PELLISSIPPI STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC AUDIT SELF STUDY
Communication Studies

Prepared Fall 2016

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INTRODUCTION

In 1999, three academic departments (Fine and Applied Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities) merged to form the Liberal Arts Department, which is now home to four programs: Fine Arts (Art, Music, and Theater), Communication Studies (Mass Communication and Communication Studies), Foreign Languages (Chinese, French, German and Spanish), and Humanities and Social Sciences (History, Humanities, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, Social Work, and Women’s Studies).

The goal of today’s Communication Program is “to enhance the effective use of the English language essential to students’ success in school and in the world by way of learning to read and listen critically and to write and speak thoughtfully, clearly, coherently and persuasively.” (General Education Goals) PSCC does not offer Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degrees in Communication Studies or Mass Communication, but rather provides general education Speech courses that serve the entire PSCC population for those pursuing specific career and certificate programs and students transferring to four-year institutions through a Tennessee Transfer Pathway (TTP), as well as specific Mass Communication courses. Between spring 2015 and spring 2016, a total of 2,734 students enrolled in SPCH 2100 - Public Speaking via conventional, web-based and hybrid cohort classes. Communication Studies served one student in SPCH 2110 - Independent Study in fall 2015 and nine students in SPCH 2400 - Business and Professional Speaking in spring 2016. Additionally, three students listed Speech Communication as their major area of study during the same period, with 49 students declaring Mass Communication as a focal area. COMM 1010 - Introduction to Mass Communication, enrolled 47 students in fall 2015, and 32 students in spring 2016. Enrollment in COMM 1020 - Media Writing was 13 students in fall 2015 and 11 students in spring 2016.

The current faculty consists of nine full-time faculty members who hold Masters or Doctorate degrees from universities in Alabama, California, Georgia, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah. One faculty member currently serves as the director of the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), and another holds the title of Faculty Liaison for Mobile and Emergent Technology. Tenured and tenure-track faculty currently are joined by five adjunct faculty, although that number varies from year to year. Together they bring a wealth of experience and talents to the Speech Communication Program.

In addition to teaching and advising students, the PSCC Communication Studies faculty are involved in many extracurricular and co-curricular activities that offer students opportunity to speak at a variety of college-wide events or write for the current student online newspaper, the Pellissippi Press. One faculty member taught Public Speaking in Greece as part of the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies for two summers. This offered students the opportunity to
complete the three-unit class while experiencing and studying the culture of the country – considered the birthplace of modern rhetoric.

Faculty members sing in the Winter Holiday choir, present at in-service events, volunteer at academic fairs, attend and present at the campus-wide Faculty Lecture Series, attend concerts, theater productions and art shows on campus and support each other in worthy co-curricular activities. Most Communication Studies full-time faculty and several adjunct faculty also have participated in the College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) each semester that assesses whether their engagement activities in the classroom encourage students to more effectively learn the material in their courses. All full-time faculty have kept current in their discipline by attending the Tennessee Communication Association Convention in 2015, and four attended the 2016 convention. In addition, several are members of the Southern States Communication Association, the National Communication Association and, by College affiliation, are members of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD). Several faculty members have presented at conventions and seminars, including the League for Innovation for Community Colleges and NISOD.

The Liberal Arts dean informed faculty of the responsibility to conduct an Academic Audit at a department meeting on September 7, 2016. Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Vice Chancellor Randy Schulte explained what TBR required from an audit during a conference call to faculty members September 21 and 22. Faculty met on September 28, with all full-time and three adjunct members present to discuss the Audit and determine who would take the lead to develop each of the required Focal Areas and who would take responsibility for other aspects of the review. Faculty decided they would initially produce a shared Google document so everyone could add their contributions, and set October 28 for the first draft and October 30 as the first edit. In the interim, faculty utilized Desire to Learn (D2L) to communicate with each other about various aspects of the project. On November 16, most fulltime and two adjunct faculty members met to determine what else required attention. From there, the Audit group shrunk to four main fulltime faculty members who met Nov. 23, Dec. 8 and 12, and thrice in January before the Audit’s TBR due date, January 27, 2017. In the interim, three independent readers, including the dean, reviewed the document before submission.

**OVERALL PERFORMANCE**

Collaboration – Cooperation – Innovation – Motivation – These four words stood out as faculty worked through the self-audit. Faculty meet regularly to discuss and share best practices, update curriculum, as well as socialize with one another.
Throughout the audit process, the Communication faculty reaffirmed their strong commitment to student-focused and skills-based courses in Communication Studies. Several department-sponsored campus-wide events each semester have placed Communication Studies in the spotlight (the “In Our Words” lecture series, the Student Speech Showcase, and the Storytelling Festival). These activities provide students opportunity to utilize their communication skills when they present or emcee at the venues. A student debate club will debut in Spring, 2017, and a new student-directed, “independent” news magazine will begin publishing by Fall, 2017. One of Communication Studies’ greatest strengths is the administration of the Tennessee Board of Regent’s Mandate of Oral Communication Competencies Assessment (T-MOCCA), a highly effective evaluation tool that measures student learning outcomes each semester. This results in faculty better meeting the needs of students within the discipline. Commitment to the College’s QEP ensures students’ engagement and gives life to the curriculum. Faculty collaborate across disciplines, thus far with English during a National Public Radio-based student-speaking event, and with Natural and Behavioral Science for the student lecture series, in addition to presentations for the Faculty Lecture Series. Communication faculty participate in the Tennessee Communication Association and other national communication organizations and have been active contributors to a statewide study abroad program based at Pellissippi State. They teach SPCH 2100 on each of the College’s five campuses. Adjunct faculty are encouraged to join gatherings both on and off campus and participate in projects, including this academic audit.

The audit brought to light two major areas that require immediate attention:  
1) Mass Communication courses need stronger assessments; and  
2) Communication Studies needs stronger course offerings.

Regarding #1, above: Pellissippi State graduates intended Mass Communication majors annually, even though the College offers only two Mass Communication courses, both taught by the same adjunct instructor. Fulltime faculty will work with the Mass Communication instructor to develop an independent assessment tool for both of the class offerings. Faculty have begun discussions with the dean about hiring a full-time Mass Communication instructor in the near future.

Regarding #2: above, between 45 and 50 sections of SPCH 2100 are offered each semester, divided among nine full-time faculty and four adjunct faculty. To grow Communication Studies as a viable program of study, PSCC needs to broaden its course schedule to include all of the course offerings currently in the catalog. Additionally; both fulltime and adjunct faculty will begin to review and update current course master syllabi.

