**El Camino Community College**

**PROGRAM REVIEW 2022-23**

**FINE ARTS DIVISION**

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES PROGRAM**



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# SECTION 1 Program Overview

1. **Provide an abstract of what your program does, who you serve, your previous successes, and where your program is moving in the next four years. Highlight the most interesting, compelling aspects of your program – your recent achievements and needs.**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Communication Studies department had grown a great deal and with good reason. Our AA-T degrees have increased 124% over the past 3 years, and the number of degrees over the past 5 years has increased 622%. The department uniquely offers students the ability to complete three of the CSU Golden Four requirements, and our courses satisfy eight different CSU general education requirements for transfer. In 2019 The Communication Studies Department received The Model Program award from The Western States Communication Association. The department goal is to grow the offerings and enrollment, but understanding the implications of AB 928 (discussed in a later section) are foundational; that said, some other colleges offer a greater array of courses that should be offered at El Camino.

The Forensics Team won the national championship each of the past 4 years, culminating in 2023 by winning the 4-year National Parliamentary Debate Association national championship and the Phi Rho Pi debate national championship. A high percentage of our majors successfully transfer to 4 year institutions, and approximately 95% of students on the forensic team are accepted at universities every year. In fact, since 2000, over 40 former forensics students have been accepted to professional schools, including medical, law, and graduate programs. Of the forensics students who have completed their post-graduate education, over a dozen are practicing attorneys, one is an Assistant District Attorney, two are physicians, and nine are professors at various colleges and universities (six tenured). Currently El Camino faculty who were forensics alumni are Francesca Bishop, Joseph Evans, and Brittany Hubble. For a list of distinguished alumni, see our forensics page: <http://www.elcaminoforensicsteam.com/distinguished-alumni.html>**.** In 2023, for the first time, the Forensics Team competed at the International Forensics Association (IFA) tournament in Tokyo, Japan. El Camino took 5th place overall, among 55 mainly 4-year institutions, and took had the International Champion in both Impromptu Speaking and International Public Debate Association-format debate.

**PROGRAM MISSION:**

**The Communication degree provides students with a thorough foundation in the theory and practice of communication studies. This is achieved through a variety of courses that serve to develop personal, business, and professional communication skills in individual, interpersonal, and group situations, along with skills in research, organization, critical thinking, argumentation, and forensics. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through performance, class projects, research papers, objective tests, critiques, and forensic competitions. Course completion, evaluation of student learning outcomes, transferability, competitions at the local, state, and national levels, and periodic program review serve as measures of program assessment.**

Consistent with the overall mission of El Camino College to offer a broad range of programs and courses to serve students in obtaining a degree, transferring, and embracing skills, the program in Communication Studies offers excellent preparation and training for each of these areas. The department uniquely offers students the ability to complete three of the CSU Golden Four requirements, and our courses satisfy eight different CSU general education requirements for transfer. Our curriculum is designed so that, upon completion of the program, students will have taken a diverse set of courses that will give them the appropriate background in Communication as a general field of study, as well as specific training that will assist them in successfully transferring to a four-year university or enhancing personal skills. For example, students will have a basic understanding of sub-disciplines or topics relating to Communication (public speaking, group, argumentation, media, oral interpretation of literature, interpersonal, intercultural and forensics), offering the student a diverse selection of lower division courses that will provide a strong foundation to further their undergraduate education, as well as offering greater understanding of how meaning is exchanged within a variety of contexts. Additionally, our new Data Driven Persuasion class fulfills the quantitative reasoning requirement for graduation.

Upon completion of the Communication program, students will gain a basic understanding of how communication works. Students will gain hands-on training in dissecting and utilizing the communication process through individual performances, conversations with others in dyads and groups, and debating a variety of topics. Students will obtain experiences of communicating in public address settings to offer individual presentations, argue critical issues and present researched topics. As a result students will have intense practice in conducting and evaluating collegiate level research to construct and analyze arguments. In doing so, students will have a stronger grasp on the differences of nonverbal and verbal messages and how they influence audiences. In addition, students will be able to practice the management of speech anxiety through applying various methods of preparation and delivering messages. At the same time, students will gain a stronger sense of local, state, national and international issues worthy of discussion and advocacy. With such skills, students obtain stronger critical thinking skills, public speaking skills and interpersonal skills that will be applied to their personal lives, the community in which they live and to the world in general.

Communication Studies is currently allowed to offer about 62 sections a semester serving approximately 2,000 students. In the Fall of 2022, we offered the following:

30 COMS-100 (Public Speaking) sections

05 COMS-120 (Argumentation & Debate) sections

11 COMS-130 (Interpersonal Communication) sections

11 COMS-140 (Small Group Communication) sections

01 COMS-180 (Data-Driven Persuasion) section

01 COMS-250 (Oral Interpretation of Literature) sections

02 COMS-260 (Intercultural Communication) sections

02 COMS-265 (Mass Communication) sections

01 COMS-270 (Organizational Communication) section

01 COMS-275 (Gender Communication) section

01 COMS-292abcd (Forensics, Individual Events) section

01 COMS-293abcd (Forensics, Team Events) section

01 COMS-294abcd (Forensics, Individual Debate Events) section

Over time, the department has grown substantially. For comparison, in 1952 we offered one Public Speaking course, one Group, and one Oral Interpretation. By 1960 we were teaching 22 sections and by 1993 we offered 50 sections (including Voice and Articulation, Interpersonal, Argumentation, Readers Theatre and Intercultural Communication). Since 2017 we have introduced three new courses: Data-Driven Persuasion, Gender Communication, and Forensics Individual Debate Events.

