Communication Intensive Requirement Discussion
Academic Policies Committee
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From Proposed Framework:
**Skills 1 (S1):** Write, read, speak, and listen effectively in various contexts using a variety of means including appropriate information sources and technologies. *One learning experience required before the end of the sophomore year to meet the university Writing requirement. Consult English Department guidelines for details.*

This requirement does not meet the “speak and listen” components of the outcome.

It is vitally important that our students graduate with skills in oral communication. Effective oral communication assists students in becoming:

- More effective learners
- More effective members of organizations
- More effective citizens
- More effective relational partners

Success in oral communication goes far beyond the ability to give an effective public presentation (although AAC&U focuses its rubric here). It also includes:

- Making effective decisions in groups and interpersonal relationships
- Managing conflict in interpersonal, group, and public settings
- Advocating for oneself and others in ethical and effective ways
- Building and maintaining human relationships
- Connecting across boundaries of race, class, sex, sexuality, gender, and nationality
- Listening critically and responding thoughtfully to arguments in social, political, and professional settings

Five outcomes cross the various communication settings listed above: Adapted from Beebe, Beebe & Ivy, 2012, *Communication: Principles for a Lifetime*

- Students will demonstrate awareness of their own oral communication behaviors
- Students will consider the perspective of their communication partners and adapt communication behaviors appropriately
- Students will listen/monitor and respond thoughtfully to verbal and nonverbal messages
- Students will craft effective and ethical verbal messages
- Students will craft effective and ethical nonverbal messages

These outcomes can be most effectively met in a course-based setting with attention to theoretical foundations and a focus on skill development. While there are many experiences that provide practice in meeting some of these outcomes, it is unlikely that those experiences can meet a majority of them.
Currently, these outcomes are addressed in the following CJ courses:

- CJ 100/200 (Forensics—1 credit, repeatable)
- CJ 201 (Interpersonal Communication)
- CJ 202 (Public Speaking)
- CJ 205 (Listening)
- CJ 301 (Intercultural Communication) (CJ 201 or 202 pre-req)
- CJ 307 (Small Group Communication)

The Department of Communication and Journalism is planning to add an additional skill course covering interpersonal communication, public speaking and group communication, and would also explore additional courses designed to meet this outcome.

Dr. Paula Lentz, Chair in Business Communication confirms that the following BCOM courses currently address these outcomes (these courses do have at least 1 pre-req):

- BCOM 207 (Business Presentations)
- BCOM 307 (Advanced Business Presentations)
- BCOM 308 (Business Communication for the 21st Century)
- BCOM 405 (Advanced Business Communications)

A review of course descriptions also shows they are likely met in:

- SW 220 (Interpersonal Relations) (Pre req IDIS 100)

The Department of Communication and Journalism is currently taking the following steps to enhance oral communication skills at UW-Eau Claire:

- We are searching for a coordinator of the basic communication skills course. This colleague will work with those teaching the class to refine outcomes, teaching strategies, and assessment methods.
- We are offering several CJ 202 sections as part of integrated learning bundles.

If a second “experience” were required in S1, we would:

- Revise courses as needed to more clearly address the agreed-upon outcomes.
- Develop teaching strategies that would allow us to expand sizes in some courses in order to accommodate student demand, while keeping class sizes relatively smaller in performance classes.
- Continue to teach oral communication courses as part of integrated learning bundles and participate in other initiatives emerging from LE reform.
- Develop materials and partnerships to help those teaching in other disciplines build on the five oral communication outcomes when they make and assess communication-related assignments in their upper-division courses.
- Explore providing training for colleagues in other disciplines who want to incorporate oral communication-intensive elements in their courses.
- Explore ways that the department could support alternative paths for meeting this requirement.