Mission Statement

The Communication Department advances unique forms of human expression through the performing arts, media, and public/organizational and interpersonal interaction to prepare students to think critically, develop a multicultural understanding, enrich society and select appropriate career paths. The Department provides students with quality graduate and undergraduate programs. The Communication Department will continue to strive for excellence by pursuing a multi-pronged approach to enhance the areas of teaching, professional achievement and service in a student-centered, intellectually stimulating environment.

In pursuit of our mission we will work on the following goal-specific objectives and strategies:

Goal 1: Instruction; Student Learning; Curriculum

The Communication Department will continue to provide quality undergraduate and graduate programs that cultivate active learning, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary perspectives and meet the mission statement of the Department and of the College of Arts & Humanities.

Measurable Objectives

1. Review the Communication Department Mission Statement, formulate learning outcomes for general education courses in the Department, and align the departmental mission statements to the college mission statement in one year.

   Strategies:
   ♦ Seek Department approval of the department mission statement.
   ♦ Review Communication classes in the core curriculum for their alignment with the goals and learning outcomes established for general education in one year.

2. Increase the integration of instructional technology in Communication classes in two years.

   Strategies:
   ♦ Recognize faculty efforts to integrate instructional technology in tenure, promotion and merit decisions.
   ♦ Encourage faculty to use mediated classrooms.
♦ Seek funds through HEAF to increase the number of mediated classrooms.
♦ Encourage faculty to teach on-line classes and to get involved in distance learning.
♦ Determine the costs and equipment needed to develop a computer lab.
♦ Seek funds through HEAF for computer lab.
♦ Hire a technician to supervise and maintain the labs.

3. Increase enrollment of Communication majors in the Honors Studies Program by 10% in three (3) years

**Strategies:**
♦ Work with the Honors Studies Program in recruitment.
♦ Revitalize the Communication Department Courses that are classified as honors classes.

4. Develop and implement critical thinking in all Communication Department courses two (2) years.

**Strategies:**
♦ Encourage faculty to refer students to the University Writing Center to support critical thinking.
♦ Require the integration of critical thinking approaches in the curriculum of all Communication courses.

5. Develop and implement teacher preparation programs in all Communication certification areas within three (3) years.

**Strategies:**
♦ Hire one tenure-track faculty member specializing in teacher preparation.
♦ Implement workshops to help students’ performance on the ExCET.
♦ Work with the Curriculum Committee and the TEC to include a basic communication course in certification plans.
♦ Revise the certification programs to bring them in line with TEKS standards.

6. Help revise current interdisciplinary degree programs and provide input for new interdisciplinary programs in three (3) years

**Strategies:**
♦ Determine the role of the Communication Department in COAH interdisciplinary programs.
♦ Work with the Center for International Studies in developing a degree in International Relations.
♦ Explore the development of a joint major in communication and Spanish.

7. Develop the area of creative drama/children’s theatre in three (3) years

**Strategies:**
♦ Hire a creative drama/children’s theatre specialist.
♦ Expand course offerings.
♦ Develop after school/summer classes.
Goal 2: Faculty

The Communication Department will recruit and retain highly qualified faculty by providing an environment that promotes and rewards excellence in teaching, research, service, and student success.

**Measurable Objectives**

1. Increase the number of applicants from doctoral/research-extensive universities by 25% in three (3) years

   **Strategies:**
   - Each division in the Communication Department will develop a line of communication with similar departments/divisions at research universities.
   - Encourage faculty in the Communication Department to seek collaborative research efforts with faculty at doctoral/research-extensive universities to facilitate networking with them.
   - Encourage faculty engaged in creative activities to seek collaborative creative efforts with faculty at other institutes.

2. Increase the number of qualified faculty applicants per academic vacancy in the Communication Department by 25% in two (2) years.

   **Strategies:**
   - Improve advertising strategy by advertising in specialized publications.
   - Request competitive salaries to attract qualified faculty.
   - Start the search process as early as possible.
   - Conduct a thorough reference check on eligible candidates.

3. Retain 30% of the newly hired faculty in the Department of Communication in 5 years.

   **Strategies:**
   - Develop a mentorship program for new faculty.
   - Implement a departmental orientation for new faculty.
   - Guide new Communication Dept. faculty to utilize the Office of Sponsored Projects for support of research/scholarship efforts.
   - Guide new Comm. Dept. faculty to seek support from the Faculty Development Council and Faculty Research Council.
   - Encourage new Comm. Dept. faculty to utilize the Center for Distance Learning and Teaching Excellence in order to promote technology-based delivery of instruction.
   - Publish the contributions in campus and public periodicals of outstanding Communication Dept. faculty for their teaching effectiveness, professional achievement/scholarship and professional service, and reward these efforts in the annual faculty evaluation/merit cycle.
4. Increase the number of faculty members integrating instructional technology in Communication courses by 25% in two (2) years.

