COMM 109 Recertification proposal (2011-2012) example

Course description

(ACE 2) COMM 109. Fundamentals of Human Communication (3 cr) Prereq: Freshman-sophomore level; juniors and seniors by permission only.
Theory and practice in communication, including discussions and practical experiences in communication process, language, self-concept, perception, interviewing, group communication, audience analysis, public speaking, feedback, and listening.

Original Certification Proposal

Outcome(s)

SLO2: Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: (a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials, (b) by leading and participating in problem-solving teams, (c) by employing a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships, or (d) by creating and interpreting visual information.

1. Describe opportunities students should have to learn the outcome. How is the learning objective embedded in the course?

   SLO2. Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: (a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials

   The primary goal of the Comm. 109 course is to take students with minimal public speaking experience, exposure to public speaking, and other communication practices and teach them about the fundamentals of oral communication. The course specifically teaches them how to give an oral presentation using supporting and clarifying materials to an audience. Students receive explanations of the nature and process of communication and how communication affects them and others. They are also introduced to several communication contexts besides public speaking, such as small group and team communication, listening, nonverbal communication, and interpersonal communication. The students learn what it means to be an ethical communicator, how to choose an effective speech topic, how to determine the speech’s purpose and how to analyze an audience. They further learn how to research a speech topic, how to organize a speech by developing full-content outlines for each speech presentation, how to use supporting and clarifying materials in a speech, how to develop an introduction and conclusion for a speech, and how to effectively deliver a speech.

2. Describe student work that will be used to assess student achievement of the outcome and explain how the students demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the outcome.

   The students present a minimum of three speeches (all speeches require students to use supporting and clarifying materials): Speech #1 is a five to seven minute introductory
speech. It is a speech to get students in front of an audience which requires an introduction, body and conclusion. This speech helps students get some experience standing in front of an audience and is a warm-up presentation for the remaining speeches required in the class. Speech #2 is a four to six minute informative extemporaneous speech—students select their speech topic related to social/political theme and must be approved by the instructor. The students then research and develop their speech topics before they present them. They are also required to use presentational aids, i.e., PowerPoint or other visuals such as graphs, pictures, etc. Speech #3 is a five to seven minute persuasive speech which must be on a socio-political issue where the students focus on a question of policy. Speech #3 specifically requires the students to develop supporting and clarifying materials to support their persuasive goal, i.e., appeals to needs, logical appeals (deductive, inductive, causal, and reasoning by analogy), as well as use emotional appeals.

Students’ speech presentations are evaluated using a competency based evaluation forms. The evaluation forms assess each speech presentation requiring that students give a speech that meets specific acceptable standards for effective speech development and delivery of the speech to an audience.

**Sample of Specific Criteria that must be met on evaluation form***

Every speech presentation has specific assignment criteria that must be met for the student to pass the assignment with the equivalent a “C” grade or better, for example for speech #1—students’ outlines must be written in proper form (i.e., narrow and focused topic, appropriate to presentation guidelines; proper outline format (full-content outline, transitions, introduction and conclusion written out; and bibliography in APA format), speech must be informative and not a demonstration speech, met time limit of 5 to 7 minutes, speech was not read or memorized, used a maximum of three 3 x 5 note cards, one side only, visual aid was used correctly and according to guidelines, and three sources were cited (only one internet source and two other sources within the last five years). The form also includes additional criteria see attachment labeled evaluation form.

3. As part of the ACE certification process, the department/unit agrees to collect and assess a reasonable sample of students' work and provide reflections on students' achievement of the Learning Outcomes for its respective ACE-certified courses. Please comment on your plans to develop a process to collect and evaluate student work over time for the purpose of assessing student success for this ACE outcome.

This course is taught in multiple sections with different class sizes (day and evening classes) by a combination of faculty, adjunct faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. There are 14 or 15 sections of Comm. 109 taught each semester and several sections during the summer sessions with approximately 1200 students enrolled annually.

The department would randomly select a representative sample (minimum of two per section) of evaluations as well as student speech outlines to be used to assess the learning outcomes. Those selected would be verified for evaluation accuracy and procedure to
ensure that those evaluating were making valid and reliable evaluations using the competency based form. This would indicate that students were meeting an acceptable level of public speaking competency and meeting ACE requirement #2a.

**Reinforcements**

What Outcome(s) or skill(s) will be reinforced in this course?

**Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking skills are used in making decisions about speech content, research, and development of their speeches. In addition students read about critical listening and critical thinking: analyzing and evaluating messages. Included in the exams in the course are questions that allow students to demonstrate what they have learned about critical thinking skills.

**Problem Solving**

Students read about problem solving and how to utilize problem solving steps. Included in the exams in the course are questions that allow students to demonstrate what they have learned about problem solving skills. In some sections students can also practice the problem solving skills through various small group problem solving exercises.

**Ethics**

Students read about ethics and of course hopefully practice good ethics in development of their speeches. The area of ethics has a very strong component in the course. In addition, the area is reinforced by examination of their knowledge about ethics.

**Recertification Proposal**

1. Please indicate the semesters the course has been taught as an ACE certified course.

   Fall 2009 (1098), Spring 2010 (1101), Summer 2010 (1105), Fall 2010 (1108), Spring 2011 (1111), Summer 2011 (1115), Fall 2011 (1118)

2. What have assessment data revealed about how the course helps students achieve the designated Student Learning Outcome(s)? (You might be able to complete this textbox by copying information found in the Summary & Conclusion sections from your Department/Program ACE Assessment Report.)

   In the standardized course speech outlines were assessed using a standardized rubric and a standardized outline format was used required of all students. Speeches were also assessed using a competency based evaluation form ranging from zero to forty points. Students may choose to give their speech a second time to make the necessary corrections using instructor feedback and the higher score is recorded.

   The following distribution of scores is for the spring of 2011 standardized course and they indicate that we are meeting are primary outcome of oral presentations that are effectively delivered, organized and using supporting and clarifying materials:

   Speech #1 range of scores for 517 students was 0 to 20 with 20 being the highest score.
The mean was 18.8.
Speech #2 range of scores for 517 students was 0 to 40 with 40 being the highest score. The mean was 35.12 for the speech. The outline scores for speech #2—the range of scores were 0 to 10 with 10 being the highest score. The mean was 8.9.
Speech #3 range of scores for 517 students was 0 to 40 with 40 being the highest score. The mean was 35.9 for the speech. The outline for speech #3 the range of scores were 0 to 10 with 10 being the highest score. The mean was 8.9.

In the “stand alone” and honor sections instructors used a similar grading rubric but used letter grades rather than numerical scores.

Students in all three formats took tests and while test scores were collected they are not part of the assessment outcome for Comm. 109...they can be used as supporting data but the main objective of ACE #2 was speaking competency using supporting and clarifying materials.

The sample taken from standardized format indicates that approximately 92 to 95 percent of the students met the outcome. In the traditional sections it was a bit higher around 96 percent of the students met the outcome and in the honors section 100% of the students met the outcome. These percentages are based on the sample data.

3. How have those assessment data been used to help the course meet the certified Student Learning Outcome(s)? (You might be able to complete this textbox by copying information found in the Summary & Conclusion sections from your Department/Program ACE Assessment Report.)

In all three formats the use of speaking assignments and required outlines appear to be working extremely well in reaching the desired outcome for ACE #2a.

4. If your assessment plan does not include collection of student work from all sections each time the course is taught, indicate how your department ensures that all sections are taught in accordance with the ACE plan.

Comm. 109 “Fundamentals of Human Communication” is a semi-standardized course which is taught using three different formats—The first is the largest it enrolls approximately 540 students each semester and uses a modified mastery approach which is standardized across all sections. Everyone uses the same course syllabus, assignments, quizzes & tests, and grading rubric. The second is stand alone Comm. 109 course which enrolls approximately 100 to 125 students in four to six sections each semester. The third is a web based/distance taught course which enrolls approximately 20 to 50 students each semester.

The stand alone and web based Comm. 109 course allows instructors to develop individual course syllabi, tests, and assignments. All the sections use the same textbook, similar speaking assignments and quizzes and tests as the standardized sections of the course. The course director collects all syllabi from the stand alone and web based
sections, grading rubrics, speech evaluation forms, quiz &/or test grades, speech and outline grades, digital video of a random sample of student speeches, as well as course evaluation data.

Comm.109H “Fundamentals of Human Communication” utilizes the same text but has some additional assignments depending on the instructor teaching the honor section—the instructors do collect similar data as described above for assessment process. The 109H course is only taught in the spring semester each AY and it enrolls approximately 20 to 24 students each semester it is taught.

5. If the response in the original proposal for ACE certification indicated that the assessment process was still being developed, the UCC/ACE subcommittee expects an explanation of the process. (May be referenced in the Methods section of the Department ACE Assessment Report.)