



**Final Annual Report**

**Tennessee Tech University**

**President**

**Provost**

**College of Arts and Sciences**

**Communication**



**Communication Department/Program Mission**

**Department/Unit Contact:** Brenda Wilson

**Mission/Vision/Goal Statement**

The Bachelor of Science degree in Communication supports the department's goals to help students "tap the power of words to create meaning and understanding and pursue intellectual curiosity, cultural awareness, creative expression, and build effective communication skills." The communication program at TTU is dedicated to fostering a strong sense of public citizenship preparing students for civic participation in an increasingly complex world that requires sophisticated, practical, critical, and theoretical understanding of the human communication process. The B.S. in communication degree program includes both communication studies and journalism and supports these outcomes by using active learning strategies and experiential learning to develop students' critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills for their professional goals and personal success. Our mission is to provide general education instruction in oral communication and a variety of undergraduate courses in communication studies and journalism including mass communication, print and broadcast journalism, literary journalism, public relations, advertising, photojournalism, interpersonal, intercultural, and computer-mediated communication, persuasion, and conflict resolution. Besides those majoring in communication with an emphasis in communication studies or journalism, Tennessee Tech students take our courses for general education requirements or sometimes as a minor that will enhance their communication skills and their versatility in whatever career they choose. Students are encouraged to get hands-on, real-world experience in their field through the internship or co-op program. Our program provides students the opportunity to participate in various clubs related to their major as well. The journalism curriculum is designed to prepare students for a variety of employment opportunities in the communication professions, primarily in print media and public relations. The program stresses practical experience. We offer students experience in media through work on the student-run newspaper (The Oracle), radio station (WTTU-FM), yearbook (the Eagle) and campus magazine (Eagle Eye). The student newspaper, magazine, yearbook, and radio station, and the regional educational television station are utilized extensively in connection with class work.



The communication studies curriculum provides instruction in the ability to understand and apply principles that guide communication theory and research; the ability to deliver effective public speeches; the ability to write clearly and concisely; the ability to engage in effective communication on the interpersonal level, in small and large group activities and settings. Our award-winning speech and debate team gives students competitive forensics experience to strengthen their oral presentation skills and debate and persuasion techniques.

The Communication Department's Mission relates to the Flight Plan items of Co-Curricular Undergraduate Program and Technology in Teaching.

## Program Goal 1: Written and Oral Communication Skills

### Define Goal

Program Goal 1: The program will provide instruction in effective written and oral communication skills and current technology for a variety of media and for interpersonal, small and large group settings, and business environments.

### Intended Outcomes / Objectives

Journalism Graduates will be able to: Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to write and edit competently for the news media and public relations settings.

Communication Studies Graduates will be able to: Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate effective oral presentation skills that correspond with various communication events and the ability to evaluate written and oral presentations. These Learning Outcomes relate to the Flight Plan items of Co-Curricular Undergraduate Program and Technology in Teaching.

## Program Goal 2: Career Preparation

### Define Goal

Program Goal 2: The program will prepare students for entry-level positions in a number of different fields that emphasize effective communication skills or for a graduate program.

### Intended Outcomes / Objectives

Journalism Graduates will be able to:

Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will demonstrate the knowledge and critical-



thinking skills to be discerning consumers of the media through an understanding of the roles and functions of the media.

Communication Studies Graduates will be able to:

Student Learning Outcome 4: Students will demonstrate an understanding of communication theory and research and their practical application to Interpersonal, Intercultural, Public Address, and Business Communication.

These Learning Outcomes relate to the Flight Plan items of Co-Curricular Undergraduate Program and Technology in Teaching.



### **Assessment 1: Area Concentration Assessment Test (ACAT) for Communication**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 1 and Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 4

**Type of Tool:** Exit Exam

#### **Rationale**

Communication majors take the ACAT which measures students' knowledge of Interpersonal Communications, Laws and Ethics, Mass Communication/Mass Media, and Public Speaking/Debate.

The Area Concentration Assessment Test (ACAT) for Communication tests students in the following areas of the communication discipline: Interpersonal Communications, Laws and Ethics, Mass Communication/Mass Media, and Public Speaking/Debate. Students are expected to score at least as well as the average score in their reference group.

\*ACAT scores range from 200-800 with an average score of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. Nationally, 68% of scores in any given year should fall between approximately 400 and 600. Year-to-year variations in the size of the reference groups will cause scores to fall outside these limits. The content area scores are compared with a reference group of other examinees taking the same content area. The overall performance score is compared with other examinees taking the ACAT in this discipline with the same number of content areas. The overall score is a separately determined performance appraisal rather than a numerical average of the area scores.