The program has shrunk post-pandemic, partially due to the on-campus mandate, and partially because we are not offering sufficient online sections. For example, in Fall 2020, all 30 public speaking sections were waitlisted or closed. In 2017, 49 sections were offered. It was estimated that up to an additional 10-15 sections of this course would fill if offered online, and 25-30 more sections overall when all courses are considered; however, as of Spring 2023, enrollment has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. With promotion, our new Data Driven Persuasion class, which fulfills the quantitative reasoning requirement for graduation could see enormous growth.

The department is in great need of a full-time hire with forensics experience. Mark Crossman stepped out of Forensics in 2020, leaving that program severely understaffed, and Rosemary Swade retired in June 2022. It is highly likely that the department will have two additional retirements in the next two years. At this writing, Communication Studies has been authorized one new full-time position for fall 2023.

The department feels that in the future many more sections of various courses, both in-person and online, need to be offered. Until spring 2023, COMS 100 and 180 were impacted, delaying student progression to degrees. COMS 100 particularly, which is the basic course that fulfills the oral communication for graduation had been severely curtailed. At this writing, new adjunct faculty have been scheduled to teach more sections of COMS 100, 180, and 265 for spring 2023, but with enrollment down across the college and region, enrollment is not as strong as expected.

1. **Describe the degrees and/or certificates offered by the program. Consider addressing what makes your program unique to the college and region.**

The Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) or the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) is intended for students who plan to complete a bachelor's degree in a similar major at a CSU campus. Students completing these degrees (AA-T or AS-T) are guaranteed admission to the CSU system, in a major deemed similar. In order to earn one of these degrees, students must complete a minimum of 60 CSU-transferable units with a minimum GPA of 2.0. This degree may not be the best option for students intending to transfer to a particular CSU campus or to university or college that is not part of the CSU system. Students should consult with an El Camino College counselor when planning to complete the degree for more information on university admission and transfer requirements.

Required Course (3 units) Units

Communication Studies 100 Public Speaking 3

List A (6 units)

Communication Studies 120 Argumentation and Debate 3

Communication Studies 130 Interpersonal Communication 3

Communication Studies 140 Small Group Communication 3

List B (6 units)

Communication Studies 180 Data Driven Persuasion 4

Communication Studies 250 Oral Interpretation of Literature 3

Communication Studies 260 Intro to Intercultural Communication 3

Communication Studies 265 Mass Communication 3

Communication Studies 270 Organizational Communication 3  
Communication Studies 275 Gender Communication 3

Communication Studies 292abcd\* Forensics – Individual Events 2

Communication Studies 293abcd\* Forensics – Team Events 2   
Communication Studies 294abcd\* Forensics – Individual Debate Events 2

\* One semester

List C (3 units)

Anthropology 2 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology 3

Anthropology 4 Language and Culture 3

English 1B Literature and Composition 3

Psychology 5 General Psychology 3

Sociology 101 Introduction to Sociology 3

**Total Units: 18**

At least 12 units required for the major must be completed at El Camino College.

**Program Requirements Units**

Units in Major **18**

IGETC or CSU GE **34 - 39**

Transferable Electives  **3 – 8**

**TOTAL UNITS 60**

1. **Explain how the program fulfills the college’s mission. Address the work your program is doing to help the college fulfill its stated mission.**

*The mission of El Camino College is to make a positive difference in people’s lives by providing a comprehensive educational programs and services that promote student learning and success in collaboration with our diverse communities.*

The Communications Studies program offers a quality education in our major and appropriate courses for general education requirements that ensure the educational success of students from our diverse community. The department strives to strengthen quality education by seeking to teach new courses as the major evolves and as transfer schools and employers require.

The Communication Studies faculty strive to foster a positive learning environment and sense of community and cooperation through an effective process of collaboration and collegial consultation. Faculty will continue to offer recommendations to division administration regarding curriculum and staffing and will collaborate to strengthen the relationship between the two entities. The department also develops and enhances partnerships with schools, colleges, universities, businesses, and community-based organizations to respond to the workforce training and economic development needs of the community. Faculty conduct high school outreach in their areas, promoting the College and its Communications Studies program. Faculty also work in consulting, learning, and implementing new concepts in communication that business demands. Petitioning to teach Gender Communication was the result of such research.

