

Ad Hoc Faculty Working Group for Communication Beyond Carolina Report

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Committee members: Meredith Petschauer (co-chair), Jennifer Weinberg-Wolf (co-chair), Brandi Apple, Akaa Daniel Ayangeakaa, Amy Chambless, Jemilia Davis, Helyne Frederick, Christian Lundberg, Kevin Marinelli, Jane Monaco, Abigail Panter, Avi-Dan Santo, Nick Siedentop, Brian Sturm, Erika Wise.

Introduction

The committee met three times on April 17, May 1, and May 11 to establish recommendations regarding the continued implementation of the Communication Beyond Carolina (CBC) requirement for the IDEA's in Action Curriculum. Each section of the charge is explained below outlining the committee discussion, recommendations, and action items to be assigned by the Dean's office. Meeting minutes are included in Appendix A.

Summary:

Charge 1. Review description, criteria, student learning outcomes, and questions for students. Recommend adjustments if information or wording is unclear or inconsistent. For specific requirements, such as the degree of oral content, what are the acceptable limits?

Discussion: The committee started with the guidelines previously created for assisting in development of CBC courses (Appendix B). We established that the goal of this requirement is to improve oral communication and focus on how we teach students to present their work beyond written communication. The CBC requirement can be delivered by many different departments as it is content agnostic. The current wording in the student learning outcomes needs to be more specific and address the rhetoric focus of the requirement. We spent significant time discussing the section that suggests the amount of content spent on oral communication. ("Communication Beyond Carolina (CommBeyond) requires the syllabus to dedicate at least 70% of the content or grade to communication activity. But rather than think about developing different "communication assignments," consider how communication might enrich a variety of assignments and class engagements. The more opportunities students have to assess and respond to different rhetorical situations, the more competent communicators they will become.") Following this discussion, a Qualtrics survey was created to get anonymous feedback on potentially changing the previous recommendation of 70%. Based on the survey results a recommendation of revising the wording to be 2/3 is recommended. There was also discussion recommending a change to the words "content or grade". Finally, it might be necessary to define what is meant by oral communication and emphasize the preparation that accompanies rhetorical practice along with the importance of constructive feedback.

Recommendation:

1. Include the word "oral" before communication in the five learning outcomes. It is in the first outcome, but because the emphasis is on rhetoric, it should be in every learning outcome.
2. Define oral communication as not just giving speeches (or just having class discussions), but includes preparation, knowing your audience, listening skills, receiving feedback, etc.
3. Change the statement in the development guide to the following (*track changes indicate proposed edits to the original*): "Communication Beyond Carolina (CommBeyond) ~~requires the~~

syllabus courses to dedicate at least 70% of the content or grade 2/3 of the content, assignments, and/or grade to oral communication activities, as demonstrated in the course syllabus.

Action Item: The recommended changes would need to be presented to and reviewed by the General Education Oversight Committee.

Charge 2. Organize a clear roadmap for instructors who plan to develop course proposals. This includes reviewing current resources (see list below) and providing changes and/or recommended edits if needed. We seek to provide instructors with clarity on the goals of the requirement, examples of assignments/assessments that align with each learning outcome (in various disciplines), and a specific checklist of items to include in the syllabus and proposal for a successful review.

Discussion: The consensus was the current information in the guidelines document looked great. The rubrics are clear and can be utilized in multiple situations. Approved syllabi were reviewed by the committee, and all agreed it would be helpful to have access to exemplary syllabi to provide examples of how the objectives are met in differing ways across several disciplines. There was a lengthy discussion on rubrics. It was agreed that rubrics should be utilized in evaluation of assignments (during the semester) and an example rubric be provided with the course proposal.

Recommendations:

1. Provide access to sample syllabi to assist faculty in the development of new courses and modification of current courses.
2. Provide sample assignments and rubrics to evaluate those assignments.

Action Items:

1. Connect with the current faculty to obtain permission to make their syllabi public.
2. Connect with the faculty who have teaching expertise in oral communication such as the Communications department to provide examples of assignments and rubrics.
3. Convert the existing road map document into a more accessible website with the additional resources (see below action item), for example a page on the Office of Undergraduate Curricula website.

Charge 3. Develop a communication plan for the next course proposal deadline. To help ensure instructors are on the right path, should they provide a 'prospectus form' as an intermediate step before submitting a complete course proposal package? If yes, how would this be implemented?

Charge 4. Create a guide, possibly with a checklist and/or set of rubrics for the course review process. This will provide transparency and consistency in the review process for Course Committee reviewers and instructors.

Discussion: A prospectus form of some kind should be developed to give faculty a guide when designing a course and assist the course committee in evaluation of the course during the approval process. We thought it was important that the form be part of the course approval process rather than having an intermediate step. An intermediate step deviates from the procedures for all other courses and

requires additional processes that we believe are unnecessary if the proper information is collected as part of the submission process.