\*From ACAT Departmental Score Report. For more information, visit [www.collegeoutcomes.com](http://www.collegeoutcomes.com)

**Frequency of Assessment:** Each fall and spring semester



### **Assessment 2: California Critical Thinking Skills Test**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 2 and Learning Outcomes 2 and 4

**Type of Tool:** Exit Exam

#### **Rationale**

At TTU the CCTST is used as a senior exit exam each semester to assess general education learning outcomes of our graduates. Critical-thinking skills are necessary to be discerning consumers of media and for the practical application of theoretical concepts. Employers cite communication and critical-thinking skills as top qualifications for potential employees.

The California Critical Thinking Skills Test is given each semester to graduating seniors to assess general education learning outcomes of our graduates. Critical-thinking skills are necessary to be discerning consumers of media and for the practical application of theoretical concepts (learning outcomes 2 and 4). Employers cite communication and critical-thinking skills as top qualifications for potential employees. The CCTST permits test-takers to demonstrate the critical-thinking skills required to succeed in educational or workplace settings where solving problems and making decisions by forming reasoned judgments are important. Communication students are expected to perform as well as their campus peers and the national average for the test.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Each fall and spring semester

### **Assessment 3: General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment of Oral Communication**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 1 and Learning Outcome 3

**Type of Tool:** Rubric

#### **Rationale**

The TBR-mandated General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment of the oral communication competencies of students enrolled in SPCH2410 (now COMM 2025) Introduction to Speech Communication (Fundamentals of Communication) course is conducted annually every spring semester. This assessment provides very useful data on student progress in oral communication competencies across multiple sections of the SPCH 2410 Introduction to Speech Communication/COMM 2025 Fundamentals of Communication.

The analysis of the statistical data for years 2010-2016 indicates that students enrolled in SPCH 2410/COMM 2025 continue to meet or exceed outcome goals in excess of 90%. The following outcomes/competencies are assessed: 1. Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement; 2. Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose; 3. Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition); 4. Students are able to



employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics; and 5. Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources. Our students are expected to score at or above the average level as compared to other TBR institutions.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Annually

 **Assessment 4: Communication Studies Program Internship and Extra-Curricular Experiences**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Student Learning Outcome 3  
**Type of Tool:** Other

**Rationale**

Our award-winning speech and debate team gives students competitive forensics experience to strengthen their oral presentation skills and debate and persuasion techniques. Students also compete nationally and regionally through clubs associated with their major.

Students receive a grade in courses, internships and co-ops to reflect their level of performance in relevant academic assignments and real-world settings. The speech and debate team, student media and Society for Collegiate Journalists members compete regionally and nationally for external assessment and recognition of their skills. Students set individual and team goals for these competitions.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Each semester and weekly

 **Assessment 5: National Survey of Student Engagement**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 1 and Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 3  
**Type of Tool:** Survey

**Rationale**

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) assesses students' confidence in their abilities to communicate effectively using written and oral communication skills.

Through coursework and extra-curricular experiences, communication majors will be required to write, edit, and present to a variety of audiences and through several media. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) assesses students' confidence in their abilities to write and speak clearly and effectively. These results are compared to other TTU students and our Carnegie peer institutions. Students are expected to score at least as well as other Tech students and Carnegie peers.



**Frequency of Assessment:** Every 2-3 years



### **Assessment 6: QEP Participation**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 2 and Learning Outcomes 1 and 2

**Type of Tool:** Survey, Other

#### **Rationale**

Communication faculty members participate in the University's Quality Enhancement Plan, now known as the EDGE program, in order to give students the opportunity to improve communication and critical-thinking skills as well as to provide hands-on, experiential learning. Employers cite communication and critical-thinking skills as top qualifications for potential employees.

Journalism faculty participated in the university's Quality Enhancement Plan grant program in 2009-10 and 2011-12. In 2009-2010, the public relations classes engaged in a service-learning project in which they developed a promotional and fund-raising campaign for the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity. The 2011-2012 project was a collaboration of three journalism classes to produce a campus magazine. The 2014-15 project focused on identifying, visually documenting and publicizing social issues in the local community and the larger Upper Cumberland region in a community-oriented photojournalism course. The QEP seeks to improve critical-thinking and communication skills and real-world problem-solving through the use of active learning strategies. The QEP program administers a pre- and post- survey to measure students' perceived progress in these skills. The communication program participates in the QEP initiative when possible in order to show student gains in these areas.

