

ACTION PLAN FOR FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

The Communication Department of Buffalo State College

(Adopted May 2005)

The Communication Department of Buffalo State College is committed to communication scholarship through a broad array of approaches and venues. Specifically, the department seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in relevant communication disciplines and to contribute to the professional development of media-related organizations and individuals in Western New York.

To this purpose, we identify five goals for the department:

Goal 1 – Scholarship Support

Strategy 1.1 – General Scholarship

- Priority Action Step – Guidelines for Scholarship
- Priority Action Step – Assistance and Support
- Action Step – Resources
- Action Step – Letters of Expectation
- Action Step – Annual Report
- Action Step – Recognition

Goal 2 – Research

Strategy 2.1 – Faculty Research

- Action Step – Research Agenda
- Action Step – Interdisciplinary Research

Strategy 2.2 – Departmental Research

- Action Step – Research Forum
- Action Step – Research Projects

Goal 3 – Creative Activity

Strategy 3.1 – Faculty Creative Activity

- Action Step – Creativity Agenda
- Action Step – Interdisciplinary Creative Activity

Strategy 3.2 – Department Creative Activity

- Action Step – Creative Activity Forum
- Action Step – Creative Projects

Goal 4 – Professional Activity

Strategy 4.1 – Faculty Professional Activity

- Action Step – Professional Agenda
- Action Step – Interdisciplinary Professional Activity

Strategy 4.2 – Department Professional Activity

- Action Step – Professional Activity Forum
- Action Step – Professional Projects

Goal 5 – Assessment of Action Plan

Strategy 5.1 – Annual Report

- Action Step – Faculty Report
- Action Step – Chair's Report and Evaluation

Strategy 5.2 – Student Evaluation

- Action Step – Student Satisfaction Survey

Definitions and Assumptions

- While Buffalo State College traditionally has defined itself as a teaching-focused institution, we understand that scholarship is interdependent with teaching. We further understand that continuing scholarship enhances our competence as faculty and the range of knowledge that we can share with our students.
- “Scholarship” is a broad umbrella for a wide array of academic pursuits, including research, presentation and publication as well as creative or artistic works related to the communication disciplines within the scope of the department and professional activity associated with the relevant communication discipline. We understand that scholarship, thus broadly defined, is central to both communication education and the communication professions.
- “Research” is understood as the creation of new knowledge involving both qualitative and quantitative investigation of issues relevant to communication disciplines within the scope of the department. Traditional outlets for such research are presentations (lectures, conference papers, and speeches) and publications (books, chapters, monographs, articles and papers). Newer and nontraditional venues include audio, video and digital formats.
- “Creative activity” is understood to include a range of artistic endeavors associated with the relevant communication discipline, including radio, television, audio-visual or digital productions, development of software, and other creations that are made public through sales, commissions, presentations, exhibitions, broadcasts, and related venues.
- “Professional activity” is understood to include a range of professional pursuits in support of communication disciplines within the scope of the department, including paid or unpaid consultancies, participation and leadership in professional and community organizations, and presentations, workshops and similar programs.
- For each category of scholarship, preference is given to work that shows a degree of acceptance and endorsement by the wider academic and/or professional community, such as through juries and peer reviews, editorial board acceptance, paid commissions, grants or other financial awards, and work otherwise resulting in recognition, endorsement, and honors by relevant authorities.

Past Achievements and Current Status

- The Communication Department has articulated a statement of “Guidelines for Scholarship and Creative Activity” that begins with college-wide norms for scholarship and particularizes these to the department.
- The department provides each new faculty member with a Letter of Expectations that outlines minimal college and departmental requirements in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service. The purpose of these letters is to particularize departmental requirements to the individual faculty member.
- The Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication is encouraging the department to more clearly articulate its program of scholarship and professional service.
- In the past, the Communication Department faculty were assigned a 4-4 course load. That standard was changed several years ago to a 3-3 course load, with the current load providing significant time to accommodate faculty scholarship.

Faculty Scholarship Goal 1 – Scholarship Support

The Communication Department will develop a continuing record of communication-oriented faculty scholarship broadly defined over three key areas: research, creative activity, and professional activity.

Strategy 1.1 – General Scholarship

The department will encourage and assist the discipline-related scholarship of individual faculty members.

Priority Action Step – Guidelines for Scholarship

The department will revise its statement on “Guidelines for Scholarship and Creative Activity” to bring it more into line with the approach and expectations associated with the ACEJMC standards and SUNY& expectations for faculty scholarship.

Priority Action Step – Assistance and Support

The department will advocate for the college to provide training, sabbaticals and other forms or release time, travel funds, grant assistance, and acquisition of materials and relevant technology (both hardware and software) to support faculty scholarship.

Action Step – Resources

The department will ensure that faculty members have access to print, online, and other resources necessary for their scholarship. Most of these will be provided through Butler Library, and the department will continue its practice of inviting faculty recommendations for books, periodicals, videos, and other materials. Additionally, the department will attempt to provide funding to assist faculty with subscriptions for specialized resources not available through the library.

