A. Proposed Ph.D. Curriculum  
Department of Communication

A. Name of institution: University at Albany, State University of New York  
Specify campus where program will be offered, if other than the main campus:

B. Campus President or Chief Academic Officer: Susan V. Herbst  
Name and title: Officer in Charge and Provost  
Signature and date:

C. Contact person, if different  
Name and title: Jonathan T. Bartow, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies  
Telephone: 518-437-5062  
Fax: 518-442-3922  
E-mail: bartow@albany.edu

D. Proposed program title: Communication  
E. Proposed degree or other award: Ph.D.  
F. Proposed HEGIS code: 0601  
G. Total program credits: 60  
H. If the program will be offered jointly with another institution, name and address of the institution/branch below:  
N/A

*If the other institution is degree-granting, attach a contract or letter of agreement signed by that institution's President or CEO. If it is non-degree granting, refer to SED Memorandum to Chief Executive Officers No. 94-04 (http://www.highered.nyserd.gov/ocue/ceo%20memorandum.htm).*
I. If the program will lead to teacher certification as other than a classroom teacher, list the intended:
   
   Certification title(s) and type(s):
   (e.g., English 7-12, Professional; Childhood 1-6, Initial/Professional)

   N/A

J. If specialized accreditation will be sought indicate:

   Accrediting group: N/A

   Expected date of accreditation: N/A

K. Anticipated enrollment:

   Initial: 2 Full Time; 2 Part Time
   Maximum within first five years: 11 Full Time; 10 Part Time

L. If this program will be offered in a special format, please specify (See Appendix H for definitions.):

   N/A

M. If this program will be offered in an atypical schedule that may affect program financial aid eligibility, please describe:

   N/A

N. Brief Program Summary (300 words), describing academic content, structure and duration.

   The program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree is designed to prepare qualified students for college and university teaching and for careers in communication research. The program emphasizes communication theory, research methods, and the application of knowledge in the field to identify, analyze and propose solutions for communication problems. The program requires at least three academic years of full-time study and research or the equivalent over a longer period beyond the baccalaureate. Students entering the program with a Bachelor’s degree (having not yet earned a Master’s degree) are required to take a minimum of 60 credits, structured by a plan of study leading to a program specialization and cognate, to be determined in negotiation between each student and his/her advisory committee.
B1. Program Description

The program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree is designed to prepare qualified students for college and university teaching and for careers in communication research. The program emphasizes communication theory, research methods, and the application of knowledge in the field to identify, analyze and propose solutions for communication problems. The program requires at least three academic years of full-time study and research or the equivalent over a longer period beyond the baccalaureate.

Students entering the program with a Bachelor’s degree (having not yet earned a Master’s degree) are required to take a minimum of 60 credits, distributed as follows below, along with successful completion of a qualifying exam and a dissertation. Items in A1 below should be completed within the first two years of the program.

Doctoral students are required to complete a plan of study indicating a projected pathway to a program specialization and cognate, to be determined in negotiation between each student and his/her advisory committee.

A. Required Coursework

1. **Core Courses (24 credits)**
   Consists of 3 theory courses and 3 methods courses

   a. Theory courses (9 credits)
      Communication Theory (Com 502)
      Persuasion/Message Design and Social Influence (Com 503)
      Advanced Theory (Com 702)

   b. Methods courses (9 credits)
      Communication methods (Com 525)
      2 additional quantitative or qualitative methods courses*

   *Qualitative methods may be satisfied with Qualitative Research Methods (Com 580), Field Research Methods (Com 587), Conversation Analysis (Com 585), Qualitative Research Techniques (Soc 535), and Field Methods in Ethnology (Ant 608). Quantitative methods may be satisfied with Research Methods (Soc 509), Intermediate Stats (Soc 522), Multivariate Analysis (Soc 609), Survey Design and Analysis (Soc 626), Empirical Data Analysis (Pos 517), Regression Analysis (Pos 518), and Advanced Statistical Methods (Pos 519).

   c. Breadth Courses (6 credits)
      This requirement ensures that students become familiar with 1 or 2 other fields of study in the communication discipline beyond that represented by the substantive area. Courses fulfilling this requirement are designated by the Director of Graduate Studies, selected from courses such as: Theories and Research in Public Organizational Communication (COM 551), Interpersonal Interaction (COM 575), Culture and Communication COM 577, Theories and Research in Political Communication (COM 520), Introduction to Health Communication (COM 560). (Note that these courses may not be double counted to fulfill other requirements)
2. **Substantive area (15-18 credits, with a minimum of 15 credits inside Department)**
   The substantive area will be defined in consultation between students and their faculty advisers. Fields of study historically associated with the discipline of communication and represented in this department are: interpersonal/intercultural communication, organizational communication, political communication, health communication, and communication technologies.