**Frequency of Assessment:** At completion of project



### **Assessment 7: Senior Exit Survey**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goals 1 and 2, Student Learning Objectives 1-4

**Type of Tool:** Survey

#### **Rationale**

We specifically ask graduating seniors to report their progress on the program goals and learning objectives in each concentration.

Senior Exit Surveys provide feedback for continuous quality improvement of our program and to determine students' perceived progress on our program goals and learning outcomes 1-4. The majority of comments are positive which indicates to us that students are pleased with our program. We will review the data and implement improvements during periodic audits by the Tennessee Board of Regents for performance funding. We successfully completed an audit of our academic program in spring 2013. One of the



commendations we received from the audit team was for the enthusiasm students who participated in the review process showed for their major.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Each fall and spring semester

 **Assessment 8: Journalism Program Student Media, Internship, Co-op and Extra-Curricular Experiences**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Student Learning Outcome 1

**Type of Tool:** Other

**Rationale**

For decades, Tech's journalism program has produced a weekly newspaper, a year-round radio station and an annual yearbook that are supplemental to the curriculum and provide practical experience in both print and broadcast media. In 2012 we added a campus magazine, Eagle Eye, to the media mix, and in 2016 we added a broadcasting club, Eagle View Productions. An internship program is available to students that provides experience in organizations on and off campus for news reporting and public relations and with the PBS-affiliate on campus for television broadcasting experience.

Student media experience is guaranteed through a "campus beat" system in print reporting and editing classes. We include beat assignments in one introductory and two advanced journalism courses. All three of these courses are required for the journalism degree program. Students may also take an introductory broadcasting course with a campus beat assignment for the broadcast media. Other opportunities for hands-on learning include management positions on the student media and the internship or co-op program. Students receive a grade in courses, internships and co-ops to reflect their level of performance in relevant academic assignments and real-world settings. Academic assignments are designed to provide practical instruction for news reporting and editing and for public relations. These courses prepare students for work at internships and co-ops as well. The Speech and Debate team, student media and Society for Collegiate Journalists members compete regionally and nationally for external assessment and recognition of their skills. Students set individual and team goals for these competitions.

**Frequency of Assessment:** Each semester and weekly

 **Assessment 9: Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24)**

**Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:** Program Goal 1 and Learning Outcome 3

**Type of Tool:** Other

**Rationale**

The **Personal Report of Communication Apprehension** (PRCA-24) typically has an  $\alpha$  of .93-.95 (McCroskey, Beatty, Kearney, & Plax, 1985). The scale accesses four dimensions of communication apprehension: interpersonal, group, meeting, and public speaking (McCroskey, 1982; Rubin, 2009). Instructors in SPCH 2410 (now COMM 2025),



a required general education communication course, use the instrument to measure progress on building confidence in students' communication skills. The instrument can be scored both by adding the value of items in individual sub-measures to assess communication apprehension in a particular context or by combining the scores of each sub-measure to assess overall communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1982). The norms for the PRCA-24 are listed below.

Norms for the PRCA-24	High Anxiety	Medium Anxiety	Low Anxiety	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Interpersonal</b>	19 or more	18-11	10 or lower	14.2	3.9
<b>Group</b>	20 or more	19-11	10 or lower	15.4	4.8
<b>Meeting</b>	21 or more	20-13	12 or lower	16.4	4.2
<b>Public</b>	25 or more	24-14	13 or lower	19.3	5.1
<b>Overall Communication Anxiety</b>	81 or more	80-51	50 or lower	65.6	15.3

*\*<http://www.jamescmccroskey.com/measures/prca24.htm>*

**Frequency of Assessment:** Pretest/posttest in SPCH 2410 courses



### Results of Assessment 1

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goal 1 and Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 4

#### Results

Students take the **Area Concentration Assessment Test (ACAT)** for communication in the semester in which they plan to graduate or once they have completed coursework in their major. Since we began administering the test in fall 2010, our students have been performing well. In 2010-2011, our overall performance score was 713 of a possible 800 points, which was in the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2011-2012, our overall performance score was 678 of 800 points and in the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2012-2013, our overall performance score was 565 of 800, which was in the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2013-2014 our overall performance score was