The audit process is allowing Communication faculty to celebrate victories in Collaboration, Cooperation, Innovation, and Motivation. The process also added
a fifth descriptor word to Communication Studies’ outstanding characteristics: Collegiality. While the regular Confab meetings bring faculty together for work, learning, and socialization, the audit strengthened ties further as they worked together to evaluate the past and focus on making changes that will ensure a stronger future. A primary challenge was getting everyone together in one room for audit meetings. Because of varying teaching schedules and other responsibilities, the four editors became the chief audit-report writers and organizers, although all faculty named on the cover sheet contributed to the document. Faculty desiring to model the Communication discipline of which they are a part revitalized the Speech Instructor Café through the College’s online course management system, which they will use to share dialogue and post relevant discipline-related articles. This form of interaction, in addition to a private Speech Facebook page, serves as our connection when face-to-face communication may not be possible.

PERFORMANCE BY FOCAL AREA

Focal Area 1: Learning Outcomes

In 2014, Communication faculty evaluated and rewrote the SPCH 2100 Public Speaking course goals and outcomes, yielding the following course description: “Principles and practices of the oral communication process with a primary emphasis on extemporaneous public speaking. The course incorporates research and planning, audience demographics, topic selection, small and large group communication, listening, reasoning, and evaluation skills.” (SPCH 2100 Master Syllabus) Faculty kept the essence of the original list of 20 outcomes and reduced it to ten with clearer language. Additionally, they matched the course student outcomes to the Tennessee Board of Regents’ (TBR) general education goals to ensure high standards and continuity.

Communication faculty regularly evaluate these student learning outcomes in several ways. Faculty each make decisions about appropriate assignments and grading criteria. However, a common assessment practice allows for course-level evaluation. Fulltime faculty use a common rubric based on TBR’s general education goals to assess a random selection of student capstone persuasive speeches from two sections other than their own. The data is collected, compiled, analyzed, and reported, previously, to TBR for the T-MOCCA and, currently, as part of the QEP report.

Examples of student learning outcomes include:
  • Cite relevant, reliable and sufficient sources in oral presentation.
  • Organize material in a purposeful, cohesive outline.
  • Adapt a nonverbal style using eye contact, gestures, movement, and vocal variety appropriate to the speaker, the audience and the occasion.
There have been limited electives offered in the area of Communication Studies over the last several years. Those offered, including Business and Professional Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, and Advanced Public Speaking, have led the department faculty to an understanding that those syllabi need to be revised with more appropriate student learning outcomes and assessment processes. The electives in the area of Mass Communication also have student learning outcomes to guide instruction and learning. The outcomes, which are available in the master syllabi for each course, include:

- Compare and contrast the communication industries (COMM 1010)
- Perform an analysis of a specific example of a mass-media outlet (COMM 1010)
- Demonstrate news gathering skills (COMM 1020)
- Write stories that are clear, concise, and concrete (COMM 1020)
- Demonstrate basic editing skills (COMM 1020)

These classes use grading criteria set by faculty, who are confident in the current assessment process for the Public Speaking course. However, the Mass Communication courses report a less clear assessment process. This will be a primary initiative for improvement in Fall, 2017.

**Focal Area 2: Curriculum and Co-curriculum**

Concerning curriculum, Communication faculty work together to determine course content. They base their curriculum on the seven [TBR General Education Goals](#) for Communication. The aim "is to enhance the use of the English language essential to students' success in school and in the world by way of learning to read and listen critically and to write and speak thoughtfully, clearly, coherently, and persuasively." The learning objectives of the courses offered are aligned with the overall General Education goals so that students may develop the skills needed to succeed in today's world.

The passage of the Complete College Act in 2010, and the resulting Tennessee Transfer Pathways (TTPs), drastically changed what curriculum was offered. The Act dictated that either SPCH 1000-Introduction to Speech Communication or SPCH 2100-Public Speaking were Pellissippi State’s only choices available for graduation or transfer. All other Speech courses became electives. Institutions that follow TTPs now specify classes they will accept in order to satisfy their requirements. With the exception of SPCH 1000 or 2100, the other courses only count as electives, so the ability to fill other courses declined because they no longer were necessary as most students at the community-college level work to fulfill their general electives and focus on their major specifics when they transfer to a four-year institution.

The College has syllabi on record for courses in both Speech Communication and Mass Communication:

- SPCH 1000-Introduction to Speech Communication
Because Pellissippi State does not offer a Communication Studies A.A./A.S. degree, students who wish to follow the TTPs and focus on a seamless transfer to the state’s four-year institutions, tend to choose Public Speaking and both Mass Communication courses if that is their intended four-year major. When a Communication Studies Cohort was created in 2012 to facilitate Communication majors at the College to make smooth transitions to four-year institutions, one section each of Advanced Public Speaking, Interpersonal Communication, and Business & Professional Communication were offered. However, between 2012 and 2014, the numbers dwindled because students changed majors or lost interest. When the one remaining student in the Cohort completed his requirements and the Cohort was discontinued, Public Speaking, Introduction to Mass Communication and Media Writing became the only courses guaranteed to fill and thus the only courses offered. Records from spring semesters 2012-2016 show that only 16 students declared Communication as their intended major, and 122 students declared Mass Communication as their intended major.

Prior to 2014, full-time faculty met approximately four or five times a semester on campus to discuss curriculum and the strengths and weakness of Communication Studies, with part-time faculty attending when possible. In 2015, when the Speech Program coordinator stepped down, several full-time faculty members stepped up to create Communication Confab, where both full-time and adjunct instructors were invited to participate in informal gatherings off campus. These off-campus meetings created a more relaxed atmosphere that inspired several significant events such as the Student Speech Showcase and the “In Our Words” student speaker forum. The Confabs continue to focus on curriculum and the sharing of professional strengths and challenges. In 2014-2015, Confab participants updated and rewrote the SPCH 2100 Master Syllabus and collectively chose a new common textbook. While they share the same Master Syllabus and text in order to maintain uniformity in classes, each instructor exercises freedom to customize the syllabus to fit his/her teaching style and to choose which activities in the classroom best fit the chosen lessons. Public Speaking faculty require a minimum of five speeches each semester: two informative, two persuasive and one speech of the instructor’s choice.
Communication Studies offers conventional classes, two or three online sections each term, and hybrid classes as part of the Accelerated Higher Education Associate's Degree (AHEAD) program at Pellissippi State. Accelerated Pathway Cohorts are designed to meet the needs of busy adults and working parents. This makes it possible for learners to take advantage of two key methods of acceleration: shortened time periods and credit for prior learning. Students move through their degrees as a unified group, which encourages students to collaborate and learn from each other. Full-time speech members teach these AHEAD classes. (Success Rate Chart)

One goal of Communication faculty in 2017 is to rewrite and update the SPCH 1000-Introduction to Speech Communication syllabus, after learning at the 2016 Tennessee Communication Association conference that PSCC should offer the fundamental survey course as an option to students to fulfill the general education requirement for Speech. In addition, one Communication faculty member participated in a TTP Common Course Identifier workshop at TBR headquarters in spring 2016. As a result of the meeting, all Speech Communication programs in fall 2018, including those throughout the TBR system, will be renamed Communication Studies and courses will be recognized by a COMM prefix. Communication Studies anticipates the revision of additional syllabi as the need for more courses develops.