3. **Cognate area (9 credits)**
   The cognate area consists of coursework related to or supportive of students' substantive areas, consisting of courses in or outside department; courses are selected in consultation with students’ doctoral advisors.

4. **Independent Research Project (3 credits)**
   This project is to be completed in the 4th semester, under the guidance of a faculty member in an independent study.

5. **Electives (6-9 credits)**
   Electives inside and outside of the department, including independent studies, as advised.

The core, substantive area, cognate area, electives, and independent research project add up to 57-63 credits minimum. A minimum of 60 credits is required for the program.

**B. Other program requirements**

1. **Proseminar** (participation required until coursework is completed; not credit bearing).
   These are weekly research discussions with faculty during the academic year; participation is expected until the student completes coursework.

2. **Three qualifying exams: 1 in methods, 2 in specialty areas**
   Three qualifying examinations, 1 in methods, 2 in substantive areas as defined in consultation with the qualifying examination committee. The qualifying exams can be initiated as early as the 5th semester (or when required methods courses are completed) but should be completed by the end of the 7th semester (or 1.5 years past Master’s level coursework). Students who fail a qualifying exam or portions of an exam may retake the entire exam or that portion with deficient work. Students who do not pass the qualifying exams on second attempt will not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D program. Students will remain eligible to complete the master’s degree.

3. **Research Tool**

   Students must demonstrate competence in use of one research tool relevant to the area of specialization. The research tool requirement may be fulfilled with a reading knowledge in one appropriate foreign language, or competence in one special methodological area.

   Foreign language skills are tested by appropriate examinations. Research tool options not involving foreign languages are satisfied by passing appropriate courses, as advised by the chair.
of the committee, with a grade of B or better.

4. **Teaching Tool Requirement**

Students fulfill this requirement by successfully engaging in a bona fide teaching experience, such as teaching a course or playing a major role in assisting in the teaching of a course, under the supervision of a faculty member in the Department. Students will generally complete this requirement by fulfilling the duties of a teaching assistantship, although other options will be available.

5. **Dissertation Committee**

Doctoral students will each be guided by a committee comprised of at least 3 faculty members, one of whom will serve as chair. The chair generally should be selected from faculty members in the Department of Communication. Other members of the committee will be selected by students in consultation with committee chair.

C. **Other program information:**

1. **Advanced Standing and Waivers**

Of the 60 credits required for the degree, 30 credits must be completed at this university. Students who have completed graduate work in our M.A. program or elsewhere may apply for advanced standing credits. Students may receive up to 30 credits of advanced standing, and this credit may or may not include credit for required courses. It also is possible for students with or without a master’s in communication to receive advanced standing for one or more courses in a related discipline.

A waiver is granted when the faculty committee deems that students have satisfied a specific requirement by some means other than taking the required course. It does not carry credit.

2. **Admission to Candidacy**

Students are admitted to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy upon the following:

(a) Satisfactory record in course study
(b) Satisfactory completion of the research tool requirement
(c) Completion of the University residence requirements
(d) Satisfactory completion of the qualifying examination (both methods and specialty areas)

**Notes on Proposal**

It is worth commenting in a little more detail on some of the features of the proposed doctoral curriculum for clarification and to address questions that may be forthcoming.
Required Courses in Research Methods: Our proposal enables doctoral students in our program to use existing research methods courses in other departments to satisfy requirements in our program. In doing this, we are following current policy in the College of Arts and Sciences to avoid duplicating methods courses across departments that might be shared. We are in the process of consulting with the chairs of these departments to insure that our students would be welcome, and plan to provide letters of support in an appendix to this proposal in the near future.

Required Breadth Courses: These courses provide exposure to other areas of the discipline beyond the substantive area. We expect the “breadth” courses to be particularly important for students who come to the doctoral program straight from their undergraduate degrees.

Required Cognate Area: Our proposal recognizes the benefits of interdisciplinary education and research, and thus requires doctoral students to explore bodies of knowledge elsewhere on campus that can be brought to bear in their program.

Required 60 credit hours: We expect 60 credit hours to be the minimum number of required credits. We will explore the use of readings courses and Load Equivalent Unit (L.E.U.) courses to insure that doctoral students continue to maintain their full-time status.