567 of 800, which was in the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2014-15 our overall performance score was a 540 of 800, which was in the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2015-16 our overall performance score was a 609 of 800, which was in the 86<sup>th</sup> percentile for that testing period. In 2010-2011, 23 graduating seniors took the test with 20 of the 23 scoring at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. All but one were in the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher, with six students in the 100<sup>th</sup> percentile and two students scoring a perfect score of 800. In 2011-2012, 31 graduating seniors took the test, and all but four were in the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher, with 24 in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile, 8 in the 100<sup>th</sup> percentile and four perfect scores. In 2012-2013, 24 graduating seniors took the test with 15 of 24 scoring at the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. Six of those were at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. In 2013-2014, 25 students completed the test with 14 scoring in the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. Four were in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher. In 2014-15, 27 graduating seniors took the test, with two scoring in the 91<sup>st</sup> and 92<sup>nd</sup> percentiles, two scoring in the 84<sup>th</sup> percentile, and seven above the 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile. In 2015-16, 28 students took the test with 17 scoring at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile or better and one student scoring in the 100<sup>th</sup> percentile. In 2016-17, 42 students took the test, with an overall score of 562, the 73<sup>rd</sup> percentile, and seven students scored at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. While our average score has dropped as our enrollment has grown, 40 percent of recent graduates scored at or above the 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile and continue to score above the average score for their reference group, which exceeds our expectations.

**The following attachment** shows the scores for years 2010-2017, since inception of the test for our program.

### Attachments

 ACAT Scores 10F-16S

 ACAT Scores 2016-17.docx



### Results of Assessment 2

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goal 2 and Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 4

### Results

On the **California Critical Thinking Skills Test**, communication students have scored higher than the campus and national average every year for the past five years, except for the 2012 testing period. For academic year 2015-16, communication students scored a 19.6 (N=11), compared to the Tech average of 16.9 and the national average of 17.1. In 2014-15, communication students scored an 18.5 (N=25), compared to the campus average of 17.3 and the national average of 17.1. In 2013-14, our students scored a 17.9, compared to a campus average of 17.7 and a national average of 17.1. In 2012-2013, our students scored a 15.9 compared to a national average of 16.8 and



Tech's average of 17.6. In 2011-2012 our students scored an 18.2, compared to a campus average of 17.9 and a national average of 16.8. The average score for the five year period of 2011-2016 for our students is 18.02, slightly higher than the five-year average for campus, 17.48, and higher than the national average of 16.98. We will continue to monitor our students' performance on this test.

### Attachments

No items to display.



### Results of Assessment 3

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goal 1 and Student Learning Outcome 3

#### Results

The TBR-mandated General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment includes the following oral communication competencies of students enrolled in *SPCH2410 Introduction to Speech Communication (COMM 2025 Fundamentals of Communication)* course: 1. Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement; 2. Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose; 3. Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition); 4. Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics; and 5. Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources. Our students are expected to score at or above the average level as compared to other TBR institutions.



A review and analysis of the statistical data for the current year indicates that the majority of students included in the assessment scored as either superior, with percentages varying between 65% and 77%, or, as satisfactory varying between 21% and 32% in each category. The percentage of students assessed as unsatisfactory generally ranged between 0.9% and 7.16% on any given outcome. This means that, on the average, no more than 8 students out of 100 performed unsatisfactorily in any of the five categories. The overall scores for each outcome appear to be about even, with the category (E) "use of sources and research" being slightly weaker.

A review and analysis of the statistical data based on the scores received in Spring 2016 (see attached table) indicates that the majority of students included in the assessment scored as either superior, with percentages varying between 65% and 79%, or, as satisfactory varying between 18% and 29% in each category. The percentage of students assessed as unsatisfactory generally ranged between 1.8% and 4.7% on any given outcome. This means that, on the average, no more than five students out of 100 performed unsatisfactorily in any of the five categories. The overall scores for each outcome appear to be about even, with the category (E) "use of sources and research" being slightly weaker. The data clearly indicates that students enrolled in *COMM 2025* continue to meet or exceed outcome goals in excess of 95%.



The Analysis of the Statistical Data for years 2010-2015 indicates that students enrolled in COMM 2025 continue to meet or exceed outcome goals in excess of 88%. The majority of students included in the assessment scored as either superior, with percentages varying between 53% and 86%, or, as satisfactory varying between 12% and 42% in the categories tested. The percentage of students assessed as unsatisfactory generally ranged between 0.97% and 11.55% on any given outcome. This means that, on the average, one student out of 16 performed unsatisfactorily. The overall scores for each outcome appear to be about even, with the category (5) "Use of sources and research" being weaker followed by the outcome in the category (1) "Formulating a purpose statement." **The attachments below** show the results for this test for years 2010-2017.