Instructors should complete the addendum and upload it with their CIM course proposal, along with the syllabus. The addendum will include a Justification Table (see Appendix C) that outlines the student learning outcomes (SLO), how the course aligns with the SLO, how course activities support the SLO and how the assessment and feedback measure the SLO.

While the guidelines for developing a CBC course are well done, they need to be presented in an organized fashion to make it easier for faculty to access what they need. We discussed adding resources (syllabi, assignments, rubrics, etc.) to the Office of Undergraduate Curricula (OUC) website in an outline format. As part of the communication plan, we also discussed enlisting the Directors of Undergraduate Studies and Department Chairs to help disseminate information.

Recommendations:

1. Include the Justification Addendum along with the syllabus when submitting the course proposal for CBC.
2. Revise the OUC website to include the relevant resources in a way that makes information more readily accessible.
3. Communicate with Directors of Undergraduate Studies and Department Chairs as to the new resources available to encourage CBC proposals.

Action Items:

1. Add the request to upload the Justification Addendum to CIM proposal website when CBC is selected.
2. Collect the resources that are to be added to the OUC website and link those documents in an organized outline.
3. Add the CBC requirement discussion to the agendas for the next DUS and Chairs meetings. Encouraging them to reach out to OUC if they need further clarification.

Charge 5. Provide recommendations for any trainings, workshops, and/or other forms of instructional support to improve classroom activities, assessments, and grading rubrics for COMMBEYOND courses. Should trainings be required, optional, or vary depending on the instructor's prior experience? How might this be implemented?

Discussion: In developing the course we strongly recommend that instructors participate in one of the many options available for curricular development and delivery of content. The discussion included suggestions for the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) and other departmental partners to provide workshops, opportunities for faculty learning communities and include CBC courses in the peer observation program. The Communications Department can offer content training to graduate students. We discussed using the GRC model as it is utilized in undergraduate research. Additional support ideas include a stipend/grant for those who want to attend a workshop and develop a course or for those who have taught a course to help in facilitation of a peer working group. New faculty are invited to a summer institute in which a portion of content could be dedicated to CBC.

There was discussion surrounding the requirement of training courses and who is responsible for managing the qualifications of faculty who teach these courses. The consensus was that faculty qualifications are monitored by Department Chairs as is consistent with assignment of other courses in the department and these training courses would be strongly recommended. The variety of types of training will also allow instructors to receive professional development appropriate to their own background and needs, rather than requiring a single, specific option.

Recommendations:

1. Partner with CFE and the Communications department to develop programming to assist faculty in development of CBC courses.
2. Strongly recommend all faculty who teach a CBC course participate in one of the options to assist with development of the course and skills for delivering and evaluating the content.
3. Consistent with the Chair's manual, the quality of faculty at UNC-Chapel Hill is ensured through careful decision-making in academic departments (usually the chair). This will include CBC courses offered in a department.

Action Items:

1. Reach out to CFE and the Communications department for development of training opportunities.
2. Include a statement in the materials associated with CBC course development recommending training courses or workshops. Communicate this to DUS and Chairs.

“Communication Beyond Carolina” Justification Addendum

Complete the following table to communicate how the five “Communication Beyond Carolina” Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) are addressed in the course.

COURSE NAME:

COURSE NUMBER:

Communication Beyond Carolina Student Learning Outcomes(SLO)	Course Objective(s) that align with SLOs ¹	Course Activities that support this learning outcome ²	Assessments and feedback that measure this learning outcome ³
1. Ascertain the expectations, opportunities, and barriers to oral communication in distinct situations.			
2. Tailor oral communications to different kinds of settings, including individual, small group, and public communication.			
3. Tailor oral communications to different levels of expertise (inexpert, informed, expert) and/or to varying levels of alignment (resistant, ambivalent, supportive).			
4. Make informed situation- and audience-sensitive strategic choices in content and delivery.			
5. Reflect on and use feedback to improve one’s practice and ability			

to move or inform an audience.			
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¹ Briefly share which Course Objective(s) align with each of the five “Communication Beyond Carolina” (CBC) SLO’s. One course objective can match more than one CBC SLO. It is helpful to have the Course Objectives in the Syllabus that you provide and to denote (circle/highlight/...) on that Syllabus provided, the Course Objectives mentioned in this column.

² Typical activities include readings, discussions, assignments. Please be specific here, if possible. For example, mentioning which unit/week/chapter/assignment number where applicable. See examples provided.

³ Typical assignments would be discussions, drafts, projects, presentations, ... Those items should be easily identifiable on the course Syllabus provided. A single assignment may address more than one SLO. Multiple assignments may address a single SLO.