are noted below.

### **Assessment, Benchmarks, and Initiatives of the Department's Teaching and Research Foci**

The department has four teaching and research foci: Intercultural Communication, Persuasion and Social Influence, Public Relations, and Rhetoric and Political Culture. Each area proposed programs to serve as comparisons for their graduate programs, undergraduate programs, research productivity, faculty quality, and faculty recruitment. Each set of these "benchmark" programs is listed below, along with an assessment of the area, and the area's special initiatives (i.e., those not mentioned or included elsewhere in this Plan; the plan for faculty hiring may be found in Appendix B).

#### **Persuasion and Social Influence**

Assessment. On June 4, 2001, in a letter to Dean Harris, the chair provided an assessment of this area as follows:

[S]ocial Influence, is, for various reasons, without a strong national reputation at this point. In our department, Social Influence is identified with quantitative methods and the examination of cognitive processes. Although the department is very strong theoretically and methodologically, there are structural factors that work against our reputation in this area. We have an inordinate number of junior faculty members here, and two of these faculty members have degrees from outside the Communication discipline. . . . [M]y ability to mentor and to participate fully in research is limited by my other responsibilities. The development of a strong reputation in this area requires hiring faculty who are successful and notable senior scholars, scholars who will enhance the department's reputation and attract the very best graduate students to our program. . . .

Thus, a critical threat to the success of the department is the limited success that faculty members in this area have had in attracting graduate applicants to be advisees as well as research team members. Until this year, most of the faculty in this area were untenured assistant professors and departmental administration reduced the research and advising activity of the department chair. On the other hand, a significant number of undergraduate courses with relatively large waitlists are typically taught by faculty members in this area, so there is great need for these faculty members even if the only consideration were the department's teaching requirements (see Appendix C).

#### **Benchmark Programs**

- Michigan State University
- Northwestern University

- Purdue University
- University of Arizona
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Initiatives. An undergraduate research pool needs to be created to support the research in this area. One or more "splash" events should be used to quickly and effectively bring this area's scholarship to national attention. An additional faculty member specializing in the quantitative study of political communication is needed. Finally, more and better recruitment efforts for quantitative graduate students are needed here.

### **Intercultural Communication**

Assessment. This area has the fewest number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members as compared to the department's other specialties. Thus, the need for additional faculty members is critical. The assessment of this area is similar to that for persuasion and social influence: Few faculty, relatively few graduate applications, no full professor in this area, and the faculty's assignment to courses with large waitlists providing some justification for the need for additional faculty in this area.

#### Benchmark Programs

- Michigan State University
- University of Arizona
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of Texas.

Initiatives. In order to enhance this area, it needs to increase the number of courses, at both the graduate and undergraduate level, that reflect this specialty. In addition, it needs to strengthen its recruitment efforts. One way of doing so is by seeking M.A.s from the top intercultural communication programs, such as from the benchmark programs identified above, as well as from the University of Hawaii, the University of Oklahoma, and California State University, Fullerton. Because there is the desire to maintain this area as one based on quantitative methods, faculty hired in this area need to have quantitative expertise.

### **Public Relations**

Assessment. The chair's letter of June 4, 2001 assessed this area as follows:

[T]he Public Relations area is strong, stronger than it ever has been. We have two senior and two junior regular faculty members in this area, and the research by these faculty members is successful and highly respected. . . .

#### Benchmark Programs

- Michigan State University
- Syracuse University
- University of Florida
- University of Georgia.

Initiatives. The initiatives identified by this area require departmental action, and they are mentioned as departmental initiatives elsewhere in this Plan. These include the need for placement services, which are available in benchmark programs. Similarly, alumni networking, which requires records on alumni, is important for career development. The major initiative in this area is the hiring of senior faculty to replace

anticipated senior faculty retirements. A departmental goal is to maintain the top-ranked public relations program in the nation. The department has achieved certification in education for public relations by the Public Relations Society of America, and the department needs to maintain that certification. In addition, the department houses one of the nine charter chapters of the Public Relations Student Society of America; the department needs to maintain and increase the strength of this student organization.

### **Rhetoric and Political Culture**

Assessment. The chair's letter of June 4, 2001 assessed this area as follows:

[O]ur Rhetoric area is . . . very strong. The faculty members in this area are primarily in political communication. This coming fall we will have two new regular faculty members in the area of political rhetoric; we will also have a visiting professor in this specialty. In addition, the newly established Center for Political Communication and Civic Leadership supports and enhances this specialty. The Rhetoric area is well established, and, as word gets out about our recent faculty hires, the department's reputation in this area will surely increase. . . .