1. **Discuss the status of recommendations from your previous program review. In the “Notes/Comments” section, please discuss the known impact of a completed recommendation or the rationale for recommendations that are on active, on hold, and/or abandoned.**

*If more than ten recommendations were presented in the previous program review, expand the enumerated list below as needed.*

1. **Recommendation:** Hire a full time faculty member with forensics responsibilities.  
   **Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** This was our number 1 recommendation in the last Program Review, but despite department support, was not successful until Spring 2023 when the department was given the go-ahead to start the search. Without this, the forensics program would be diminished in size, quality, and prestige, and the students will lose the immense benefits of this opportunity. Currently, the program relies on an adjunct instructor, but that is a stop-gap measure. Since the retirement from forensics by Dr. Crossman (he is still teaching) the director has been severely overworked and has indicated that she cannot continue this way indefinitely. At this writing, the department has been authorized a full-time hire for Fall 2023. This will satisfy this recommendation.

1. **Recommendation:** Increase the district budget for the forensics team.

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** While inflation has drastically increased costs (travel alone has increased 25%), the budget has not increased commensurately; in fact, we suffered a 10% cut in Associate Students funds since the last program review. During the pandemic, competition was online so the budget was sufficient but now that competition is in-person, the team has had to cut tournaments and students in order to stretch available funds. The Forensics Team’s success rate among students from underserved populations justifies an increase in funding as El Camino’s forensics budget is approximately 2/3 of our competitors; thus we need at least $20,000 more in district to provide a stable funding stream and increase the students we serve.

1. **Recommendation:** Create a third forensics course (COMS-294abcd)

**Status:** Completed

**Notes/Comments:** The course has allowed students to expand their knowledge and skills. This is a course the new faculty member would teach as its status as an adjunct-taught course makes its offering tenuous.

1. **Recommendation:** Rewrite COMS 290 to be a 2 unit course offered each winter.

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** The course was rewritten but has been held up in curriculum for several years.

1. **Recommendation:** Expand the number of golden four sections

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** The number of golden four sections have inexplicably been reduced. The new adjunct faculty may bring the golden four up to previous levels, but even more sections are needed both to satisfy current demand and to meet the expected demand created by AB 928.

1. **Recommendation:** Extend the wall to ceiling in MU 132 offices.

**Status:** Abandoned

**Notes/Comments:** The pandemic disrupted this plan and now the move into the Social Sciences building in 3-4 years will obviate the need.

1. **Recommendation:** Hire approximately 4 more part-time faculty

**Status:** Completed

**Notes/Comments:** New faculty have been hired, but others have left the college, making our part-time faculty number lower than it was when the previous program review was written. As of this writing, several part-time faculty have been hired for Spring 2023.

1. **Recommendation:** English 1-A pre-req on potentially all A-1 classes

**Status:** On hold

**Notes/Comments:** There is no longer a departmental consensus on this because of the impact of AB 705.

1. **Recommendation:** Provide more support for adjunct faculty

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** This is still supported by the department but no real progress has been made. The pandemic may have interrupted efforts.

1. **Recommendation:** Explore increased standardization of COMS-100

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** The pandemic interrupted efforts but Diana Crossman is spearheading an effort to accomplish this. This is now more important than ever because of the many new part-time faculty members and the increased number of online sections.

1. **Recommendation:** Continue to request the creation of a Department Chair and explore the possibility of “Directors”

**Status:** Active

**Notes/Comments:** The department still supports this but no progress has been made.

1. **Recommendation:** Develop additional course offerings

**Status:** Competed

**Notes/Comments:** COMS 175, 180, and 294abcd were all added giving students a more diverse opportunity for education and a faster way to complete their degree. There is a possibility of rewriting Intercultural Communication and cross listing it with an Ethnic Studies course to fulfill the new Ethnic Studies requirement. This course would be excellent for Dual Enrollment because students could fulfill both their College and High School Ethnic Studies requirements with the same course.

# SECTION 2 Program Assessment

# Program Contribution to Student Success and Equity

**For the program under review, examine the following data for the last four years by:**

* + **Disaggregating by race/ethnicity, gender, and age where possible.**
  + **Discussing internal and external factors contributing to constant, increasing or decreasing trends.**
  + **Discuss any known barriers to student success in your program.**
  + **Highlighting equity gaps found among different groups of students.**
  + **Present and discuss possible action plans about what could be done to address equity and achievement/opportunity gaps.**
* *If the program under review is a Career Education Program, please examine a) through k) from the list below.*
* *If students taking courses from the program under review end with a degree or certificate issued by the program, please examine a) through h) from the list below.*
* *If students taking courses from the program under review do not end with a degree or certificate issued by the program, please examine d) through g) from the list below.*