An open line of communication exists between the faculty and the publisher the Public Speaking textbook, *Public Speaking: An Audience Centered Approach* by Beebe and Beebe. Publisher representatives regularly sponsor in-person and online training to keep faculty up-to-date on the resources the publisher offers. For the Introduction to Mass Communication course, the instructor bases the course and course assignments on Vivian’s *The Media of Mass Communication* textbook. The textbook required for Media Writing students is *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method* by Rich. Students in Introduction to Mass Communication study the media on the mass media continuum, public relations, advertising, theory, and media law. During the semester they write four opinion papers on the survival of newspapers, music piracy, a current aspect of the FCC and the pros and cons of modern journalism versus socially responsible journalism. Each short paper must have a minimum of two credible outside sources.

Media Writing students meet in a computer lab where they learn newspaper, broadcast and online writing, Associated Press (AP) style, broadcast style and media law. Students must demonstrate their understanding of the material covered each week via quizzes and exams. They are required to select a beat from a list of Pellissippi State topics and write and submit to the online editor a minimum of four news stories from their beat for publication in the online newspaper, the *Pellissippi Press*. The editor is chosen based on his or her excellence in this class in a previous semester.
Jack McElroy, editor of the *Knoxville News Sentinel*, visits each semester to encourage students in their selection of a career and offers advice on increasing their desirability to prospective employers.

In addition, Pellissippi State Community College administrators and the Speech Communication Program faculty place a strong emphasis on co-curricular activities to enhance students’ learning experience. The Student Speech Showcase, for example, is a major strength of Communication Studies. The Showcase has taken place for the past three academic years. Started by a full-time faculty member, the Showcase allows for students excelling in Speech to present informative and persuasive speeches to a broader audience in the spring semester. A full-time faculty member serves as master of ceremonies, and each year full-time and adjunct faculty are encouraged to pick one of their top students to present in the Showcase. At the event, distinguished keynote speakers are invited to address students, faculty, staff and guests after the top students offer their speeches. Keynote speakers thus far have been Dr. Steven Bucci, former assistant to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld; Dr. Steven Beebe, author of the Public Speaking textbook; and Knoxvillian Kevin Slimp, newspaper advisor to major dailies across the nation. Slimp, who is credited with developing and implementing the PDF, addressed the audience about the importance of communication in today’s world.

Communication faculty believe that students should apply what they learn in the classroom. Thus in 2016, two full-time faculty members collaborated with the advisors of Phi Theta Kappa to create the "In Our Words" student speaker series. It is based on the same concept as Pellissippi State’s hour-long Faculty Lecture Series offered three times each semester in which faculty present an open lecture in their field of interest. The student series consists of a panel, so more students have the opportunity to present. Students are given a voice and share their stories through this series. The 2015-2016 academic year featured two student panels: In February 2016, at the Blount County campus, students gave speeches focused on overcoming obstacles. In April 2016, at the Hardin Valley campus, students focused on volunteerism and service learning. The 2016-2017 academic year began with a student panel at the Division Street campus in October, where students spoke about their communities. The organizers plan to expand to other campuses in the coming semesters.

In conjunction with the Common Academic Experience Committee (CAE), two full-time faculty members coordinated the College’s first-ever storytelling festival in the 2015-2016 academic year. Funds provided by the CAE were used to hire professional Appalachian storytellers to present tales at the Hardin Valley campus to Pellissippi faculty, students, and staff. Each storyteller had the opportunity to present a tale or two for up to 30 minutes, and Speech students were selected to introduce each guest.

Students in Media Writing maintain an online newspaper called *The Pellissippi Press*. The publication allows students to focus on different topics as they relate to Pellissippi
State issues. Students work on developing their interpersonal and journalism skills through the interviews and research assigned.

Faculty encourage students to engage in service-learning. Two faculty members participated in the official college-wide Service-Learning program that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. In academic Service-Learning, students do not earn credit for the service. Students earn credit for the learning that takes place as a result. Service-Learning differs from volunteering, internships, or student teaching experiences because the service is tied to the course learning outcomes through reflection.

One faculty member gave her students the option of completing ten hours of service-learning, which resulted in them using their experiences learned in place of some of the required research for either of their two persuasive speeches, as long as the service pertained to the topic they chose. Another faculty member assigned her students a project of finding a way to improve one of the downtown campuses which is in a designated food desert. Those students succeeded in removing a non-functioning soda machine from the campus and replacing it with a frozen food machine with burgers, burritos, and pizza. By the time it becomes operational in the 2017 spring semester, students at that campus will, for the first time, consistently have access to food other than chips and candy. Other faculty members added service components to their classes as well.

One faculty member participated in the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TNCIS) and taught Public Speaking in Greece, the birthplace of rhetoric. Students completed the traditional SPCH 2100 course during their three-week stay, and spoke in the places where ancient, famous orators, philosophers Plato and Aristotle and the Apostle Paul of the Christian New Testament, once stood and spoke. Being involved in this program, the Speech Communication faculty member played a role in expanding students’ educational opportunities beyond the borders of the United States. Faculty are committed to the international dimension of students’ studies and encourage the opportunity for students and faculty to participate in international experiences.

Furthermore, faculty strive to make campus resources available to student outside the classroom. Public Speaking has its own designated librarian. Each semester, full-time and adjunct faculty invite the librarian into their classes to discuss the research process. Correspondingly, the librarian has created a webpage on the Pellissippi library website for students enrolled in Public Speaking and created a video expounding on research for online students to help them while researching their speeches away from the campus. The webpage includes information on how to find and cite resources. Students are encouraged, and in some sections required, to use the Pellissippi Library and interact regularly with library staff.
Focal Area 3: Teaching and Learning

Both full- and part-time faculty collaborate in the design, development, and delivery of courses in order to improve student learning. One of the more successful opportunities for Communication faculty to collaborate is our Speech Confabs. These voluntary meetings are scheduled at an off-campus, informal location, and give fulltime and adjunct communication faculty from all five campuses a chance to reconnect and discuss important classroom issues and share teaching initiatives and ideas. Some of the topics discussed recently included new technology available from the publisher of our text, as well as assessment goals and processes.

Since a majority of faculty participate in the student-engagement based QEP, student engagement activities are often shared and workshopped with others as they are implemented in the classroom. Faculty also share assignment and assessment ideas, plan required elements, initiate activities, and collaborate to enhance teaching and learning.