#### Benchmark Programs

- Northwestern University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Texas A&M University
- University of Georgia
- University of Iowa
- University of Kansas.

Initiatives. The number of courses in this area needs to be increased. To increase the visibility in this area, the department needs to host and sponsor the 2004 Conference on Public Address. The department needs to support the publication of *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* when it is housed and edited in the department. A faculty member in minority rhetoric is greatly needed.

### **Plans for the Department's Graduate Program**

The Fall, 2001, Report of the Graduate Committee proposed the following goals that are supported in this Strategic Plan. The Report provides some tactics to achieve these goals, which are not reproduced here, but are incorporated by reference. The Graduate Studies Committee is charged with reviewing progress towards these goals annually.

To improve the quality of the graduate program, the entering classes of graduate students is to be improved as follows:

- Within five years, increase the average G.R.E. (verbal plus quantitative score) to 1350 from its current 1263;
- Within five years, increase the average last 60 hour undergraduate G.P.A. to 3.7 from its current 3.6;
- Within five years, increase the percentage of historically under-represented groups (African American, Native American, Latino/a, Asian American) in the program to 15% from its current 11%.

To increase the participation of graduate students in research,



- Within five years, increase the average number of convention, conference, or symposia presentations to 25 per year from its current 10 per year;
- Within five years, increase the average number of publications in appropriate journals to 6 per year from its current 1 per year;
- Offer COMM718 regularly, and monitor the one-credit independent study course to ensure that students receiving financial support take their full ten-credit load.

The department needs to maintain its excellent record in M.A. graduation time-to-degree; currently 90% of full-time M.A. students graduate within two years.

To improve the department's time-to-degree for its Ph.D. students,

- Within five years, reduce the average time-to-degree for Ph.D. students to 6.0 years from its current 7.2 years.

To improve the placement of the graduate program's Ph.D. recipients,

- Over five years, increase the number of placements at Research/Doctoral Extensive Universities to seven, as compared to five in the last five years;
- Over five years, increase the number of placements at universities with Ph.D. programs in Communication departments at Carnegie Research/Doctoral Extensive Universities to 2, as compared to none in last five years.

To support the administrative activities of the Director of Graduate Studies,

- The department will provide a stipend for the Director of Graduate Studies for service in the summer, and will provide an appropriate mix of course releases, graduate assistant support, and staff support.

### **Plans for the Department's Undergraduate Program**

The Strategic Plan for the Undergraduate Studies Program (November 21, 2001) proposed the following goals that are supported in this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan for the Undergraduate Studies Program provides some tactics to achieve these goals, which are not reproduced here, but are incorporated by reference. The Undergraduate Studies Committee is charged with reviewing progress towards these goals annually.

In the face of inadequate resources, the undergraduate program must capitalize on the department's existing strengths and eliminate those courses not part of those strengths for which the department lacks resources.

To build on the strengths,

- The department will offer courses in five areas of concentration that prepare its students for professional and academic careers and that provide its students with the intellectual, analytical and technical competencies required to be successful in the professions and in graduate work. The department will title the areas (and change titles as indicated) as follows:

Communication and Education (preparation for teaching communication in secondary schools);

Communication Studies (the general communication interest area);

Public Relations (applied communication and relationships between publics and organizations);

Rhetoric and Political Culture (the history, theory, strategies, and analysis of public discourse);

Social Influence (strategies of influence by mediated, cultural, and interpersonal means).

- Consistent with Building on Excellence: The Next Steps, The Strategic Plan for the University of Maryland, College Park (May 3, 2000; found at [http://www.inform.umd.edu/provost/Strategic\\_Planning/Plan.html](http://www.inform.umd.edu/provost/Strategic_Planning/Plan.html)), the department will take a strong leadership role in developing the Shady Grove campus as a site for daytime upper-division undergraduate instruction.

As previously explained, the department's resources are stretched to their limits. This resource issue reduces the quality of instruction due to increased class size, inability to mentor undergraduate majors, fewer writing assignments in courses, and a relatively high proportion of temporary faculty. In addition, large classes limit the development of student-faculty ties, which reduces the faculty's ability to write letters of recommendation for fellowships, graduate school, and jobs, and to engage in other such mentoring activities. The recently approved limited enrollment program (LEP) should, when fully implemented, reduce the number of the department's undergraduate majors. However, implementing the LEP requires administrative support.