1. ***Degree Completion:* Number/percent of students earning a program degree**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **2018-19** | | **2019-20** | | **2020-21** | | **2021-22** | |  |
|  | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |  |
| Asian | 8 | 9.6% | 11 | 12.0% | 21 | 20.8% | 6 | 8.3% |  |
| American Indian | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.0% | 1 | 1.4% |  |
| Black/African American | 9 | 10.8% | 6 | 7.6% | 10 | 9.9% | 7 | 9.7% |  |
| Hispanic | 37 | 43.5% | 51 | 55.4% | 53 | 52.5% | 35 | 48.6% |  |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.1% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |  |
| Two or More Races | 6 | 7.2% | 4 | 4.3% | 7 | 6.9% | 6 | 8.4% |  |
| White | 23 | 27.7% | 18 | 18.5% | 9 | 8.9% | 17 | 23.6% |  |
| Unknown | 1 | 1.2% | 1 | 1.1% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |  |
| **Total** | **84** |  | **92** |  | **101** |  | **72** |  |  |

When we look at African Americans and Latinos, the numbers above are remarkably consistent. Over four years there is a slight decrease in degrees conferred. White students had a precipitous dip in 2020-2021, the first year of shutdown, while Asians had a similar dip in 2021-2022, the second year of the shutdown. I am hesitant to draw conclusions when the data covers a never before seen scenario. That said, it is to be noted that when underrepresented students are members of the Forensics Team they have a better than 95% success in earning a degree, no matter what the discipline and this trend continued during both years of the pandemic. This is likely because they “find a home” on the team, they received one-on-one mentoring and class support by forensics faculty.

1. ***Certificate Completion:* Number/percent of students earning a program certificate**

Communication Studies revived their certificate since the last Program Review. It was first listed in the 2020-2021 Catalog. No certificates have yet been granted, but we expect students to complete the requirements this year

1. ***Transfer to a four-year institution*: Number/percent of students transferring to a four-year institution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2018-19** | | **2019-20** | | **2020-21** | | **2021-22** | |
|  | # | % | # | % | # | % | **#** | % |
| Asian | 2 | 10.0% | 10 | 13.5% | 5 | 14.7% | 4 | 7.3% |
| American Indian | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.8% |
| Black/African American | 0 | 0.0% | 5 | 6.7% | 6 | 17.7% | 4 | 7.3% |
| Hispanic | 8 | 40.0% | 38 | 51.4% | 18 | 52.9% | 28 | 50.9% |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Two or More Races | 1 | 5.0% | 3 | 4.1% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 7.3% |
| White | 9 | 45.0% | 16 | 21.5% | 5 | 14.7% | 14 | 25.4% |
| Unknown | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| **Total** | **20** |  | **74** |  | **34** |  | **55** |  |

It is to be noted that the Forensics Team has a close to 100% transfer to four-year institutions. Because the team’s make up generally represents the demographics of the college, underrepresented students have a far greater transfer rate than the program or college average. Increasing the team’s district budget would allow more students to avail themselves of the opportunity that the Forensics Team offers.

1. ***Scheduling of courses:* Percentage of students enrolled in day/evening courses, on campus/online/hybrid courses, days of the week**

In spring 2023, 100% classes held on-campus were day classes. The department had 33 on-campus sections (44%), 41 online sections (55%), and 1 hybrid section (1%).

1. ***Fill rate:* Percentage of actual students enrolled in a term in relation to total seats offered**

Historically, all COM classes had over a 95% fill rate; however, since the Pandemic, only online classes have filled which, until spring 2023, were all waitlisted. For spring 2023, at this writing, enrollment is down across the college, but communications is faring as well or better than most departments in the college. ECC is currently aiming at 50% on-campus education, but data indicates that students prefer online classes, leading to lower enrollment in on-campus classes.

1. ***Grade Distribution:* Percentage of students in a course receiving each of the possible grades that can be awarded**

Although percentages are unavailable, in fall of 2019 (pre-pandemic) raw grade distribution for communications classes were as follows for the demographics noted:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ETHICITY** | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **F** | **TOTAL** |
| African American | 68 | 52 | 33 | 11 | 45 | 281 |
| Asian | 118 | 68 | 16 | 6 | 10 | 258 |
| Latino | 318 | 186 | 103 | 28 | 102 | 901 |
| 2 or More Races | 155 | 108 | 53 | 18 | 56 | 455 |
| Unknown/Decline to State | 115 | 49 | 15 | 6 | 17 | 242 |

The grade distribution for fall 2020 in COMS 100 (mid-pandemic when all classes were online) were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ETHICITY** | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **IPP** | **F** | **W** | **TOTAL** | **SUCCESS** | **RETENTION** |
| African American | 37 | 33 | 14 | 7 | 1 | 28 | 38 | 158 | 54% | 76% |
| Asian | 60 | 28 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 20 | 127 | 79% | 84% |
| Latino | 165 | 102 | 53 | 17 |  | 58 | 92 | 487 | 66% | 81% |
| 2 or More Races | 15 | 8 | 3 | 2 |  | 2 | 6 | 36 | 72% | 83% |
| Unknown/Decline to State | 88 | 73 | 33 | 11 |  | 32 | 45 | 283 | 69% | 84% |

Although official percentages were unavailable for 2019, rough calculations indicate that 2020 had a significantly greater success and retention rate across the board. This could be for several reasons, including the decrease in communication anxiety (stage fright) when public speaking is without a live audience and the fact that instructors were asked to be generous in grading because of the struggles students had during the pandemic.