Faculty collaborate online, sharing ideas, documents, and plans. Communication Studies has a section in D2L, the online learning management system, and a closed Facebook group as well. Both are used to post relevant articles, ask questions, and foster collegiality among full- and part-time faculty.

In addition to using collaborative efforts to design and develop classes, faculty work in partnership to deliver some course content. In previous years, a fulltime faculty member worked with an adjunct to successfully incorporate lessons on counter-persuasive arguments into their classes to enhance students’ persuasive speeches. More recently, two faculty members whose classes met at the same time were able to combine their classes to practice concepts related to persuasive refutation and appeals. Students worked in small groups to create a persuasive argument to represent a side of a debatable issue and then presented it to the entire combined group.

Communication faculty join with faculty in other programs and departments to both deliver content and enhance student learning. Public Speaking students have worked with international students in ESL courses to assuage communication apprehension, and with the Service-Learning office to incorporate community involvement into the course.

Pellissippi State excels at providing varied and ongoing professional development to enhance instruction, much of which is dedicated to the best use of technology in the classroom. Communication faculty regularly participate as both students and instructors in sessions related to the development and use of mobile technologies in the classroom. In the College’s Mobile Fellows initiative, faculty members propose an idea related to technology use in the classroom and receive a grant to try it. Several Program members have participated, bringing stronger use of technology to the
Faculty members also integrate technology, including the use of Kahoot and Nearpod, for more effective and interesting content delivery and mastery. For example, a faculty member integrated the use of Nearpod to teach thesis writing, allowing students to participate on their own devices.

Several faculty also recently completed both Level I and Level II online instructor training, which is designed to improve learning outcomes in both online-only and hybrid courses. In this training, faculty learn best practices for teaching and learning online and interact with teaching modalities that enhance student understanding and mastery. Additionally, some faculty members engaged in small group and/or private training sessions with instructional technology staff to ensure that online, hybrid, and technology-assisted face-to-face classes effectively reach students and promote mastery of learning objectives.

As the SPCH 2100 - Public Speaking course is a core component of the College’s QEP, fulltime faculty and most adjunct faculty have participated in the QEP since its inception in 2012. The QEP focuses on improving student learning outcomes in targeted courses through increasing student engagement in the core curriculum areas: mathematics, oral communication, and writing. Oral communication is a targeted area for the institution, so Communication faculty members understand that involving students in the learning process through QEP activities is particularly important in skills-based courses. The QEP is structured to give faculty instant feedback, in the form of student surveys, on the effectiveness of specific teaching tools and/or lessons used in the classroom in order to promote student engagement and improve student learning outcomes. After implementing a QEP learning experience, faculty gauge success and adjust teaching to continue to teach and reinforce student learning.

The College evaluates full-time faculty each year through use of a self-evaluation instrument. Each faculty member evaluates his or her performance for the past year’s accomplishments, assessing achievements and setting goals for the coming year. The instrument looks at classroom and course management, curriculum and program development, application of new techniques and professional development. The Dean of Liberal Arts and the Vice President of Academic Affairs review the evaluations, which are part of the promotion and tenure system at PSCC. In addition, the dean, program coordinator or a peer observes all full- and part-time faculty, and a student perception survey evaluates the faculty from students’ perspectives.

While every instructor is evaluated in class annually, this is a snapshot of one day, and is not designed to evaluate teaching effectiveness in a measurable way. Instead, these classroom visits provide feedback to faculty as they continue to develop instructional methods, including lecturing, student engagement activities, interactions with students, and assessment of student learning.
Far more effective is the peer review process, in which members of the Communication faculty volunteer to attend each other’s classes and provide constructive feedback. As this comes from someone who teaches the same material, the input is more valuable to many.

Communication faculty meet every few years to re-evaluate the common texts for courses and engage in lively debate until a consensus is reached. Recently, the publisher of the Public Speaking text introduced an e-book version (Revel) with a wealth of online teaching and learning tools including videos and interactive quizzes for use by both instructors and students. Faculty met with the publisher’s representative to discuss effective ways to use this new product, which became available in Fall, 2016, for use at the instructor’s discretion. Its effectiveness as a teaching tool will be evaluated after the term ends.

The results of the T-MOCCA inform decisions made by faculty members about course design, teaching, and student learning. Currently, the main tool used for evaluating the effectiveness of the Public Speaking course is the T-MOCCA assessment of persuasive speeches. These assessments are independent of the course grade, and guided by the course and student-level outcomes. Each faculty member, both full- and part-time, has at least one section, including those taught online, evaluated by a full-time faculty member. The data collected is random and anonymous in terms of the student evaluated and that student’s instructor, so the College is able to get a broad understanding of student learning and success in the course. It effectively measures the learning outcomes for the skills-based public speaking course. Then, adjustments are made to instruction to improve student learning. When assessment results indicated that students were weakest in areas of delivery, faculty enhanced instruction in delivery methods through student engagement activities and assessment. Next, faculty learned that while students improved in the area of delivery from past semesters, their overall critical thinking scores declined. As data are being evaluated to examine variables which may have contributed to this result, methods are being developed to reverse this decline. (QEP report)

Faculty participate in various types of professional development to enhance teaching, scholarship, and practice. Within the communication discipline, faculty attend communication conferences, both in state and beyond. The League of Innovation Conference allows those who attend to learn from others and present work related to pedagogy and the communication field.

All instructors received training to utilize Revel, the online learning component provided through the public speaking textbook. Several faculty participated in professional development opportunities including New Faculty Academy, Junior Faculty Academy, and Partners for Student Potential reading groups, which focuses efforts toward understanding and promoting the learning of under-resourced students. Additionally,
Pellissippi State provides robust professional development opportunities through in-service workshops, including topics on discrimination/sexual harassment, safety/security, and pedagogy-related issues. Finally, faculty sought out professional development in additional areas of interest such as educational technology and accessibility. Opportunities to learn to make course documents accessible as well as concepts of universal design afford faculty the opportunity to grow professionally. With different faculty members participating in a myriad of professional development opportunities, time is set aside to share insights, points of understanding, and new ideas within Communication Studies at the regular Confab meetings.

Since PSCC does not currently provide a full slate of courses for a Communication major, persistence is not tracked insofar as students completing a program of study. However, student success rates in the courses offered are tracked for college-wide institutional effectiveness purposes, to improve outcomes of student achievement and to gauge enrollment.

The Communication Studies coordinator gathers and compiles data related to how many sections of a course are offered, how many students sign up for each section, and how many students successfully complete the course. This data informs decisions on course-related improvements such as course scheduling. Additional success measures include the T-MOCCA assessment at the course objective/student outcome level. The results of these assessments are utilized by faculty to find areas of instructional improvement to promote student outcome success.
Focal Area 4: Student Learning Assessment

Through collecting data on course success rates and grade distributions, Communication Studies can improve. The IEAP report is reviewed by the Liberal Arts dean for purposes of budgeting and determination of annual departmental actions.