To reduce the excessive number of undergraduate majors fairly and appropriately,

- The department's Undergraduate Studies Office will monitor the implementation of admission to the major as specified by the LEP, for directly admitted freshmen as well as for external and internal transfers;
- The department's Undergraduate Studies Office will coordinate the department's LEP with the LEP Coordinator within the university's Office of Admissions.

To facilitate the in-class interaction necessary for enhanced teaching and learning, and to increase the number of writing assignments that can reasonably be assigned in the undergraduate curriculum,

- Class size in the 300-400 level courses will be reduced from 45 to 35.

To insure that undergraduate majors can graduate within four years,

- A sufficient number of course sections for required courses will be provided each semester. (See Appendix C.)

To improve the "connectedness" of students with the discipline, with the faculty, with other students, with alumni, with the community at large, and with the university community,

- To make the programs of undergraduate majors coherent, undergraduate majors will be required to present proposals to explain and justify their selection of the required cognate area of study;
- Undergraduate majors will be encouraged to get involved in departmental governance and to participate in departmental events;
- Undergraduate majors will be encouraged to network with alumni by (a) becoming members in professional organizations; (b) actively participating in professional organizations' events; (c) mentoring other students to facilitate academic and professional success; and (d) increasing the

number of undergraduate majors involved in research and professional events;

- The department will support service learning in relevant classes and expand and develop the internship program to address students' professional needs;
- The department will work with the university's Career Center and the College of Arts and Humanities Office of Student Affairs to enable the department's undergraduate majors to have access to effective career counseling and placement services.

To increase the "connectedness" of the undergraduate program to the general University of Maryland student body,

- The department will add courses that satisfy university CORE requirements.

To enhance the experience of the department's better undergraduate majors, the department will

- Implement the revised Honors Program and increase the number of undergraduate majors who participate in it;
- Nominate each year three faculty members to its standing Honors Committee to evaluate the applications and research proposals of undergraduate majors applying for this program;
- Develop activities and procedures that will increase the number of undergraduate majors participating on faculty-directed research teams;
- Facilitate the selection of students to Lambda Pi Eta;
- Encourage participation in undergraduate honors conferences;
- Increase the number of undergraduate majors nominated for scholarships and awards for academic excellence;
- Recognize the academic achievements of the department's honors students.

To support the performance and professional development of the department's students,

- The department will establish a studio equipped with quality camera, lighting, a PowerPoint projector, a laptop computer, a video playback system, and an appropriate editing and duplicating system;
- The department will add teaching about Web design to the curriculum;
- The department will investigate the creation of a new course emphasizing graphic design and layout.

To facilitate faculty research, and to provide departmental undergraduates with first-hand experience as research participants,

- A student research participant pool will be created.

To improve the administrative functioning of the department's Undergraduate Studies Office,

- Funds for additional staff will be sought, so that the office can have an administrative assistant, three full-time advisors with master's degrees in counseling or related fields; three full-time (20 hours per week) graduate assistants; a full-time media technician; a part-time Assistant to the Director of the Basic Course; and the equivalent of a full-time graduate assistant for the Outreach Coordinator.

### **Plans for the Department's General Health and Administration**

As the department gets larger, with new faculty, staff, graduate assistants, graduate scholars, and graduate fellows, there is an increased division of labor in the department, which results in specialized "pockets" of expertise. However, to administer the department effectively, those involved with departmental governance ought to be knowledgeable about the various departmental functions and services. The department's staff have valuable knowledge and perspective on the department, and this knowledge and perspective should be exploited more than it currently is. Therefore,

- The department will increase staff involvement in departmental decision making.

According to Pursuing Excellence, the Strategic Plan of the College of Arts and Humanities (February 26, 2001), "The content and focus of many of our disciplines renders us leaders, not only in the internationalization of the campus, but also in the area of diversity, both as it relates to curriculum and as it is reflected in the composition of our faculty and student body." The Department of Communication also seeks to be a leader in this area. Although the department's faculty is diverse in disciplinary interests and methodology, and in gender, it is less diverse with regard to race and ethnicity.

To increase the diversity of the faculty,

- The department will work with the University's Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity to (a) attempt to establish post-doctoral appointments that could develop into targeted faculty hires, and (b) create visiting faculty opportunities for Communication Ph.D.s from under-represented groups;
- The chair will be responsible for seeking targeted hires that enhance the racial and ethnic diversity of the faculty.