Progress toward degree completion: See the accompanying time-line for a basic understanding of how we see a student progressing through coursework and the qualifying examination.

Guidelines for Implementation

1. Doctoral students must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or better; falling below will put a student on probation for a semester. Falling below for two semesters may indicate that a student is not capable of doctoral work, and, if funded, the Department may choose to withdraw funding for that student. The Department may also choose to decline to continue him or her in the doctoral program.

2. The Department will look at doctoral students’ progress through the program and GPA on a semester by semester basis. In general, and budgets permitting, students will receive 4 years of funding from the program, but this is dependent on making adequate progress through the program and maintaining a 3.5 or better GPA.

3. Students who have exhausted funding from Department may receive additional support in the form of adjunct teaching, generally for about 2 semesters. However, this funding is subject to the availability of adjunct teaching opportunities in the department and should not be assumed.

4. With respect to program and qualifying examinations, students should be encouraged to choose their substantive areas with an eye to being able to identify themselves as fitting an area or areas in the field in which job descriptions are typically specified (e.g., organizational communication, political communication, interpersonal communication, and subdivisions thereof).
**B2. Semester-by-Semester Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>SPRING COURSE TITLE</th>
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<th>FALL COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>SPRING COURSE TITLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Com 503-Persuasion/</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Substantive Area #3</td>
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<td>Substantive Area #4</td>
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<td>Message Design &amp; Social Influence</td>
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<td>Breadth Course #1²</td>
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<td>Breadth Course #2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ind. Research Project</td>
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<tr>
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<th>SPRING COURSE TITLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elective #1</td>
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<td>Cognate Course #2</td>
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<td>Com 702-Advanced Theory</td>
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<td>Elective #2</td>
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<td>Qualifying Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1- Substantive Area: Doctoral student is asked to propose a field of research and teaching expertise in an area historically associated with the discipline of communication and represented in the department.

2- Breadth Course: Doctoral student is required to become familiar with one or two other fields of study in the communication discipline beyond their chosen substantive area.

3- Cognate Course: Coursework related to or supportive of students' substantive areas.
### B3. Schedule of Graduate Courses

#### '07-'08 Graduate Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Core</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM 502</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Communication Theory and Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 503</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Message Design and Social Influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 525</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Communication Research Methods</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Communication Theory and Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 525</td>
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<td>Communication Research Methods</td>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM 523</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Communication in Political Decision-Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 551</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Theories and Research in Public Organizational Communication</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 575</td>
<td>F'07</td>
<td>Interpersonal Interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 520</td>
<td>S'08</td>
<td>Theories and Research in Political Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 552</td>
<td>S'08</td>
<td>Advanced Studies in Organizational Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 577</td>
<td>S'08</td>
<td>Culture and Communication</td>
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</table>

| Electives            |        |                                      |                                    |
|----------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|                                    |
| COM 557              | F'07   | Communication Audits within Organizations |                                  |
| COM 625              | F'07   | Mass Media Effects in Political Communication |                                |
| COM 585              | S'08   | Conversation Analysis                |                                    |
| COM 635              | S'08   | Communication Campaign Strategies    |                                    |
| COM 635              | S'08   | Communication in Health Care Organizations |                                |
| COM 635              | S'08   | Mediated Communication in Social & Political Contexts |                                |
| COM 659              | S'08   | Corporate Communication: Theory and Practice |                                |
| COM 675              | S'08   | Negotiation                          |                                    |
| COM 659              | S'08   | Leadership Communication             |                                    |

| Independent and Applied Courses |        |                                      |                                    |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|                                    |
| COM 697                          | F'07   | Independent Study in Communication   |                                    |
| COM 698                          | F'07   | Research Seminar/Practicum           |                                    |
| COM 699                          | F'07   | Masters Thesis                       |                                    |
| COM 697                          | S'08   | Independent Study in Communication   |                                    |
| COM 698                          | S'08   | Research Practicum                   |                                    |
| COM 699                          | S'08   | Masters Thesis                       |                                    |
# '08-'09 Graduate Schedule

## Program Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM 502</td>
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<td>Communication Theory and Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 503</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Message Design and Social Influence</td>
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<td>COM 525</td>
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<td>Communication Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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## Substantive Core

