Communication Studies

2019 Program Review

MJC Program Review 2019

Modesto Junior College's Program Review process is divided into 3 sections:

- Program Analysis (SWOT Analysis)

- Goal Setting and Activities

- Resource Request

Program Analysis

Internal Strengths

1. What strengths does the analysis of student data reveal?

Success rates have remained stable over the last five years. In the online modality, our success rates have increased from 65% to 73% over the last four years. We are offering more classes in both hybrid and online formats. We have increased our number of DE-certified instructors, including full time and part time faculty. We have increased the number of Associates degrees granted by 26% in the last year. We maintained the number of Certificates awarded. We have increased our online offerings from 9% in 2015-2016 to 19% in 2017-2018. Evening class offerings have decreased, but our online offerings are able to accommodate students schedules.

2. Are there specific aspects of the program that are exemplary or could serve as a model?

We have strengthened our connection with industry by identifying available jobs that require effective communication skills. We had a record number of 18 inductees into Sigma Chi Eta two years ago. The Speech & Debate team has created positive press. Students on the team complete formal service hours which include volunteering at local high school tournaments, facilitating on-campus events, and assisting instructors by presenting sample speeches/debates and facilitating labs. We have continued to increase our OER textbook offerings and low / no-cost books. A high number of students in our department receive academic scholarships. Every spring, we coordinate Communication Studies Student Appreciation Night to bring students in the discipline together to celebrate their accomplishments.

3. What do others see as the program's strengths?

Colleagues from other colleges comment on our diversity of course offerings. Our speech and debate team is nationally competitive and students have been offered scholarships and jobs because of their participation.

4. How well are students meeting program learning outcomes, skills, or competencies; and how are they relevant to careers in your discipline or industries for which you help prepare students?

Across all demographics, students PLO success rate is above 73%. In our last Program Review, the department did see an equity gap for Black and African-American students. We identified strategic teaching approaches and our current data shows significant improvement. This gap has been closed and this group is–in some PLO categories–out performing all other groups. Our data shows that our students are highly successful at meeting both course and program level outcomes. These directly align with soft-skills sought by local employers. These job opportunities are identified and advertised to students by the department.

Internal Weaknesses

5. What gaps are observed by reviewing the student data?

There is a gap between fill rate and success rate in classes.

6. What disproportionate gaps need to be addressed?

Asian and Pacific-Islander students seem to be struggling with some of the PLOs when compared to other demographic groups.

7. What are areas in which the program could improve? (curriculum, scheduling, modality, other?)

There are a few specific occurrences where our curriculum could be better adapted to serve our majors in the community including offering more sections of some classes and less sections of others, especially based on transferability. Offering A1 in the fully online modality. We want to investigate our percentage of East Campus v. West Campus offerings to see how we can better serve students needs. This data was not disaggregated for our department on the Program Review Dashboard. We could improve our high school out-reach by hosting high school speech and debate tournaments.

8. Where are there gaps in the program on how students are meeting learning outcomes, skills, or competencies?

We have improved in PLO-attainment by ethnicity, and no major gaps seem to exist in the data. However, there are minor ones we can continue to improve upon.

External Opportunities

9. Where are potential opportunities for expansion, improvement, or new program development?

Continue to make connections with employers in the area who hire Communication Studies majors and graduates. Expand curriculum to meet transfer requirements and industry trends.

10. What are some industry or disciplinary trends that could enhance the program?

Continue to make connections with employers in the area who hire Communication Studies majors and graduates. Continue to make transfer connections with other institutions to enhance our program and facilitate more clarity in the transfer process for students. Hosting a high school speech and debate tournament would help foster connections with the community and recruit students to MJC. We could work to establish a Communication Studies alumni network.

External Threats

11. How are changing resources, technology, employer, or transfer requirements affecting the program's ability to serve students?

There are courses we can offer to enhance students transfer. Outdated resources and technology inhibit our ability to serve students, including problems with computers/tech in offices and classrooms.

12. What are some current industry or disciplinary trends that could have a negative impact on the program?

We werent able to identify any.