1. ***Course* Su*ccess:* Percentage of students enrolled at census who complete the course with a grade of A, B, C, or P**

In fall of 2019 (pre-pandemic) success and retention percentages were as follows for the demographics noted:

Success % Retention %

African American 66 83  
Asian 79 90  
Latino 74 88  
Unknown/Decline to State 76 91  
White 84 90

In fall of 2020 (during the shutdown) success and retention percentages were as follows for the demographics noted:

Success % Retention %

African American 56 75  
Asian 80 86  
Latino 67 82  
Unknown/Decline to State 70 86  
White 74 84

Success declined across all populations during the time El Camino was offering only online classes. We do not have post-pandemic data; it is hoped that success will increase to pre-pandemic levels.

Data pre-pandemic showed that some communications courses were more amenable to success by certain groups. For example, COMS 120: Argumentation and Debate had a 90.3% success rate for African Americans, while COMS 140: Small Group Communication had a 90.4% success rate for Latinos. African American males did marginally better than African American females. As of this writing, both courses satisfied the oral communication requirement for graduation, but once AB 928 is implemented, likely only COMS 100: Public Speaking will be accepted. COMS 100 success rate was 64.7 and 67.7 respectively. That may be due to the fear of public speaking that almost all Americans have. The proposed speech lab would likely decrease communication apprehension and increase success rate for all groups.

1. ***Unit Accumulation:* Number of units accumulated by students working towards a program degree/certificate. Discuss whether students who take units beyond the requirements for their educational goals serve educational purposes or not. Focus on general trends, not on particular courses within the program.**

Units

2018-2019 64

2019-2020 65

2020-2021 69

2021-2022 56

Communication Studies majors did not take a great many units beyond that needed for graduation. This is likely because many of our golden four classes can be used for other majors also, so when switching majors, they find they have not taken a lot of unnecessary classes. We call the com major the ‘universal double-major’ because if you choose communication classes to fulfill requirements for graduation in any major, you are close to earning a com degree.

1. ***Annual earnings:* Median annual income of alumni who attended the program under review (or the closest related sector)**

Institutional Research advised this was only require for CTE programs.

1. ***Living Wage Attainment:* Percent of alumni who attended the program under review (or the closest related sector) and earn living wage**

Institutional Research advised this was only require for CTE programs.

***k) Job in Field of Study: P*ercent of alumni who pursued a career education path with a job related to their field of study.**

Institutional Research advised this was only require for CTE programs.

# Curriculum and Outcomes Assessment

1. **Examine the program curriculum using an equity lens by responding to the following questions: To what extent does the curriculum:**

* **Prepare students to actively engage in a diverse society?**

Communication performance classes all have an audience adaptation component which requires students to modify their performance based on audience demographics. This makes all students consider diversity and how to reach all audience members; in this way, equity is achieved as all perspectives are included. Additionally, all communication theory classes discuss culture and diversity as part of course curriculum.

* **Include multicultural content?**

The program offers an Intercultural Communication course (COM 260) and a Gender Communication course (COM 275), both of which have heavy multicultural content. Every other communication course has a multicultural component. Communication, by its nature, requires practitioners to understand a variety of perspectives in order to get their message across in a multicultural society; every textbook surveyed has a unit on multiculturalism.

* **Respond to diverse students’ learning needs?**

Since the last program review, the program has instituted several new courses that respond to diverse students’ learning needs. COM180: Data Storytelling in particular, allows students who may not engage successfully with mathematics to satisfy the quantitative reasoning requirement for graduation in a way where actual computation is not necessary. Gender communication was also added, allowing students to learn about other than binary genders, and the communication between and with people of all genders. Additionally, communication courses adapt to a variety of diverse needs, from nonverbal communication to verbal expression.

* **Encourage instructors and students to investigate their own views, biases and values and discuss multiple perspectives different from their own?**

COMS130: Interpersonal Communication and COMS120: Argumentation and Debate focus on investigation of diverse perspectives and encourage students to look at issues from a variety of viewpoints. Due to course content, COM 260: Intercultural Communication and COM 275: Gender Communication center on multiple perspectives. Additionally, our gateway course, COM100 requires a persuasive speech that entails adapting advocacy to a variety of audiences, and addressing counter-arguments. In that way, students are required to consider whether all people can access their speech.

* **Use critical/equity-oriented pedagogy?**

With the exception of COMS120: Argumentation and Debate, and all forensics courses (COMS 292, 293, 294) curriculum does not mandate critical pedagogy; however, all professors are encouraged to use equity-oriented pedagogy. For the past several years, Required Professional Development presentations (on what used to be called Flex Day) have focused on this topic; additionally, several of the required professional development hours are required to have an equity focus.

* **Ensure creating an empowering classroom environment?**

While curriculum would not necessarily create an empowering classroom in communication classes, best practices in communication instruction does. For example, Interpersonal Communication instructors are encouraged to arrange desks in a circle, so that all participants can see the faces of each other. Small Group Communication, by definition, has students learn cooperatively, in groups. In performance classes such as Public Speaking and Argumentation and Debate has presenters at the front of the class, which empowers students to command the classroom.