### Attachments

-  Results of Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes 2010-2016
-  Results of Assessment of General Education Outcomes 2017



### Results of Assessment 4


**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 3

#### Results

Debate and Forensics team experience offers students training and application opportunities for their public speaking skills in argumentation and persuasion. While participation on the team is open to all students, speech majors are required to participate. The team travels to and participates in state and regional speech contests and tournaments. The number of various awards received by our students provides a measure of success in achieving the learning objectives. The Speech and Debate Team received a total of 69 individual and six team awards in 2012-2013 and 72 individual and seven team awards in the 2013-2014 debate season, along with a service award for the coach that was named for the coach to honor his outstanding record of achievements throughout his career. In 2014-15, the team brought home 86 individual awards, seven team awards and one "Coach of the Year" award. In 2015-16 the team earned 106 individual awards and 8 team awards. In 2016-17, the team received 110 individual awards and nine team awards, the most in recent history.

**The following attachments** show the team's accomplishments for the past several years.

### Attachments

-  TTU Speech and Debate Team Awards 2011-2016
-  TTU Speech and Debate Team Awards 2016-2017



**Results of Assessment 5**

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goal 1 and Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 3

**Results**

The **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** is administered every two-to-three years at TTU to a sample of freshmen and senior students. The assessment of oral communication skills was based on the student's response to the statement "Made a class presentation." Response categories include, "Very Often, Often, Sometimes, or Never," and these responses are converted to a mean score. The assessment of written communication skills was based on the student's response to the statement, "Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources" or "Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments" The same response categories as above are used. Data for surveys in 2016, 2014, and 2011 are presented below:

TTU Learning Outcome Skill Peers	Carnegie	TTU	
		Communication	Total
<b><u>2016</u></b>			
<b>Oral Communication</b>			
Freshmen 2.3		1.75	2.2
Seniors 2.7		3.45	2.7
<b>Written Communication</b>			
Freshmen 2.6		1.75	2.5
Seniors 3.0		2.55	2.9

**2014**
**Oral Communication**



Freshmen	3.00	3.00
2.70		

Seniors	3.50	3.30
3.10		

### Written Communication

Freshmen	3.25	3.10
2.90		

Seniors	3.50	3.50
3.30		

### 2011 Data

#### Oral Communication

Freshmen	3.40	2.79
2.93		

Seniors	3.56	2.97
3.05		

#### Written Communication

Freshmen	3.40	2.94
3.07		

Seniors	3.89	2.93
3.14		

Based on data from the NSSE, oral and written communication scores for communication majors in 2016 increased considerably more than did those of their campus or Carnegie peers, yet their scores were lower than their peers, except for the oral communication category for seniors. We will continue to monitor this. In 2014 and 2011 their scores increased slightly from their freshman year to their senior year. For these two testing periods, Tech communication majors scored higher than their campus peers and Carnegie Peers on both these areas. This meets or exceeds our expectations.

### Attachments

No items to display.



## Results of Assessment 6

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Learning Outcomes 1-4

### Results

We participated in **Tech's QEP program** in 2009-2010, 2011-2012 and 2014-15. In 2010, one faculty member presented research on teaching effectiveness obtained through 2009-2010 QEP program participation at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual, national conference. The paper was selected as a top-five teaching research paper in the public relations division. A version of the research findings was also presented at the 2010 annual conference of the International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning as well as the 2010 Tennessee Communication Association annual conference. The paper was published in the spring 2012 issue of *Teaching PR*, a publication of the public relations division of AEJMC. The study of students in a public relations course showed support for a service-learning instructional model enhancing critical thinking and problem solving and reducing rote memorization. Data were collected from 40 undergraduates in a pretest/posttest design and showed significance (at the .05 level) on 11 of 19 critical-thinking and problem-solving items. The 2011-2012 project received an innovative teaching award from the College of Arts and Sciences. Results for the 2011-2012 project showed significant gains (at the .05 level) in six areas associated with critical thinking, communication, and real-world problem solving. Results of the 2014-15 project are not available.

### Attachments

No items to display.