Faculty use indicators of student learning success that are aligned with student learning outcomes. Continuous assessment throughout the semester ensures students meet student learning outcomes. The requisite course for Communication Studies, Public Speaking, requires at least five graded speeches, with most instructors including more. As dictated by the master syllabus, speaking comprises 60% of students’ final grade, and 40% of the grade comes from written work, including outlines, exams, self-evaluations, and other homework. Faculty typically use evaluation rubrics that are available online to students before the speeches begin. Some faculty use a standard instrument throughout the term, while others tailor the evaluation form to the specifics of the speech assignment. Each instrument is crafted to reflect the principles discussed in the class. Students, therefore, get feedback and assessment as to how well they are applying concepts they have learned. Typical speech classes employ instructor and peer feedback. Students participate in peer evaluations, using a variety of methods, including short forms, narratives, and discussions. All methods give students important insights as to how they are perceived by an audience. Some faculty encourage students to use their cell phones to record themselves presenting speeches, providing them a means of self-evaluation to improve as speakers.

While faculty have autonomy to construct and evaluate assignments to address course-level student learning outcomes, a capstone speech in Public Speaking allows for consistent, program-wide assessment. That is accomplished through the T-MOCCA assessment process as explained in Focal Area 1. After data collection, faculty meet to discuss the results, as well as the improvement process. For example, the assessment of the capstone speech previously included video-recording every student’s presentation, randomizing the videos and dividing them up among full-time Speech faculty to conduct assessment. However, this process became overly cumbersome. Some instructors thought the camera in the room negatively affected students’ presentations and sometimes the cameras just did not work. Therefore, faculty met and discussed the process and changed the design of the procedure. Now, faculty members attend other colleague’s classes to perform randomized assessments during students’ presentations. Generally the data has shown which learning outcomes are successful and which need more focus.
Electives, Introduction to Mass Communication and Media Writing, assess student learning outcomes primarily through assignments in the form of exams and papers. Media writing includes assessment opportunities for fieldwork and writing for an online school newspaper. Feedback provided for these assignments provides students with a better understanding of mass communication and the expectations of related careers.

In Spring 2016, the College began a student learning outcome assessment process. The new process is the product of growth in the assessment culture of the college. Members of the college’s strategic planning committee identified institutional core competencies. It is the goal of the college that all graduates have mastered skills in the following:

- Write clearly.
- Read proficiently.
- Communicate effectively.
- Analyze and apply quantitative information appropriately.
- Solve problems successfully.
- Use technology effectively.

Once the institutional core competencies were vetted by the Faculty Senate and members of the strategic planning committee, they were adopted in spring 2016. Department meetings took place in spring and summer of 2016 to identify departmental and program goals tied to the core competencies. The faculty began assessment of student learning outcomes tied to department and program goals in fall 2016. The assessment data is being analyzed by department and program faculty during the current semester. Once the data is analyzed, each department or program will identify improvement actions to be implemented in fall 2017. Once implementation has taken place, the student learning outcomes will be measured again. In a five year period all department and program goals will have two completed cycles of assessment for all of the department goals.

The college is in the process of implementing a software program which will assist with the collection and reporting of assessment. The assessment process involves faculty, staff and administration at many levels. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and Planning will report annually on achievement of graduates in the core competencies.

Throughout the self-study process, the faculty worked together to develop a clear vision of the status of Communication Studies and identify actions for improvement. The improvement initiatives are contained in the following matrix.
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<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To update the SPCH 100-Introduction to Communication (COMM 2025—Fundamentals of Communication) syllabus in order to offer the course</td>
<td>In anticipation of course name and numbering changes and the expected expansion of course offerings, the syllabus requires modernizing with clearer language, clarifying the list of student learning outcomes, and aligning with TBR general education goals</td>
<td>Communication faculty</td>
<td>Complete syllabus revision and make course available</td>
<td>Syllabus revision completed by the end of spring 2017. Course made available by the fall 2017 schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To create a co-curricular Debate Club</td>
<td>To give students opportunity to expand their persuasive abilities while learning proper debate skills</td>
<td>A full-time faculty member will serve as club adviser and will recruit and train team members</td>
<td>After a team is trained, it will enter debate competitions with other community colleges</td>
<td>Recruitment will begin in spring 2017 and will be ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To update the SPCH 2320 Argumentation and Debate (COMM 2055) syllabus</td>
<td>In anticipation of the discipline’s course numbering system and the expected expansion of course offerings, the syllabus requires modernizing with clearer language, clarifying the list of student learning outcomes, and aligning with TBR</td>
<td>Communication faculty</td>
<td>Complete syllabus revision and make course available</td>
<td>Syllabus revision completed by end of fall 2017. Course made available on spring 2018 schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>general education goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>To revise the master syllabi and develop additional course-level assessment for</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>COMM 1010 – Introduction to Mass Communication and</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>COMM 1020 – Media Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>To update and expand Mass Communication courses to more appropriately meet TBR guidelines</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communication faculty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Complete syllabi revision and utilize course-level assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Complete assessment cycle implementation</strong></td>
<td><strong>To improve student learning in areas identified</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communication faculty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Baseline will be established in Spring 2017 following the first round of assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Pellissippi State’s QEP, *Strong to the Core*, incorporates active learning strategies in the core competencies of writing, mathematics, and oral communication to increase student engagement and thereby improve student performance. The QEP, developed with input from faculty, administration, staff, and students, was approved with the College’s reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 2012.

As conceived and described in the original QEP Report for SACSCOC and subsequent *Addendum*, improvement in student performance in the competencies is measured by improvements in three student learning outcomes:

- Improve the ability of students in ENGL 1010 Composition I to write clear, well organized, sufficiently developed analyses with a minimum of 70% competency.
- Improve the ability of students in MATH 1130 College Algebra to develop mathematical problem-solving skills by modeling real world behavior in mathematics and other disciplines by applying mathematical concepts to real-life problems with a minimum of 70% competency.
- Improve the ability of students in SPCH 2100 to plan, research, and present an effective persuasive speech with a minimum of 74% competency.

The choice of these courses was guided by evidence of lower than desired success rates in two of the three courses selected, weaknesses in student critical thinking based on the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), and the expressed desire by employers that graduates be proficient in communication and problem solving. In establishing the benchmarks, the QEP Implementation Team decided a student’s abilities to think critically and to communicate are essential to improvement in the three core areas. To guide assessment of the acquisition of these skills, the team developed these questions:

- To what extent do active learning strategies improve student learning in the outcomes of critical thinking and communication competence in the core courses?
- To what extent do active learning strategies increase student engagement?
- To what extent do active learning strategies impact retention, success rates, completion rates and aggregate GPA?
• To what extent can active learning strategies be applied to student support functions, such as orientation, advising, and tutoring?