**Strategies:** (same as Goal 1, Objective 2, Strategies 1&2)
- Recognize faculty efforts to integrate instructional technology in tenure, promotion and merit decisions.
- Seek funds through HEAF to increase the number of mediated classrooms.

### Goal 3: Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activities

The Communication department will facilitate excellence in scholarship, research, and/or creative activities for the enhancement of knowledge that can be shared with the public through presentation, publication, or performance.

**Measurable Objectives**

1. Increase the number of Communication Department faculty who have developed a 3-year plan/proposal for scholarship by 50% in three (3) years.
2. Increase the number of Communication Department faculty designated as research/creative activity faculty to 80% by AY 2006.
3. Increase the number of Communication Department applications for sponsored grants by 20% per year for the next five (5) years.
4. Increase the number of funded sponsored grants to Communication Department faculty by 10% per year for the next five (5) years.

**Strategies:**
- Clarify and promote the research agenda of the College to the Communication Department faculty.
- Continue to seek increased funding to acquire larger numbers of research assistants.
- Increase Communication Department submissions to the Faculty Research Council.
- Continue to recognize and reward Communication Department faculty members for scholarship/research/creative activities in terms of merit and tenure/promotion.
- Seek additional travel funds to assist faculty in presenting research at professional conferences.
- Encourage Communication Department faculty to utilize the services offered by the Office of Sponsored Research.
- Arrange faculty tours of the library to increase level of awareness of available resources.
- Assist Communication Department faculty in seeking grants and creative activities outlets outside regular university sources.

5. NA

6. Participate in the proposal for a COAH doctoral program which is scheduled by 2006.

**Strategies:**
- Join the COAH committee set up to explore the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program.
- Explore the role of the Communication Department in the doctoral program.
Goal 4: Development and Service

The Communication Department will encourage and support ongoing professional and academic development activities by faculty and students within a multi-cultural environment.

**MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

**[Professional activities]**
1. Work with the administration to provide increased opportunities for faculty and students to be involved in professional development activities by 20% in three (3) years.

   **Strategies:**
   - Obtain funding for students to attend student academic competitions through the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program.
   - Increase internship opportunities for Communication Department students by working closely with professional counterparts.
   - Work with the Coop Office at UTPA to obtain more internship opportunities.
   - Invite professional speakers to the department.
   - Encourage community members to audition for the theatre plays.

**[University activities]**
2. Participate in University and COAH-sponsored multicultural activities on campus by an increase of 25% in three (3) years.

   **Strategies:**
   - Continue to work with the Center for International Studies on the undergraduate and graduate degrees in International Relations.
   - Encourage faculty and students to participate in various multi-cultural events held on campus.
   - Work with the Center for International Studies on exchange programs with other countries.
   - Develop cooperative programs with Mexican theatre artists.
   - Explore the feasibility of a Latino Center for Theatre/TV/Film.

**[Community service activities]**
3. Increase service-learning opportunities for Communication Department faculty and students by 20% by 2002.

   **Strategies:**
   - Encourage the development of community projects and volunteerism for classes within the Communication Department.
   - Encourage faculty to engage in speaking/creative activities on and off campus in the United States, in Mexico and Internationally.
Increase opportunities for pre-college students to participate in departmental activities and classes through continuing and cooperative education classes.

Goal 5: Student Recruitment, Development, Retention, Placement

The Communication Department will provide effective student recruitment, development, retention, and placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.

**Measurable Objectives**

**[Recruitment aspect]**

1. **Increase the number of Communication majors and minors by 10% by 2004.**

   **Strategies:**
   - The department will develop more pamphlets for majors and minors.
   - The department will send the information to all campus advisors and the community.
   - Continue publishing the departmental newsletter.
   - Continue with theatre publicity.
   - Promote the new Masters Program in Communication.
   - Increase the number of faculty who visit high schools.
   - Encourage high school teachers to bring their students for tours of the department.
   - Producing recruiting videos for department and for each area within the department.

2. **Increase the number of Communication Department faculty who are engaged in ongoing recruiting activities by 25% in three (3) years.**

   **Strategies:**
   - Complete articulation agreements with community and technical colleges in two years.
   - Increase the participation of the Communication Department at University recruitment events.
   - Increase the participation of the Communication Department at regional professional meetings with student recruitment components.

3. **Increase faculty involvement in student development activities by 25% in two (2) years.**

   **Strategies:**
   - Inform the Communication Department faculty about the COAH URAP representative’s involvement and availability for student development.
♦ Encourage faculty to participate in student development.
♦ Develop incentives for faculty to participate in student development.

4. Increase the pass rate in the Communication Department for each teacher certification area to 90% in three (3) years.

Strategies:
♦ Provide more extensive ExCET workshops for teacher preparation students in all Communication fields.
♦ Hire an educator to coordinate ExCET preparation.
♦ Align course content with TEKS standards.