13. What other obstacles does the program face?

The increased costs of maintaining a nationally competitive speech and debate team are hard to meet. The teams budget has not kept up with the growing costs of travel. Through the development of Pathways, speech and debate has been recognized as an important area for transfer. This increases the number of students who wish to travel, compete, and gain scholarships. Our department consistently provides leaders for the college community. However, while we are enthusiastic about these efforts it can also make it difficult to plan and implement new efforts for growing our own department / program.

Goal Setting and Activities

Goals

Program Goal	Mission Alignment	Area of Focus
1. Build a fully online Public Speaking class. (Innovative Education).	Innovative Education	Curriculum
2. Establish COMM internships with local employers. (Workforce Needs).	Workforce Needs	Internship/Service Learning

3. Reduce financial barriers to success in our department. (Equity).   Equity   Student Support

Activities

Activities	In Support of Goal #	Outcome or Deliverable
1. Get DE modality approval for Public Speaking.	Goal #1	1. Ability to offer Public Speaking fully online by Fall 2021.
2. Develop a shared Public Speaking Canvas shell featuring OER resources that can be used in a fully online Public Speaking class.	Goal #1	2. Ability to offer Public Speaking fully online with 50% of our Public Speaking sections using low or no cost textbooks before the next Program Review.
3. Increase connections with top employers in the area.	Goal #2	3. Internship offers before the next Program Review.
4. Provide resources and opportunities to forensics team that remove socioeconomic barriers.	Goal #3	4. Cover students food, equipment, and technology costs.
5. Participate in professional development opportunities to stay current with disciplinary trends including but not limited to distance education. Please note this does support all three goals, but the survey instructions only allow us to indicate one.	Goal #1	5. Upgrade and expand curriculum, course content and/or modality to be consistent with changing trends via department presentations recapping attended professional development activities.

Resource Requests

Category	Request	Activity #	Estimated Cost
Prof. Devel.	Attend a Communication Conference.	5	1800
Technology	Laptops for forensics team. We have had several laptops fail since our last purchase. The demand for students has increased.	4	10000
Technology	Office computers. On September 12, IT informed us that our office computers were too old to be supported any longer and needed to be replaced. Our desires to teach more online classes are being actively impeded by outdated technology. This is relevant to multiple activities, but the survey only allows us to formally select one.	2	12000

Technology	Digital camcorders. In order to develop an open-source set of speech examples, we need a set of next-generation camcorders that we can take to speech and tournament tournaments and into classrooms. Additionally, to record high-quality instructional videos camcorders are necessary. We are requesting 4 camcorders, but desperately need at least 1 as soon as possible.	2	4000
Personnel	Gender Pay Equity for Assistant Director of Forensics. Currently, the Director of Forensics and the Assistant Director of Forensics perform the same job function with the exception of additional administrative duties performed by the director, which he receives an additional stipend for. Both individuals spend the same number of hours in the classroom, meeting with students outside of class, and traveling to tournaments. The Director of Forensics receives a 40% load whereas the ADOF receives 20%. The department feels this is a gender disparity as the only difference between the duties and qualifications of these individuals is that the Assistant Director is a woman. Because this survey requires a cost estimate, we have included one. However, what is actually being requested is an additional 20% load reassign to the ADOF position to match that of the Director of Forensics.	4	20000
Facilities	Practice rooms on West Campus. These would be useful for students taking face-to-face communication courses and for those in hybrid/online classes where they may need a private space to record a presentation. It is unclear whether existing space could be used for this, or if it would require construction/modification. Thus, we did not include a cost estimate.	1	NA
Facilities	Shared COMM faculty office on West Campus. Instructors who teach on West Campus do not currently have a dedicated workspace to conduct office hours or prep in between classes, nor to facilitate online teaching on West campus. It is unclear whether existing space could be used for this, or if it would require construction/modification. Thus, we did not include a cost estimate.	1	NA
Other	Forensics team budget equity funds. Currently, the forensics team lacks a large enough budget to provide	4	15000

food money to students while traveling. This is inconsistent with what other teams do in the region and nationally. Oftentimes, the forensics coaches will buy food with their own personal funds so that students with food insecurity issues are able to eat while traveling with the team. Food insecure students may feel they cannot travel as frequently as others because of this, which gives them less competitive practice and exposure to transfer universities who may be willing to offer scholarships. Additionally, costs of travel have significantly increased over the last ten years. This makes it difficult for the team to stay in safe and clean hotel facilities and to sustain a 15-25 person team.