A QEP director was appointed in fall 2011 to direct QEP implementation and assessment as well as faculty development opportunities, a Teaching and Learning Center was created as a space to hold QEP meetings and house faculty resource materials, and a QEP web page was created to make resources readily available to faculty. Since 2013–2014, professional development opportunities have been offered to address relevant QEP topics. Members of the QEP Implementation Team have continued to share information and provide opportunities for conversations within their own departments. Interested faculty and adjuncts piloted strategies and gathered baseline data through spring 2013.

Faculty continue to initiate strategies within their individual classrooms as they implement the QEP more fully.

Description of QEP Assessment Activities and Results for 2015–2016

Amid administrative changes, a new QEP director was appointed in spring 2014 to oversee and facilitate the initiatives and various assessments and to promote the QEP. Internal assessments include Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) General Education Assessment conducted annually in the three core courses; instructor post-activity reports, which include instructor reflection and possible revision of the process for the activity; the semantic differential survey, which assesses student engagement after in-class activities, and the newly created Survey of Faculty Perception. The TBR General Education assessment is directly relevant to QEP effectiveness as it requires common rubrics to evaluate these assignments in the three core courses:

• a final argumentative essay in ENGL 1010 scored on the basis of five TBR learning outcomes, two of which specifically target critical thinking and communication;

• embedded questions in the MATH 1130 common final exam that assess student learning outcomes three and five from the TBR math rubric, which are indicators of proficiency in critical thinking and communication; and

• a persuasive speech in SPCH 2100, with concentration on PSCC criteria 6 and 7 which have been added to the TBR rubric to specifically measure problem-solving and oral communication skills.

Table 1 shows results from the assessment rubrics and the semantic differential.

Table 1: Internal Assessment Results

|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>All %, QEP %</th>
<th>Satisfactory In-class Argumentative Essay All n = 124 QEP n = 11 Unity 77.4%, 72.7% Development 52.4%, 36.4% Organization 65.3%, 54.5% Style 58.1%, 45.5% Documentation 51.6%, 45.5% All QEP n = 100 Unity, 79% Development, 60% Organization, 70% Style, 57% Documentation, 51% All QEP n =82 Unity, 73% Development, 66% Organization, 67% Style, 54% Documentation, 48% All QEP n=150 Unity, 49% Development, 23% Organization, 51% Style, 32% Documentation, 29%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Spring 2013 n = 252 163/252 64.6% Critical Thinking % Successful Spring 2014 n = 313 228/313 72.9% Math Objective 5 Communication n = 252 179/252 71.0% Communication % Successful Spring 2014 n=313 242/313 77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Speech General Education Goals 6 and 7 Meets or exceeds expectations</td>
<td>n = 108 Problem Solving 74.8% Oral Communication 75.5%</td>
<td>n=116 Problem Solving 85.3% Oral Communication 75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL</td>
<td>Student Responses IM = 4.88/7</td>
<td>n=3,746 82% of students reported positive engagement from QEP learning activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Speech--The speech faculty continued to focus on active learning strategies assessing competencies in critical thinking and oral communication measured by criteria 6 and 7 respectively from the speech performance evaluation rubric. The speech program saw significant changes in the results this year with a decrease in criterion 6, problem-solving, from 80.5% to 62%, and an increase in criterion 7, oral communication, from 70.7% to 85%. These results may be explained by several factors. While the sampling size remained relatively stable, the sampling method changed from external evaluation of recorded presentations to in-class instructor evaluations. Additionally, while the speech program was not directly affected by the loss of Learning Support, many of the co-remediation students who were in English 1010 were also taking Speech. The decline in English results may be connected to the decline in speech problem-solving as well.

Semantic Differential--The semantic differential measures the level and intensity of students’ attitudes and opinions regarding engagement immediately after a learning activity in the classroom, as well as allowing for almost instant feedback for students and faculty. This year, approximately 77% of students from all disciplines reported positive engagement results on the semantic differential, indicating they were mostly engaged and challenged by the various activities. This was down slightly from 80% in 2014-2015, a decrease of less than 4%.

Post-activity Reports--Faculty submit post-activity QEP reports to document active learning strategies employed in the classroom, as well as student reactions as indicated by the semantic differential. Having standardized the reporting, this year’s report continues to reflect growth in both expansion of the initiative and employment of active learning strategies. Faculty participation in reporting assessment outcomes increased from approximately 131 faculty members in 2014-2015 to 176 faculty in 2015-2016, a 34% increase. Roughly 5,453 students participated in active and engaging learning strategies employed by the faculty for QEP, a 48% increase in student participation from last year. Of the faculty who participated, 96% indicated they would repeat the activity, or some modification of it, and 88% indicated they achieved their targeted learning outcome. This was down slightly from 91% in 2014-2015, a decrease of 4.4%.

Between last reporting year and this year, the collected data indicates a slight decrease in faculty reporting achievement of the targeted learning outcome as well as reported student engagement. The relatively small decreases in active engagement reported by students and the minimal decrease in the achievement of learning outcomes reported by faculty may be explained by the dramatic increase in both student and faculty participation. Additionally, many new faculty participated in QEP who have not had the opportunity to take part in QEP professional development opportunities to learn about the nuances of QEP, student engagement, assessment of learning outcomes, and the semantic differential.

The following assessments are elements of the overall college assessment plan and provide comparison with national results:
• Education Testing Services Proficiency Profile (ETS), mandated exit exam for graduating students, yields a large sample of data across a wide range of academic skills and is administered every semester.

• Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), administered in the fourth and fifth weeks of the fall academic term to entering students, provides information on students’ earliest experiences and why some students persist and succeed while others do not. This formative assessment complements the more comprehensive CCSSE.

• Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), administered biannually to sophomore–level students, provides limited baseline and summative information on engagement.

Table 2 shows results of these assessments.

Table 2: Comparative Assessment Results

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBASE</td>
<td>n = 1041</td>
<td>n = 1186</td>
<td>n=1180</td>
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<td>No longer</td>
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<td>PSCC mean (IM)</td>
<td>S.D. = 55.6</td>
<td>S.D. = 52.4</td>
<td>S.D.=60</td>
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<td>National norm (NN)</td>
<td>IM=266</td>
<td>IM=265</td>
<td>IM=266</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NN=276</td>
<td>NN=277</td>
<td>NN=269</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETS</td>
<td>N=987</td>
<td></td>
<td>IM=446</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCC Mean (IM)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Mean (NM)</td>
<td>IM=12.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>IM = 12.39</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NM=13.5</td>
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<td>NM = 13.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCSSE Means Report (Biannual)</td>
<td>2013 Results</td>
<td>2014 Results</td>
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<td>Selected items: 5a-5f</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENSE Means Report</td>
<td>2011-2012 Results</td>
<td>2012-2013 Results</td>
<td>2014-2015 Results</td>
<td>2015-2016 Results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT results PSCC mean (IM)</td>
<td>n = 43</td>
<td>n = 111</td>
<td>n = 133</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Mean (NM)</td>
<td>SD = 5.27</td>
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<td>SD = 4.75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IM = 12.00</td>
<td>IM = 12.39</td>
<td>IM = 12.31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NM = 13.5</td>
<td>NM = 13.5</td>
<td>NM = 13.66</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *n = Total number of students taking the test; ** (N, National; I, Institution) S D = Standard deviation
ETS—This is only the second year for administering this exam; therefore, not enough data has been collected to establish a trend. However, based on the comparison of the college mean to the national mean, Pellissippi scores continue to be slightly above the national mean.