* **Use multiple evaluation techniques sensitive to the diverse ways students can demonstrate understanding?**

All communication curriculum encourages (and in many cases, requires) multiple ways to assess understanding. COMS 100, 120, 130, and 140 have a graded performance component, in addition to more traditional ways of testing knowledge.

1. **Summarize SLO and PLO assessment results over the past four years for key/gateway courses. Gateway courses are determined by your department & division – contact your Dean. For your gateway courses, present the raw data (number of students who participated in each assessment, number of students who met the standard in each assessment, what success rate for each SLO was for each assessment). This data is in Nuventive. Contact your Division Facilitator and/or Campus SLO Coordinator for assistance.**

COMS100, which according to Associate Dean Walter Cox is the department’s gateway course, evaluated SLO #1 in 2017-2018 and SLO#2 in 2018-2019. Due to some of the delays caused by COVID, the results for SLO #3 have not been entered into the system yet. It was assessed last semester and the results will be entered once classes begin again.

The results for SLO #1 as follows: 215 students were assessed. 112 (48%) attained an above average score, meeting the standard, which was 80% or higher; 52 students attained an average score; 51% had a below-average score.

The results for SLO #2 were as follows: 261 students were assessed with 245 (94%) meeting the standard of 80%.

At this point Canvas Outcomes are not being used to gather SLO data, so disaggregated data is not available. Several Communication Studies courses are participating in a pilot program analyzing Canvas Outcomes in Fall 2023 which should yield data going forward.

1. **Discuss programmatic factors contributing to constant, increasing or decreasing trends in the results for SLO and PLO assessment within the previously examined courses. What do you see that is contributing to increasing, decreasing, or stable success in each SLO analyzed?**

From Spring 2016 to the present, success in the gateway course ranged from 83.7 to 92.5%, not counting summer sessions, which were higher. First, the consistent success exemplified by the assessment results in our gateway course is due to the hard work of full-time faculty who put an emphasis on consistency of teaching by all instructors, full-time and part-time. Care was also taken to craft SLOs and PLOs and adjust instruction to assure understanding by students of core concepts.

The most recent SLO data for COMS 100, our gateway course, was assessed in spring 2018-2019 and the success rate was 94%, a significant improvement over 2017-2018, when the success rate was only 48%. The discrepancy is likely because the SLO in 2018-2019 covered material presented early in the course, while the SLO in 2017-2018 covered material presented gradually over the entire course, while the assessment was taken mid-way through the course.

1. **Highlight equity gaps found in SLO and PLO assessment results among different groups of students.**

The department did not tease out demographic groups when assessing SLOs or PLOs, so we can only look at demographic success in the courses. For COMS courses generally, see the success rate for core demographics over time below:

2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022

Asian students 86.3% 89.5% 85.2% 87.1%

White students 79.2% 82.2% 73% 71.7%

Hispanic students 76.8% 81.1% 72.1% 68.6%

Black students 70.5% 73.7% 58.5% 62.5%

Female students were marginally more successful than male students across all racial/ethnic categories. As mentioned above, Canvas Outcomes will be analyzed starting Fall 2023 with data to come.

Asian students had the greatest success rate in COMS classes, besting White students by 7-8 points each year. Hispanic students’ success rate followed closely, averaging 2-3 points below White students, while Black students were 5-6 points short of Hispanic students and 7-9 points below White students. Although success for all groups during and immediately after the pandemic shutdown, the gaps between demographic groups were remarkably consistent, telling us that the shutdown did not disproportionately disadvantage one demographic group over another.

# SECTION 3 Program Vision and Future Planning

# Program Vision

1. **Describe the vision of the program for the next four years considering the assessment reported in the previous section, student groups that are underrepresented in the program’s field, and any relevant changes within the program field/industry. A vision statement describes the desired future state of the program.**

The department will continue efforts to increase the success of underrepresented students. Because the success rate of these students is near 100% when they join the Forensics Team, if the Forensics Team budget was increased, the department’s success rate as a whole would increase; that said, because of the lack of movement on this issue for over a decade, we do not see that happening. Ignoring this program goal, which is currently number one for the department, shows the institution’s lack of desire to help departments increase success of underrepresented groups.

As a result of the pandemic with have become a flexible department with online, hybrid and traditional on campus classes.  We see many of these changes having a long-term effect.  Because we have Communication Studies courses many other colleges do not have and our courses have such an excellent reputation (as evidenced by the Western States Communication Studies Model Program Award) students from other colleges are beginning to take our courses online.

El Camino College has embraced Guided Pathways.  Communication Studies has been placed in the Behavioral and Social Science Meta-major and will soon move to the Behavioral and Social Science Division. It is hard to predict the impact of this move but we are confident Communication Studies will continue to flourish in this new environment.