To enable the department to achieve its teaching and research goals, it will need to have balanced growth to about 30 faculty members, 10 staff members, and 100 full-time graduate students. The department currently needs additional space for its personnel; it will certainly need more space as the anticipated increase in personnel occurs. This space should be all in one contiguous area so as to maximize the ability of the faculty, staff, and students to interact and function effectively. In addition, spatial contiguity works against possible axes of Balkanization.

To meet the needs for additional space,

- The department will work to establish a Communication Department building, which will house a media center, research laboratories, a computer laboratory, and the offices essential to the department. This initiative will require fund-raising and alumni support.

Research grants allow faculty members to generate knowledge as well as to disseminate it. Furthermore, the reputation of the department is enhanced by successful funded research. To increase the number of research grant applications,

- The department will create policies that encourage grant application by all faculty members such as the policy that exists for the department's untenured faculty.

To prepare the department for its anticipated growth,

- The department's Faculty Advisory Committee will review how large departments, such as English and History in the College of Arts and Humanities, and Departments of Communication at peer and benchmark institutions, deal with various administrative matters, and recommend to the chair and the Departmental Assembly such procedural changes that it deems necessary or desirable.

The reputation of the faculty is enhanced by attendance at scholarly and professional meetings. In addition, such attendance increases the department's ability to recruit graduate students, to disseminate the results of its research, and to interact with colleagues, thereby gaining knowledge about developments in the discipline.

To encourage attendance and participation at scholarly and professional conferences,

- A greater amount of the department's budget should be allotted to faculty and graduate student travel.

To increase the centrality and visibility of the department's Center for Political Communication and Civic Leadership, and to exploit the department's location near several significant archives,

- The department will promote research and faculty hiring that support archival research.

To eliminate the need for last-minute hiring of temporary faculty, and thereby to stabilize course offerings and departmental teaching efforts (see p. 6),

- The department will work with the College of Arts and Humanities and the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean for Undergraduate Studies so that ACCESS funds and other soft funds will be guaranteed on a multiple-year basis.

To prepare for future hires and to focus the department on its existing strengths,

- The department will review its mission statement and rewrite it as necessary.

To deal with the needs of untenured tenure-track faculty for promotion and tenure, and for tenured associate professors for promotion,

- The department will reduce as much as possible the service burden of untenured tenure-track faculty, and will consult with associate professors to create mechanisms that will increase the likelihood that they can do whatever is necessary for promotion.

The department has changed dramatically in the last four years, and many members of the communication discipline, the campus community, and communication professionals are unaware of the department's recent successes. In addition, initiatives such as fund raising, establishing a Department of Communication building, and endowing a professorship and one or more scholarships or fellowships require developing strong relations with alumni.

To publicize the department's accomplishments, and to increase the success of departmental fund raising,

- The department's Reputation Committee and Outreach Coordinator will actively pursue ways of enhancing the reputation of the department, and the department chair and Outreach Coordinator

will work with University Relations and the College Development Office to develop and support departmental fund raising and alumni relations efforts.

### **Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

Several groups are charged with implementing this Strategic Plan. Unless otherwise assigned in this Strategic Plan, the implementation responsibilities are as follows: First, each research group is charged with working on its initiatives (i.e., those that can be proposed and accomplished by the group), as well as on its assessment of progress in relation to its specified benchmark programs. Second, the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee are charged with working on the initiatives that fall under their rubrics. Third, the Faculty Advisory Committee is charged with working on the initiatives that refer to the department's general health and administration. The Strategic Plan also includes initiatives specifically assigned to the department chair, the Reputation Committee, the Outreach Coordinator, and the Undergraduate Studies Office; these persons and groups are charged with implementing their respective initiatives.

The department will review progress toward implementing this Plan, and review the appropriateness of the Plan, at a meeting to take place no later than May 1, 2004. At that time the Plan may be modified. Each office, person, or group with responsibilities for implementing aspects of the Plan will, prior to that meeting, prepare a report assessing its progress.

### **Conclusion**

The Report of the External Review of the Department of Communication (May 4, 2001) said that

. . . [T]he Department is now well positioned to strengthen its role in the College and to become a leading center for scholarship and research in the discipline. (cover letter)

. . . [T] Department is in a position to improve its status within the field of Communication and to become a nationally prominent center of excellence. (p. 5)

With this Strategic Plan, the department is one step closer to achieving these goals. In the next five years the department's efforts need to be focused on great accomplishments, so that the potential shown today becomes the reality of the future.