SENSE—This year’s scores remain comparatively stable as compared to last year’s in the student perceptions of engaged learning and continue to be slightly above the overall cohort of colleges.

SURVEY—Following positive formative feedback from the QEP Survey of Faculty Perception last year, the QEP Implementation Team again surveyed faculty to gain further insight into their perceptions relative to their experiences and knowledge with QEP. Seventy-seven faculty responded to the survey and provided positive feedback indicating what they perceived we were doing well and in what areas they think more information might be provided. Overall, we learned that faculty (1) are implementing multiple QEP activities in their classrooms, (2) continue to want more opportunities to share and see examples of activities, (3) need more focus on adjunct training with QEP, and (4) continue to need a clearer understanding on using and interpreting the semantic differential. The QEP team was encouraged with the atypical survey response rate of 44%, suggesting that PSCC faculty are engaging in a growing QEP culture of assessment, evaluation, and reporting. The team found the survey’s results valuable as they reinforced from the faculty’s perspective that we are accomplishing our QEP and that it continues to be a dynamic process.

The QEP Implementation Team is tracking the effect of QEP active learning strategies in student retention rates, success rates, and GPAs within core courses. The 2015-2016 results in Table 3 indicate a slight upward movement in retention but a slight decrease in overall student success rates. Again, this is likely attributed to the increase in student population with a greater variance in academic preparedness.

Table 3: Retention, Success Rates and Aggregate GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Retention rates % of total Fall</td>
<td>ENGL 1010 92%</td>
<td>ENGL 1010 92.5%</td>
<td>ENGL 1010 93.9%</td>
<td>ENGL 1010 96%</td>
<td>ENGL 1010 94%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MATH 1130 87.8%</td>
<td>MATH 1130 89.3%</td>
<td>MATH 1130 92.1%</td>
<td>MATH 1130 89.5%</td>
<td>MATH 1130 90.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPCH 2100 87.6%</td>
<td>SPCH 2100 91.3%</td>
<td>SPCH 2100 90.7%</td>
<td>SPCH 2100 91.7%</td>
<td>SPCH 2100 93%</td>
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<td>Course Retention on rates</td>
<td>ENGL 1010</td>
<td>ENGL 1010</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total Spring</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
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<td>88.2%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
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<td>Course Success rates</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total Fall</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
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<td>56%</td>
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<td>70.9%</td>
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<td>Success rates</td>
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<td>% of total Spring</td>
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<td>Core Course GPAs</td>
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<td>Core Course GPAs</td>
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<td>ENGL 1010</td>
<td>ENGL 1010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.74</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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</table>
Improvement of the QEP Based on Assessment Results

Since the inception of the QEP initiative, the Implementation Team has maintained its drive toward sustained improvement in the identified learning outcomes. In addition to professional development opportunities, a compendium of successful practices continues to be compiled to share throughout the disciplines in line with the vision of the QEP. The current data results support the following actions toward improvement:

QEP Survey of Faculty Perception: Based on the results of the survey of faculty perception, the team identified several action items to address faculty needs: 1) renew the focus on using and interpreting the semantic differential, 2) provide more opportunity for sharing discipline specific activities, 3) place dedicated focus on adjunct training and awareness of QEP, and 4) continue to increase stakeholder awareness. This year’s survey suggested that some faculty are continuing to struggle to fully comprehend the semantic differential. The annual data collected confirmed this result; twenty faculty submitted reports with unusable data resulting in a loss of nearly 1300 student reports of engagement. The faculty perception survey also suggested continued lack of clarity among faculty as to the purpose of the student engagement survey. This year the team will renew a dedicated focus on how to use and interpret the semantic differential. Additionally, the faculty desire to see and share more examples of activities being implemented by other faculty within their same disciplines. The team will coordinate with individual departments to provide this opportunity for faculty. Finally, a focused attention will be placed on increasing adjunct awareness and understanding of QEP.

Liberal Arts: The expansion of the QEP initiative has successfully involved all disciplines within the liberal arts department. The 2015-2016 academic year reflected the highest liberal arts participation since the QEP initiative began with 110 LART faculty classroom activities reaching 3393 students. This continues to demonstrate successful and sustained growth of the QEP in LART.

Analysis of the QEP and Anticipated Activities for Next Year

Relying upon the strong leadership provided by the Implementation Team and experienced core faculty, the QEP initiative continues to expand to disciplines not included in the original core. In addition to business management, psychology, biology, and nursing, faculty from physical education and the library also joined the QEP effort this year. We will continue to expand into additional academic areas as the QEP initiatives continue to move across the College.

• Speech: The Speech program will continue to support the QEP through the following:
  • incorporate QEP focused topics into regular department meetings;
  • encourage faculty to explore versatility with their QEP activities;
  • share successful practices of instructors involved in QEP;
  • mentor new faculty as they become involved in the QEP process;
  • provide opportunities that will reinvigorate the faculty during the last year of the initiative.
In addition to activities of the specific departments, college-wide faculty development continues to be expanded. The New Faculty Academy establishes the foundation for the integration of new faculty into the QEP experience. The year-long Academy allows time for instruction, active practice, and reflection on QEP techniques that encourage student growth in critical thinking and promote students’ abilities to self-assess and to give feedback to instructors. In 2016-2017, a second year Junior Faculty Academy will expand the QEP initiative for the new faculty moving into their second year by placing more emphasis on student learning outcome assessment as it pertains to student engagement.

The Faculty Development Committee continues to place emphasis on the growing culture of professional development that is emerging throughout the College. In addition to the development of new faculty, the FDC is dedicated to providing adjunct faculty training, online training and certification for faculty who teach online using D2L, and training in the creation of accessible classroom materials.

An in-depth look at the 2015-2016 QEP data and process analysis has revealed the College’s QEP continues to move in a positive direction. The expansion of the QEP across the College has allowed us to make adjustments to the procedural logistics of the QEP process. The clearly structured Pre- and Post-activity form is again being enhanced to yield an even more fluid submission process for faculty. Clearly published deadlines have proved effective in increasing faculty participation. These changes facilitate consistency in faculty reporting and increase the availability of team feedback for faculty and administration during the ongoing assessment period.