## Results of Assessment 7

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Student Learning Outcomes 1-4

### Results

Students are asked to complete the **senior exit survey** immediately after completing the ACAT test, during the same testing appointment time. Most students in the journalism concentration plan to work after graduating, and many have already accepted jobs. Others plan to go to graduate school or law school upon graduation. They chose their major because of their interest or ability in writing and because of the importance of these skills for their chosen career path. They chose Tech's journalism program because of its size, friendly atmosphere, affordability, proximity to home, broad curriculum that employs a hands-on approach to learning and opportunities on the student media. Some suggestions for improvement include more instruction in digital, electronic and social media, more coursework in broadcasting and additional courses in public relations. Students reported being pleased with the academic and career advising they received and would recommend the program to others. They reported



being pleased with their progress on journalism program learning objectives and outcomes. Students in the speech concentration report that they are planning to work or attend graduate school upon graduation. Some students said they chose speech as a major because of their own interests or prior experience in public speaking. Others commented that they majored in speech because they recognize effective communication skills as an attribute potential employers seek in graduates. Students said they chose Tech's program because of its breadth of courses and small class size. Speech students recommend that the coursework include a theory or research class to prepare them for graduate school. However, some comment that classes should remain focused on practical application rather than have a strong emphasis on theory. Speech graduates report high satisfaction with the advisement they received and said they would recommend the program to future students. They report high satisfaction with progress on the learning objectives of the program.

### Attachments

No items to display.



### Results of Assessment 8

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goals 1 and 2 and Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 3

#### Results

All program goals and student learning outcomes are evaluated on an ongoing and systematic basis. Students are evaluated through coursework, internships, and/or co-ops each semester on their **performance** of effective written and oral communication skills in various settings. For academic year fall 2016 through spring 2017, 7 journalism students completed three-hour internships. Upon the recommendation of their employment supervisors, all 7 received a grade of "A." For academic year fall 2015 through spring 2016, 11 journalism students completed three-hour internships. Upon the recommendation of their employment supervisors, 7 received a grade of "A" and 2 received a "B" grade. Two students were assigned an "incomplete" or grade of "I" and will be completing their work over the course of the coming academic year. In the previous three years, our students completed a total of 56 journalism internships, 51 were for three credit hours, three for six credit hours and two for 9 credit hours, with 52 students earning a grade of "A" and 4 earning a "B" grade. The speech communication (now Communication Studies) program of study began offering internships in fall 2013 with one student completing a three-hour internship as a "special topics" course and earning an "A". From summer 2014 to spring 2015, one speech student completed a six-hour internship with a grade of "A" and two students completed three-hour internships with "A" grades. In summer 2015, two speech students completed internships, and both received a grade of "A." In academic year fall 2015 to spring 2016, four speech students completed internships. All four received a grade of "A." This year three students completed internships with grades of "A," while one student received a



“W” grade, withdrawing before completing the internship.

Faculty oversight is maintained by interns supplying written monthly summaries of their internship work.

Students enter extra-curricular competitions throughout the academic year through work on the student media or clubs associated with their major in order to get external assessment of their performance and skills. In 2016, student media received three first place awards, a second place awards, a third place award and an honorable mention in the categories of newspaper layout and news reporting, yearbook photography, yearbook concept, general interest magazine and individual magazine writing. The Tech chapter of the Society for Collegiate Journalists won the McDonald Award for Outstanding Chapter in 2012 for participation at regional and national conferences and competitions. For the past several years students have won numerous awards including second place in best editorial writing (2009); ninth place in best editorial writing and best arts and entertainment writing (2010); sixth place in best arts and entertainment writing and fifth place best advertising staff member (2011); and 10<sup>th</sup> place in the best newspaper competition (2011). The campus magazine, Eagle Eye, receive a first-place award in the Southeast Journalism Conference's Best of the South competition in the Best College Magazine category for its inaugural issue, spring 2012, and received a second-place distinction in the 2013 Society for Professional Journalists annual competition in the Best Overall magazine category. In the 2014-15 academic year, the journalism program received 11 national awards in various categories with both the campus newspaper and magazine receiving first-place awards from the SCJ. Students also received five regional awards from the SEJC with the campus magazine receiving a fifth-place award. National awards included the following: first place college newspaper “less than weekly” category; first place campus magazine; first place in sports news; second place in sports feature writing; third place for newspaper feature pages; third place in yearbook photography; third place in newspaper multistory category; third place and honorable mention in magazine feature writing; honorable mention in newspaper feature writing; third place in news photography and honorable mention in yearbook photography. Regional student awards include the following: first place in newspaper opinion/editorial writing, second place magazine writing; third place for special events reporting; eighth place for magazine design; ninth place for sports writing.