5. Increase the six-year graduation rate of Communication majors by 5% in five (5) years.

Strategies:
♦ Improve the orientation and advisement efforts of the Communication Department.
♦ Increase the cooperation between URAP and the Communication Department to identify students with low GPA’s to get them counseling.
♦ Schedule classes with minimal conflict for students.
♦ Rotate classes as often as possible to ensure availability of required classes for graduation.
♦ Encourage and assist students in seeking financial aid resources.

6. Increase the number of Communication Department activities that promote the placement of graduates entering graduate school or employment related to their degree by 40% in two (2) years.

Strategies:
♦ Coordinate with the Office of Career Placement Services to develop or expand placement programs designed to promote and serve a diverse student population.
♦ Work with the Alumni Office to develop strategies for tracking the number of students in each discipline who are successfully placed in jobs or accepted in graduate or doctoral programs after graduation.
♦ Review and revise graduate curriculum to challenge and prepare our graduate students to enroll in doctoral programs.
♦ Develop a system by which employers and students can connect through the department.
♦ Encourage and assist students in attending appropriate professional organization meetings with placement service.

Goal 6: Planning, Assessment

The Communication Department will develop and coordinate an ongoing planning, evaluation, and dissemination process designed to ensure academic excellence.
## Measurable Objectives

1. Work with COAH in developing a systematic planning and evaluation process for the College and for the Communication Department by AY 2003.

**Strategies:**
- Establish learning outcomes for each Communication Department Division.
- Develop a planning and evaluation process for general education classes within the Communication Department.
- Review the current methods of assessing teaching effectiveness in the Communication Department.
- Investigate the feasibility of accreditation for the different programs within the Communication Department.
- Maintain the accreditation status of the theatre division of the Communication Department.

2. Use results of assessment to begin revisions of Communication Department academic programs by 2004

**Strategies:**
- Prepare for re-accreditation processes for theatre due in 2004.

### Goal 7: Resources

The Communication Department will identify, increase availability, and ensure appropriate utilization of resources that support academic programs, faculty, students, and staff.

## Measurable Objectives

[Identify resources]

1. Increase the number of applications for external funding by 25% in three (3) years.

**Strategies:**
- Disseminate information about the Office of Sponsored Projects and other sources of funding to Communication Department faculty.
- Encourage the faculty to apply for external funding to support academic programs, research efforts, creative activities, and student involvement.

2. Increase the number of contacts between the Communication Department and community businesses/organizations by 25% in three (3) years.

**Strategy:**
- Collaborate with the Division of External Affairs to identify community resources.
- Collaborate with the Division of External Affairs to identify national resources.
3. Formalize the allocation of travel funds to Communication Department faculty

**Strategies:**
- Review the criteria for the allocation of travel funds in the Communication Department.
- Prioritize requests for travel funds based on the established criteria.

4. Decrease the number of small classes by 25% in two (2) years.

**Strategies:**
- Review faculty workload.
- Review class-scheduling options to reduce the use of small classes.
- Increase the number of large sections for lecture-based courses.
- Remain committed to small class requirements of performance-intensive classes

5. Increase the amount of external funding received from successful grant applications by Communication Department faculty by 25% in three (3) years.

**Strategies:**
- Use the assistance that will be provided by COAH in developing applications for external funding.
- Work with the Office of Sponsored Research to establish a list of external funding agencies for their respective disciplines.

6. Increase the level of community support the Communication Department receives by 25% in three (3) years.

**Strategies:**
- Collaborate with the Division of External Affairs to develop campaigns to seek community support.
- Establish a Communication Department Alumni Association and solicit funds.

[Ensure appropriate utilization of resources]

7. Improve the classroom space utilization rate by 10% in two (2) years.

**Strategy:**
- Develop and implement a system of coordinated scheduling of classes in the three divisions of the Communication Dept.

8. Improve the instructional laboratory utilization rate by 20% in two (2) years.

**Strategy:**
- Request funding for a computer laboratory (same as strategy 6, objective 2, goal 1)
Goal 8: Leadership

The Communication Department will provide academic leadership for its students, faculty and for the community.

**Measurable Objectives**

1. Enhance the productivity of the Communication Department Office by AY 2003

   **Strategies:**
   - Revise departmental policies and procedures.
   - Keep faculty and staff current with university and departmental procedures.
   - Increase faculty and staff accountability.
   - Maintain effective administrative procedures.

2. Increase by 25% in two (2) years, the opportunities for the Communication Department to enhance their chair’s leadership skills.

   **Strategies:**
   - Seek opportunities for leadership training.
   - Seek resources for leadership training.
3. Upgrade the level of communication by the Communication Department by AY 2003.

**Strategies:**
- Provide a comprehensive Web site as a resource for the Communication Department faculty, students and staff.
- Continue utilizing a listserv for all Communication faculty and staff to facilitate communication.
- Disseminate departmental meeting minutes to all Communication Department faculty.
- Continue with open-door policy established by the Communication Department.
- Encourage faculty to participate in areas of the department not directly related to the individual’s discipline.