Under this Plan, the department will be advancing its existing excellence, and moving toward a second century of achievement.

### **Appendix A. Procedure for the Development of this Strategic Plan**

Stage 1. Chair distributes tentative procedures to Faculty Advisory Committee.

Stage 2. Faculty Advisory Committee discusses and amends proposed procedure.

Stage 3. Departmental Assembly discusses and approves procedure.

Stage 4. Faculty members, staff, and graduate students convene as research groups, and are charged with nominating benchmark programs, and reviewing the group's strengths, weaknesses, contributions to departmental diversity, environmental opportunities and threats, initiatives needed to reach or exceed its benchmarks, and resources needed for its initiatives. Similar reports are prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Stage 5. The Faculty Advisory Committee reviews these reports, and prepares questions for itself as well as for various departmental committees, including the Graduate Studies Committee, the Undergraduate Studies Committee, the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, and the Reputation Committee.

Stage 6. The committees respond to the questions posed to them.

Stage 7. The Faculty Advisory Committee reviews and evaluates the responses and the proposed initiatives.

Stage 8. The chair prepares a draft Strategic Plan.

Stage 9. The Faculty Advisory Committee reviews the draft Strategic Plan, suggesting changes.

Stage 10. The chair revises the draft Plan, and submits it to the Departmental Assembly.

Stage 11. The Departmental Assembly reviews the draft Strategic Plan, and endorses it.

Stage 12. The department will review progress toward the initiatives of the Plan, and the Plan itself, at a meeting to take place no later than May 1, 2004.

### **Appendix B. Plan for Faculty Hiring**

Former Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Gregory L. Geoffroy noted the following in his "farewell address" to the Campus Senate:

. . . I would like to highlight just a few areas where I think the University needs to be especially diligent in not neglecting or to give increased attention. First and foremost, the University must continue to put great energy in recruiting, retaining, and developing the talents of outstanding faculty. Nothing, nothing is more important for the advancement of the institution than great faculty . . . ("Address to the University Senate," May 10, 2001, found at <http://www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/provost/.www/SenateAddress.html>.)

With the goal of developing a great faculty for the Department of Communication, one which will support the goals of each of the department's research areas, distinguished faculty at various ranks must be hired. In addition, the current untenured faculty members must be supported so that promotion and tenure are within their reach. Below is a very tentative hiring schedule for additional faculty members. Recall some of the unknowns described on p. 3 of this Plan: the opportunity of faculty in the department to receive offers from other universities and leave; the possible retirement of senior faculty; and the possible failure of junior faculty to achieve promotion and tenure. An even greater unknown is the support by the College of Arts and Humanities for these faculty hires. Although by all measures the workload of the department's faculty is significantly above the level of the faculty in the rest of the College of Arts and Humanities, this fact alone will not and should not be sufficient for the college or the university to provide the needed level of support for the department. Rather, the hiring of additional faculty needs to be justified by the excellence of the existing faculty, and by the ability that the additional departmental faculty will have to move the department to the top of the discipline and to keep it there.

There are strong intellectual rationales for the hiring that is being proposed. Hiring should be justified primarily by the need to deepen and complement the research of the current faculty, and to build upon the faculty's strengths. That is the case with the proposed hiring in this Plan.

The department will seek to strengthen the area of persuasion and social influence by hiring scholars studying fundamental influence processes; such scholars' work is germane and complementary to the department's faculty in the other research areas. The theoretical underpinnings of influence activities such as communication campaigns and message design are found in the study of cognitive processes,

information diffusion, and interpersonal, mediated, and organizational communication. The department will seek scholars who have research programs that deal with these fundamental processes.

The lack of a sufficient number of senior faculty members in persuasion and social influence makes the goal of hiring such a faculty member a high priority. This year the department attempted to hire a senior person in this area and failed; this search must be renewed, and additional quantitative scholars of social influence need to be hired to support and develop this area.

The department's specialization in political culture is well complemented by quantitative researchers in political communication; a new hire in political communication would strengthen the tie across the department's areas as well have a potential tie to the resources of the metropolitan area.

The faculty members in intercultural communication support research in persuasion and social influence through their investigations linking cognitive and cultural processes. Research relating cognitive and cultural processes is currently experiencing a resurgence in the social sciences generally, and the department is poised to be a disciplinary leader for this highly specialized focus. Furthermore, the intercultural communication area complements the study of global public relations.