The 2015 Eagle Yearbook received six national 3rd place awards from the Society for Collegiate Journalists, including Yearbook Overall Excellence, Coverage of the Year, Concept of Book, Reporting in Words, Photography, and Design. In 2015-16, individual awards included third place in the multistory category, first in sports news, second place in sports features, third place and an honorable mention in the individual magazine writing category, an honorable mention in the individual writing feature category, third place in news photography and an honorable mention in yearbook photography. In 2015-16 at the Southeastern Journalism Conference (SEJC contest), students received five individual awards while Eagle Eye magazine received an overall award. Students received a first place award for Best Opinion/Editorial Writer, a ninth place award for sports writing, a third place award for special events writing, eighth place for magazine design and second place for magazine writing. Eagle Eye magazine received fifth place in the Best College Magazine category.

For SEJC 2016-17, three students received individual awards including the following: third place for Best Entertainment Writing, eighth place for Best Magazine Writing and tenth place for Best Newspaper Page Layout.



**Attachments**

No items to display.

**Results of Assessment 9**

**Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:** Program Goal 1 and Learning Outcome 3

**Results**

On the **PRCA-24 assessment**, Communication apprehension (CA) total score showed a reduction in communication anxiety  $t(461) = 8.5, p < .05$  with an overall reduction of 4.4 in the mean. This is important to note since prior research has found that high levels of CA have a negative effect on student assertiveness (McCroskey et al., 1985), and student ability to recall lecture material if they are expected to interact in class (Booth-Butterfield, 1988). Going beyond the classroom, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) state that oral/written communication, Teamwork, and Professionalism/work ethic are an essential requirements for new college graduates (2015). The description of these requirements all pertain to communication skills. The results suggest that the SPCH 2410/COMM 2025 class increases a student's confidence in their ability to interact with others, which will have an affect both on their academic and employment goals.

Additionally, the public speaking apprehension portion of the measure showed the most substantive decrease with a reduction of 1.537 in the mean of the pretest posttest. Since public speaking anxiety is the primary concern for the SPCH 2410/COMM 2025 course, these results show that there is a reduction in speech anxiety  $t(461) = 7.7, p < .05$ . Previous studies have shown that speech anxiety affects avoidance and withdrawal behaviors (Beaty, 1987), and speech duration (Beaty, Forst, & Stewart, 1980). This implies that students that complete SPCH 2410/COMM 2025 will be better prepared to present information in their other classes and in their future careers. The full analyses can be seen below.



	PRCA-24 Contexts		Fall 2016 * **		Spring 2017		Academic Year 2016-2017	
	Reduction in the Mean	T-Test	Reduction in the Mean	T-Test	Reduction in the Mean	T-Test	Reduction in the Mean	T-Test
<b>Public Speaking</b>	1.95	$t(223) = 6.52, p < .05$	1.151	$t(237) = 4.335, p < .05$	1.537	$t(461) = 7.7, p < .05$		
<b>Meeting</b>	-.723	$t(223) = -2.81, p < .05$	1.265	$t(237) = 4.171, p < .05$	.301	$t(461) = 1.5, p > .05$		
<b>Interpersonal</b>	1.03	$t(223) = 5.72, p < .05$	.853	$t(237) = 4.63, p < .05$	.939	$t(461) = 7.3, p < .05$		
<b>Group</b>	1.84	$t(233) = 6.14, p < .05$	1.34	$t(237) = 4.692, p < .05$	1.582	$t(461) = 7.7, p < .05$		
<b>Communication Anxiety</b>	4.10	$t(233) = 6.32, p < .05$	4.609	$t(237) = 5.802, p < .05$	4.359	$t(461) = 8.5, p < .05$		