As a result of the Special Committee on AB 928 (a singular transfer pathway) recommendation, The Universities of California will now be required to accept Oral Communication as a new (third) course in Area 1 – English Communication.  This may mean that we have to reevaluate and revise some of course's rigor.  It also means there will be an increased demand for our courses. Here is the link to the summary of action on AB 928: <https://icas-ca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/final_Summary_of_ICAS_actions_on_AB_928_June_152022.pdf>

We acknowledge that some students are not going to complete their degree as fast as we hope or at all.  Because Communication Studies teaches so many skills employers’ value, we believe the need for our certificate will increase to meet the demand for “non-degree-centric” credentials. Certificates also have shown some impact on decreasing equity gaps.

Our Data-Driven Persuasion was the first course we developed that was designed to be taught online.  This course is getting much attention around the state because it is not math, but it does fulfill the quantitative reasoning requirement for both CSUGE & IGETC.  We have seen much interest from students with other Home Colleges (On the California Virtual Campus) for this course, therefore increasing our enrollment potential and increase the success rate and degree completion rate of underserved students.

When class offerings are based on Student Educational Plans the need for our courses will increase.  Because students can fulfill so many different General Education Requirements with our courses we have become “The Universal Double for Double Majors,” therefore the demand for our courses continues to be strong.  We hope to cross-list our Intercultural Communication course with Ethnic Studies so it can be used for the new Ethnic Studies requirement.  This would be an excellent duel-enrollment course because High School students could double count (Use it for both the high school and college requirement).

# Future Planning

**A) Based on the assessment reported in the previous section, develop program goals to be completed during the next four years in relation to:**

* **Adjusting the curriculum for coherence and alignment with students’ workforce needs**
* **Advancing towards a more equitable program to close equity gaps among groups of students**
* **Clarifying students’ paths to completion, further education and employment**
* **Helping students explore options and build foundation skills**
* **Helping students stay on the path**
* **Integrating applied learning experiences**

1. The first goal is to increase the Forensics Team budget by $20,000 to allow more students to be served. This would make a more equitable program to close equity gaps among students. This was the number two recommendation in the last Program Review (number one being a forensics hire, which is being accomplished). This goal would also help students understand paths to completion, further education, and also increase persistence. Note: the team is funded through both district and AS funds. District funds to the Forensics Team increase with the COLA, but the actual cost of travel and competition has increased at a far greater rate, thus the program has essentially suffered a budget cut. AS funds, who get their money from the activity fee, have been cut 10% in recent years. The Forensics Program is grateful to the AS but this money is not guaranteed; increased funding needs to come from the District.

A survey of Southern California Community Colleges with forensics teams shows that El Camino has the next-to-lowest budget and gets less than half the budget of some schools; El Camino is also tied for the fewest coaches. Despite its success in transfer rate and equity goals, the Forensic Team is not sufficiently supported. Results of survey are as follows:

**El Camino College $38,000 2 full-time coaches**Irvine Valley College $80,000 4 full-time coaches  
Mesa College $89,000 3 full-time coaches  
Moorpark College $45,000 4 full-time coaches  
Mt. SAC $53,000 4 full-time coaches  
Orange Coast College $48,000 4 full-time coaches  
Rio Hondo College $35,000 2 full-time coaches

2. The department has long desired to implement a speech lab for non-forensics students, where they could practice speeches prior to having them graded. Communication apprehension (fear of public speaking) is one of the main reasons students drop or fail the basic course; because, as a result of AB 928, this course will soon be required for transfer to both the UC and CSU, it is imperative that we increase student success and retention. The lab could be accomplished by having forensics students, paid as student workers, coach drop-in students. While the current Dean of Fine Arts has been receptive to the idea, the need for, and resulting cost, of a faculty person to supervise has been the sticking point. This goal would help students build foundation skills and stay on path. It would also integrate applied learning experiences. The lab could be modeled after Ohlone College’s successful effort, as seen here: <https://www.ohlone.edu/communication/lab>

3. In order to adjust the curriculum for coherence and alignment with students’ workforce needs**,**

COMS 100 must be standardized and adjunct faculty must be mentored and monitored to ensure adherence to the standardization. For example, all faculty must require a minimum number of minutes of speaking time per student, and require that students attend outside speaker events, per curriculum. Diana Crossman is currently interested in spearheading this effort and plans on fine-tuning the course outline as soon as the course is up for review. Again, because AB 928 will require this course for all students to transfer to any state-funded university, it is critical that the course be taught well and that the content be standard.

1. **What projects will the program complete to achieve the desired goals? Please specify at least two for each goal.**

There are really no projects that will achieve the first goal. The Forensics Team has demonstrated prowess over the years and data shows the extremely high success and transfer rate for underrepresented students. We need lower administration to advocate for an increase in budget with upper administration. In that the department is moving division in fall 2023, it remains to be seen if there will be any movement on this goal.

For the second goal, the department will task the new faculty member, who will have forensics expertise, to coordinate with Joseph Evans, who previously came up with a plan for a speech lab, to offer the lab for a test student or two. The second project would be to assess the results. Professor Evans previously put in a great deal of work on the lab and nothing came of it due to budget constraints, so it is difficult to do more projects unless we have a commitment for action.