Although the QEP initiative has seen positive expansion throughout the College, the decline in success rates in core courses has created a cause for concern. The shifting student demographic in core courses with varying levels of academic preparedness has created the need for professional development so that faculty will be able to recognize and address the new demographic. Likewise, the QEP Team will expand their focus on faculty training to respond to specific student populations and their varying needs.

The overall concept of improving student engagement with active learning strategies has been well-received, creating a more dynamic culture at Pellissippi State. With four full years of implementation, the QEP continues to reinforce awareness in faculty that students who are cognitively engaged have the ability to think more clearly and convey those thoughts more effectively both orally and in writing. New active learning strategies continue to be developed, implemented, improved, and shared. The participating faculty’s active learning strategies and data collection processes are building a more accurate assessment of the College’s strengths, encouraging vibrant, lively, ongoing conversation and experimentation among faculty and staff. A sustainable culture of assessment is developing both inside and outside the classroom and continues to invigorate faculty practice and student learning.
APPENDIX 2

PELLISSIPPI STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MASTER SYLLABUS
PUBLIC SPEAKING
SPCH 2100

Class Hours: 3.0 Credit Hours: 3.0
Laboratory Hours: 0.0 Revised: Fall 2016

Catalog Course Description:
Principles and practices of the oral communication process, with a primary emphasis on
temporaneous public speaking. Course will incorporate research and planning, audience
demographics, topic selection, small and large group communication, listening, reasoning and
evaluation skills.

Co-requisites: ENGL 1010

Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:
New York: Pearson Publishing.
The text is available in an online, fully accessible format with the purchase of a Pearson

Week/Unit/Topic Basis:
1. Communication Apprehension/Audience Analysis
2. Selecting and Narrowing Topic/Determining Purpose/Informative Speaking
3. Developing Central Ideas/Gathering Support Materials
4. Organizing and Outlining
5. Introductions and Conclusions
6. Language/Delivery
7. Presentation Aids
8. Listening
9. Persuasive Speaking
10. Using Logic and Reasoning
11. Monroe’s Motivated Sequence of Appeals
12. Speaking for Special Occasions
13. Speaking in Small Groups
14. Speaking in Small Groups
15. Final Exam Period

**Course Goals:**

Note: Roman numerals after course objectives reference TBR's general education goals.

A. Offer strategies to control nervousness and apprehension and build confidence as a speaker. I. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7

B. Expand students’ presentation skills through audience analysis, varying methods of research, planning and organization. I. 3,4,6,7 VII. 3,4,5,6

C. Develop students’ ability to use active and reflective listening. I. 1,7

D. Foster students’ ability to identify, select, and use presentation aids effectively. I. 1,3,4,6,7

E. Enable students to recognize the process of communication to actively improve targeted areas of their communication. I. 1,5,6

F. Develop students’ verbal and nonverbal delivery skills in extemporaneous speaking. I. 3,5

G. Enable students to develop an appropriate general purpose for speaker, occasion and audience. I. 1,2,3

**Expected Student Learning Outcomes:**

Note: Capital letters after Expected Student Learning Outcomes reference the course goals listed above.

1. Explain what communication apprehension is, develop and apply coping strategies. A

2. Actively listen to and critically evaluate oral presentations. C

3. Select, research, and develop informative, persuasive, and special occasion topics appropriate for the speaker, listener and occasion. B, E, G

4. Cite relevant, reliable and sufficient sources in oral presentation. B, E

5. Present evidence using logical reasoning to support claims in persuasive speaking. B, E

6. Organize material in a purposeful, cohesive outline. B,E,G

7. Use presentation aids effectively and appropriately to support and enhance a presentation. B,D

8. Adapt an oral style using accurate, clear, and expressive language appropriate to the speaker, the audience and the occasion. A,E,F

9. Adapt a nonverbal style using eye contact, gestures, movement, and vocal variety appropriate to the speaker, the audience and the occasion. A,E,F

10. Construct a preparation outline and a speaker’s outline for extemporaneous delivery. A

**Evaluation:**
A. Laboratory Expectations

Days when speaking assignments are due are considered laboratory days. Students are expected to participate when not speaking by actively listening and critically evaluating speakers.

B. Grade Breakdown

● Speaking is 60% of grade, which includes at least two informative, two persuasive, and one instructor’s choice speech. ● Written work is 40% of grade.

C. Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 = F

Policies:

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance learning courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, may have requirements that are more stringent. In very specific circumstances, an appeal of the policy may be addressed to the head of the department in which the course was taken. If further action is warranted, the appeal may be addressed to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

B. Academic Dishonesty:

Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to the following practices:

• Cheating, including but not limited to unauthorized assistance from material, people, or devices when taking a test, quiz, or examination; writing papers or reports; solving problems; or completing academic assignments.

• Plagiarism, including but not limited to paraphrasing, summarizing, or directly quoting published or unpublished work of another person, including online or computerized services, without proper documentation of the original source.

• Purchasing or otherwise obtaining prewritten essays, research papers, or materials prepared by another person or agency that sells term papers or other academic materials to be presented as one’s own work.

• Taking an exam for another student.
• Providing others with information and/or answers regarding exams, quizzes, homework or other classroom assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.

• Any of the above occurring within the Web or distance learning environment. Please see the Pellissippi State Policies and Procedures Manual, Policy 04:02:00 Academic/Classroom Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions for the complete policy.

C. Accommodations for disabilities:

Students that need accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated should inform the instructor immediately, privately after class or in her or his office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Disability Services (DS) in order to receive accommodations in this course.

Disability Services (http://www.pstcc.edu/sswd/) may be contacted via email or by visiting Alexander 130.

D. Other Policies:

Students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior towards their instructor and their classmates. Conduct that disrupts the learning environment could result in a student’s expulsion from the class. For more information, please refer to the “Student Disciplinary Rules” section of the college catalogue.
# APPENDIX 3

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<td>3</td>
<td>Students able to distill a primary purpose into a single compelling statement.</td>
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<td>Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose.</td>
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<td>Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition) while demonstrating speaking skills from process to product.</td>
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<td>Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</td>
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<td>Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources for the purposes of problem solving and decision making.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Students adapt the use of evidence, analysis, and persuasive strategies to the audience, purpose and occasion of the speech, making basic distinctions among opinions, facts, and inferences.</td>
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<td>Students effectively utilize a variety of oral presentation skills in a conversational style that includes eye contact; variety in rate, pitch, and volume; appropriate pauses; distinct articulation; correct pronunciation; effective gestures and movement; appropriate language choices; and effective note, lecture, and presentation aid uses.</td>
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