Action Step – Letters of Expectation

The department will continue its practice of providing letters of expectation to new faculty members that spell out the departmental norms for scholarship as well as teaching and service and criteria for promotion and tenure. These expectations are particularized to each faculty member based on his/her discipline, area of expertise, academic and professional backgrounds, and other relevant considerations. While such letters articulate minimum requirements, they also will encourage faculty to work toward more ambitious personal levels of scholarship.

Action Step – Annual Report

Faculty members will submit an annual end-of-year report indicating their scholarship, including scholarly output such as books authored or edited, articles or chapters written for books, articles written for periodicals, papers presented, speeches or lectures delivered, software developed, consulting activities undertaken, and other relevant venues of dissemination. The report also will cite scholarly recognition such as book and other reviews, awards and grants received, and other academic citations.

Action Step – Recognition

The department will highlight faculty scholarship through its website and through other venues as appropriate. Individual faculty scholars will be encouraged to share their scholarship with others in the department for the purpose of fostering mutual understanding and support for continuing scholarship, and to notify College Relations of completed or presented scholarship for use in college newsletters and other media. The department also will provide a section in its conference/reading room to display faculty scholarship.

Faculty Scholarship Goal 2 – Research

The Communication Department will develop a continuing record of communication-oriented research. The purpose of this goal is to contribute to the development of new knowledge in communication disciplines and to strengthen the visibility and reputation of both the department and the college among academic and professional colleagues.

Strategy 2.1 – Faculty Research

The department will encourage and assist the discipline-related scholarship of individual faculty members.

Action Step – Research Agenda

The department will encourage faculty members to articulate an agenda of specific research topics, to communicate this agenda to colleagues and to students, and to note continuing progress on the agenda.

Action Step – Interdisciplinary Research

The department will encourage faculty members to collaborate among the various communication disciplines within the department as well as with colleagues in other disciplines.

Strategy 2.2 – Departmental Research

The department will encourage and support discipline-related research at the department level.

Action Step – Research Forum

The department will provide a forum for faculty members to discuss their scholarly agenda and progress they are making on it.

Action Step – Research Projects

The department will seek to identify an active research project that spans communication disciplines and involves various faculty members within the department working on a common project.

Faculty Scholarship Goal 3 – Creative Activity

The Communication Department will develop a continuing record of communication-oriented creative activity. The purpose of this goal is to model products and productions reflecting a high level of quality and to strengthen the visibility and reputation of both the department and the college.

Strategy 3.1 – Faculty Creative Activity

The department will encourage and assist the discipline-related creative activity of individual faculty members.

Action Step – Creative Agenda

Paralleling the individual research agenda of faculty members, the department will encourage faculty members to articulate an agenda of specific creative projects, to communicate this agenda to colleagues and to students, and to note continuing progress on the agenda.

Action Step – Interdisciplinary Creative Activity

The department will encourage faculty members to collaborate among the various communication disciplines within the department as well as with colleagues in other disciplines.

Strategy 3.2 – Department Creative Activity

The department will encourage and support discipline-related creative activity at the department level.

Action Step – Creative Activity Forum

The department will provide a forum for faculty members to discuss their scholarly agenda and progress they are making on it.

Action Step – Departmental Creative Projects

The department will seek to identify an active creative project that spans communication disciplines and involves various faculty members within the department working on a common project.

Faculty Scholarship Goal 4 – Professional Activity

The Communication Department will develop a continuing record of communication-oriented professional activity. The purpose of this goal is to encourage involvement and leadership with professional organizations, to share communication competence, and to strengthen the visibility and reputation of both the department and the college.

Strategy 4.1 – Faculty Professional Activity

The department will encourage and assist the discipline-related professional activity of individual faculty members.

Action Step – Professional Agenda

Paralleling the individual research and creative agendas of faculty members, the department will encourage faculty members to articulate an agenda of specific professional projects, to communicate this agenda to colleagues and to students, and to note continuing progress on the agenda.

Action Step – Interdisciplinary Professional Activity

The department will encourage faculty members to collaborate among the various communication disciplines within the department as well as with colleagues in other disciplines.

Strategy 4.2 – Department Professional Activity

The department will encourage and support discipline-related professional activity at the department level.

Action Step – Professional Activity Forum

The department will provide a forum for faculty members to discuss their scholarly agenda and progress they are making on it.

Action Step – Professional Projects

The department will seek to identify a current professional project that spans communication disciplines and involves various faculty members within the department working on a common project.

Faculty Scholarship Goal 5 – Assessment of Action Plan

The Communication Department will continually monitor and assess its progress on this action plan.

Strategy 5.1 – Annual Report

The department will formally report on progress toward implementation of this action plan.

Action Step – Faculty Report

Faculty members will submit information reporting their role in implementing the action plan as individual members of the faculty.

Action Step – Chair’s Report and Evaluation

The department chair will report to the department on overall progress toward implementing the action plan. As appropriate, s/he will make recommendations or invite faculty discussion on updating the plan. The chair also will report to the dean on overall progress toward implementing the action plan.

Strategy 5.2 – Student Evaluation

The department will formally evaluate student satisfaction with issues of advisement and retention.

Action Step – Student Satisfaction Survey

The department will develop and implement a brief survey of each student to be administered as part of the semester advisement process, as well as part of the senior exit survey. This questionnaire will be designed to obtain information on how well satisfied students are concerning various aspects of advisement and retention, among other topics.