For the third goal, Diana Crossman will re-write the basic course as required. Then a full-time faculty member will be recruited to mentor/monitor adjunct faculty. Francesca Bishop has indicated interest in this role.

1. **When the next program review is due, how will the program determine if the goals have been met? Please specify at least one quantitative target or qualitative accomplishment for each goal.**

The first goal is a $20,000 budget increase for the Forensics Team. It will either be fully accomplished, partly accomplished, or it will not, so quantitative success will be simple to gauge.

For the second goal, if there is a speech lab the goal will quantitatively have been met. The increased success and retention in COMS100 will be a qualitative measure of success.

The third goal’s success can be assessed by whether COMS100 has been rewritten, and if a full-time faculty member has been recruited to serve as a mentor/monitor.

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# Program Resources

**In the following areas, what are the resources needed by the program to meet the goals for the next four years? Include any recommendations from the previous Program Review that are still active or on hold.**

**List resources in order of priority. Prioritize them within each category and/or develop an overall prioritized list of resources. Explain how these resources contribute to the** [**College’s equity goals**](https://www.elcamino.edu/about/depts/ir/docs/research/outcomes/Local%20Vision%20Goals%20Infographic%202017-18.pdf)**.**

There is no category to prioritize an increase in funding for our program. Increasing the Foreniscs Team district budget is the department’s top priority. The funding is currently tied to COLA increases, but travel expenses (hotel and airfare) have increased many times that of the general COL. And that only keeps the program at the current level; if we want to close equity gaps, we need to enlarge the program.

**a) Staffing**

Priority 1: Three of the current seven full-time faculty members of the Communication Studies department have indicated that they will retire in the next few years, possibly as soon as in one year. We will need to replace these faculty members as they retire. Because COMS100 is required for graduation and transfer to the UC and CSU, not having sufficient faculty would create a bottleneck to success. Additionally, full-time faculty teach the specialized courses required for the major as qualified part-time faculty are hard to find; therefore, it would be critical to replace full-time faculty to sustain the major.

Priority 2: For 15 years or more, the Forensics Team had at least one and up to three contract or student workers, most of whom were prior national champions, to help coach the team. That worker was cut several years ago. Reinstatement of that person is necessary to maintain the one-on-one attention that leads to success for underrepresented students.

Priority 3: Although this would not require the hiring of faculty, staffing the speech lab with both a supervising faculty member and student coaches are required. As stated above, fear of public speaking is a reason students do not complete COMS100, the required course.

**b) Facilities and Equipment**

Communication Studies is slated to move to the current Social Sciences building within three years so the department does not seek any upgrade to the current facilities and it is impossible to gauge needs in the new facilities. Necessary equipment for COMS classes is minimal and currently sufficient.

**c) Technology/Software**

None is required.

**d) Contracts/Services**

Priority 1: As mentioned under staffing, student coaches to assist in coaching the Forensics Team must be reinstated.

Priority 2: As mentioned under staffing, student coaches to work in the speech lab, if established, would be required.

# APPENDIX A

# CAREER EDUCATION (CE) SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

*CE programs must conduct a full program review every 4 years. The comprehensive program review includes responses to the CE supplemental questions below. Every two years (once between full program reviews) these supplemental questions must be answered and submitted to Academic Affairs for posting on the College website.*

***Use labor market data, advisory committee input/feedback, and institutional and program-level data to respond to the following questions:***

**1. How strong is the occupational demand for the program?** In your response, describe any changes in demand over the past 5 years and discuss the occupational outlook for next five (5) years. Provide applicable labor market data (e.g., US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Development Department) that address state and local needs.

**2. How does the program address needs that are not met by similar programs in the region?** In your response, identify any distinctive components of the program (e.g., curriculum, facilities, resources) and/or describe any unique contributions the program or its students/graduates make to the community served.

**3. What are the completion, success, and employment rates for students in the program?** In your response, identify the standards set by the program and discuss any factors that may impact completion, success, and employment rates among students in the program. Describe the status of any action plans for maintaining/improving rates relative to such benchmarks.

**4. List any licensure/certification exam(s) required for entry into the workforce in the field of study and report the most recent pass rate(s) among program graduates.** In your response, identify any applicable performance benchmarks set by regulatory agencies and describe the status of any action plans for maintaining/improving pass rates relative to such benchmarks.

**5. Are the students satisfied with their preparation for employment? Are the employers in the field satisfied with the level of preparation of program graduates?** Use data from student surveys, employer surveys, and other sources of employment feedback to justify your response.

**6. Is the advisory committee satisfied with the level of preparation of program graduates? How has advisory committee input and feedback been used in the past two years to ensure employer needs are met by the program?** Describe the status and impact of any advisory committee recommendations.

California Education Code 78016 requires that the review process for CE programs includes the review and comments of a program’s advisory committee. **Provide the following information:**

a. Advisory committee membership list and credentials.

b. Meeting minutes or other documentation to demonstrate that the CE program review process has met the above Education Code requirement.