Public relations scholars study applied communication and relationships between publics and organizations. Although there is no official decision on any faculty retirements in the department, it is likely that the two senior faculty members in public relations will retire soon. To insure that the highly rated program in this area retains its top ranking, hires at the senior level are essential. The department's public relations area focuses on public relations management, theory, and techniques, and specialists with these foci will be sought.

The area of rhetoric and political culture emphasizes the department's commitment to investigate the power of communication to influence social and political processes. The department's faculty in this area employ historical and critical methods to examine public texts in their historical, cultural, and political contexts. The goal of the rhetorical approach is to understand the factors that produced such texts and give them meaning.

Studying political culture at the University of Maryland is especially attractive given the university's location. The department's faculty have easy access to resources that include the Library of Congress and the National Archives, as well as to important electronic and print media.

The area of rhetoric and political culture, though thriving, lacks sufficient specialists in minority rhetoric, the rhetoric of the media, and the history of rhetoric. Given the department's location and the anticipated successes of the CPCCL, hiring a specialist in archival research would be especially attractive.

When hiring in the area of rhetoric and political culture is completed, those interested in understanding rhetoric and political culture—its history, methods, and effects—would not be able to find a department with a better configuration of scholars in this specialty.

This appendix of the Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually prior to responding to the request for faculty hiring that comes from the Dean of the College. With the caveats listed above, the proposed list of faculty searches (excluding possible targeted searches) is as follows:

Proposed Search Year	Proposed Start, Fall	Specialty	Rank
2002	2003	Persuasion & Social Influence	Senior
2002	2003	Rhetoric (of Minority)	Open



2003	2004	Public Relations	Senior
2003	2004	Public Relations	Open
2003	2004	Intercultural Communication	Senior
2003	2004	Persuasion & Social Influence (Political)	Senior
2004	2005	Public Relations	Senior
2004	2005	Intercultural Communication	Junior
2004	2005	Rhetoric (Media)	Open
2005	2006	Public Relations	Junior
2005	2006	Persuasion & Social Influence	Open
2006	2007	Rhetoric (History/Archival)	Open

The addition of these twelve faculty lines over the next five years and the possible retirement of two faculty members will result in a department of twenty-six tenured or tenure-track faculty members. If the number of undergraduate majors is reduced to 800 in this time period, the ratio of unduplicated headcount undergraduate majors per FTE tenured and tenure-track faculty (excluding chairs) will be reduced from 85 to 32, which compares to the current comparable College (including Communication) statistic of 12. Thus, this level of increase in number of faculty members is quite modest and reasonable. Furthermore, this increase in permanent faculty will be accompanied by a reduction in the number of temporary faculty members, reducing or eliminating the problems described elsewhere in this Plan. Under this plan the ratio of tenured to untenured faculty would likely still be significantly less than the corresponding College of Arts and Humanities ratio.

Even more importantly, the addition of these permanent faculty members will achieve the department's goal of becoming a "nationally prominent center of excellence," and "a leading center for scholarship and research in the discipline." These hires will advance the department's existing excellence, and move us toward a second century of achievement.

**Appendix C. Communication Department Undergraduate Courses Seats and Waitlist Size, by Semester and Course\***

Course	Fall, 2001		Fall, 2002	
	Seats Offered	Waitlist + Oversubscription	Seat Limit	Waitlist + Oversubscription
107	934	21	960	0
125	48	3	42	7
200	100	0	60	0
220	60	7	60	13
230	96	2	88	-6
250	270	38	270	-144
324	120	11	120	66
330	90	15	80	15
350	140	2	160	-25
351	54	-10	36	6
352	54	-15	36	-12
360	120	22	100	49
370	45	10	40	14
400	180	53	160	115
401	235	27	200	46
402	90	26	120	109
424	65	18	65	16
430	15	-5	15	-15
435			40	13
450	110	7	80	-18
453	90	11	40	29
455	45	5		
460	90	4	40	25
470	45	25	40	54
475	45	12	40	15
483	40	-13	40	-14
498C			40	0
498E	45	0		
498R	45	7		

\*Excludes individual instruction courses and internship. Waitlist for Fall, 2001 is as of day 5 of the semester. Information for Fall, 2002 as of April 30, 2002. "Seat limit" for Fall, 2002 does not equal seats offered (i.e., for some courses, the seat limit represents approximately 90% of the seats offered for each

class; for other courses, the seat limit equals the seats offered). Waitlists for Fall, 2002 reflect the total limit across sections (i.e., if one section has a waitlist of 3, but another section of the same course has three openings, the waitlist is reported as 0).