On the 2015-16 PRCA-24 assessment, Communication apprehension (CA) total score showed a significant reduction in communication anxiety  $t(591) = 17.00, p < .05$  with an overall reduction of 8.73 in the mean. This is important to note since prior research has found that high levels of CA have a negative effect on student assertiveness (McCroskey et al., 1985), and student ability to recall lecture material if they are expected to interact in class (Booth-Butterfield, 1988). Going beyond the classroom, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) state that oral/written communication, Teamwork, and Professionalism/work ethic are an essential requirements for new college graduates (2015). The description of these requirements all pertain to communication skills. The results suggest that the SPCH 2410 class increases a student's confidence in their ability to interact with others, which will have an affect both on their academic and employment goals. Additionally, the public speaking apprehension portion of the measure showed the most substantive decrease with a reduction of 2.82 in the mean of the pretest posttest. Since public speaking anxiety is the primary concern for the SPCH 2410 course, these results show that there is a reduction in speech anxiety  $t(591) = 15.28, p < .05$ . Previous studies have shown that speech anxiety affects avoidance and withdrawal behaviors (Beaty, 1987), and



speech duration (Beaty, Forst, & Stewart, 1980). This implies that students that complete SPCH 2410 will be better prepared to present information in their other classes and in their future careers. The full analyses can be seen below.

PRCA-24 Contexts	Fall 2015		Spring 2016		Academic Year 2015- 2016	
	Reduction	T-Test	Reduction	T-Test	Reduction	T-Test
	in the Mean		in the Mean		in the Mean	
<b>Public Speaking</b>	2.63	$t(316) = 9.92, p < .05$	3.04	$t(274) = 11.98, p < .05$	2.82	$t(591) = 15.28, p < .05$
<b>Meeting</b>	2.07	$t(316) = 7.76, p < .05$	2.34	$t(274) = 9.31, p < .05$	2.19	$t(591) = 11.91, p < .05$
<b>Interpersonal</b>	1.83	$t(316) = 8.17, p < .05$	1.08	$t(274) = 7.30, p < .05$	1.48	$t(591) = 10.66, p < .05$
<b>Group</b>	1.62	$t(316) = 6.54, p < .05$	2.18	$t(274) = 5.36, p < .05$	5.61	$t(591) = 8.14, p < .05$
<b>Communication Anxiety</b>	8.14	$t(316) = 10.61, p < .05$	8.64	$t(274) = 14.74, p < .05$	8.73	$t(591) = 17.00, p < .05$

On the 2014-15 PRCA-24 assessment, communication apprehension (CA) total score showed a significant reduction in communication anxiety  $t(494) = 16.57, p < .05$  with an overall reduction of 9.64 in the mean. This is important to note since prior research has found that high levels of CA have a negative effect on student assertiveness (McCroskey et al., 1985), and student ability to recall lecture material if they are expected to interact in class (Booth-Butterfield, 1988). Going beyond the classroom, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) state that oral/written communication, Teamwork, and Professionalism/work ethic are an essential requirements for new college graduates (2015). The description of these requirements



all pertain to communication skills. The results suggests that the SPCH 2410 class increases a student's confidence in their ability to interact with others, which will have an affect both on their academic and employment goals. Additionally, the public speaking apprehension portion of the measure showed the most substantive decrease with a reduction of 3.4 in the mean of the pretest posttest. Since public speaking anxiety is the primary concern for the SPCH 2410 course, these results show that there is a reduction in speech anxiety  $t(494) = 15.84, p < .05$ . Previous studies have shown that speech anxiety affects avoidance and withdrawal behaviors (Beaty, 1987), and speech duration (Beaty, Forst, & Stewart, 1980). This implies that students who complete SPCH 2410 will be better prepared to present information in their other classes and in their future careers. The full analyses can be seen below.

PRCA-24 Results	Fall 2014		Spring 2015		Academic Year 2014-2015	
	Reduction	T-Test	Reduction	T-Test	Reduction	T-Test
	in the Mean		in the Mean		in the Mean	
<b>Public Speaking</b>	3.400	$t(214) = 10.05, p < .05$	3.429	$t(279) = 12.31, p < .05$	3.416	$t(494) = 15.84, p < .05$
<b>Meeting</b>	1.340	$t(214) = 5.66, p < .05$	1.743	$t(279) = 9.62, p < .05$	1.568	$t(494) = 10.79, p < .05$
<b>Interpersonal</b>	1.795	$t(214) = 5.44, p < .05$	2.464	$t(279) = 9.90, p < .05$	2.174	$t(494) = 10.79, p < .05$
<b>Group</b>	2.414	$t(214) = 7.78, p < .05$	2.532	$t(279) = 10.55, p < .05$	2.481	$t(494) = 12.98, p < .05$
<b>Communication Anxiety</b>	8.949	$t(214) = 9.29, p < .05$	10.168	$t(279) = 14.24, p < .05$	9.638	$t(494) = 16.57, p < .05$



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**Attachments**

No items to display.