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM 520</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Theories and Research in Political Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 523</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Communication in Political Decision-Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 551</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Theories and Research in Public Organizational Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 575</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Interpersonal Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 577</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Culture and Communication</td>
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<th>Term</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM 557</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Communication Audits within Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 659</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Information Technology Use and Collaboration in Distributed Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 675</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Topics in Interpersonal Interaction/Health Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 585</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Conversation Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 635</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Communication Campaign Strategies</td>
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<td>COM 635</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Communication in Health Care Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 659</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Political Communication in the Internet Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 659</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Corporate Communication: Theory and Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 675</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Technology and Contemporary Organizational Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 675</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 675</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Advanced Behavioral Health Risk Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 659</td>
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## Independent and Applied Courses

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<tr>
<td>COM 697</td>
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<td>Independent Study in Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 698</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Research Seminar/Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM 699</td>
<td>F'08</td>
<td>Masters Thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 697</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Independent Study in Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 698</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Research Practicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM 699</td>
<td>S'09</td>
<td>Masters Thesis</td>
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</table>
'09-'10 Graduate Schedule

Program Core
COM 502 F'09 Communication Theory and Practice
COM 503 F'09 Message Design and Social Influence
COM 525 F'09 Communication Research Methods
COM 522 F'09 Communication Theory and Practice
COM 525 S'10 Communication Research Methods

Substantive Core
COM 520 F'09 Theories and Research in Political Communication
COM 551 F'09 Theories and Research in Public Organizational Communication
COM 575 F'09 Interpersonal Interaction
COM 577 S'09 Culture and Communication

Electives
COM 523 F'09 Communication in Political Decision-making
COM 557 F'09 Communication Audits within Organizations
COM 675 F'09 Health Communication
COM 672 S'10 Communication in Health Care Organizations
COM 626 S'10 Campaign Communication
COM 635 S'10 Communication Campaign Strategies
COM 659 S'10 Corporate Communication: Theory and Practice
COM 659 S'10 Interacting with Organizations
COM 675 S'10 Negotiation
COM 675 S'10 Health Communication: Doctor-Patient Interaction
COM 659 Sum10 Leadership Communication

Independent and Applied Courses
COM 697 F'09 Independent Study in Communication
COM 698 F'09 Research Seminar/Practicum
COM 699 F'09 Masters Thesis
COM 697 S'10 Independent Study in Communication
COM 698 S'10 Research Practicum
COM 699 S'10 Masters Thesis
B4. Impact of the Proposed Program on Other Academic Programs

For over 20 years, the Department of Communication has educated doctoral students specializing in communication through our participation in two degree programs: the Department of Sociology's Ph.D program and the Doctor of Arts, an interdisciplinary degree program now in the process of being phased out on campus. The curriculum we propose draws largely on the existing infrastructure of courses used for current doctoral students and for our MA program in communication. Only one additional new course is envisioned for our doctoral program.

The major impact of the proposed doctoral program on department activities will be to increase the number of students pursuing doctoral education, while decreasing the number of students that previously had pursued our MA degree on a full time basis. We envision that over time most of the internal financial aid used previously to support our full time MA students will be allocated to doctoral students. This will have the effect of decreasing the numbers of students pursuing MA degrees on a full time basis.

Our MA student cohort historically has been comprised of (1) students pursuing the MA for reasons of professional advancement, who take courses on a part-time basis while they maintain full employment, and (2) those pursuing the MA degree on a full time basis in preparation for further graduate education. Regarding the professionally oriented students, which comprise approximately 75% of our MA student cohort, we expect no effect on access, retention, student/faculty ratio, and time-to-degree. For the other portion of this cohort, those MA students interested in further graduate education, we anticipate that committed students will be directed to apply for our doctoral program. Those less sure about graduate education will be directed toward our MA program (but will in all likelihood not receive internal financial aid) or to other MA programs in communication where they can acquire the background and experience required for creating a commitment to graduate education.

Given this relatively minimal change in department activities, we anticipate little or no effect on access to, retention within, student/faculty ratio for or time-to-degree for the existing undergraduate major in communication.

Thus, we envision that in adding a doctoral degree, our graduate program will come to be populated by two primary groups: (1) doctoral students supported by internal financial aid and research funding, and (2) professionally oriented MA students pursuing graduate education on a part time basis. In light of these new alignments, we spent Spring 07 reconsidering our MA program and will be offering a set of modifications to accommodate this shift. For example, we will propose to eliminate the existing requirement in the MA program for taking a comprehensive examination and we will propose to reduce from three to two the number of required core courses. We expect to maintain the substantial focus on theory and research that is historically characteristic of our graduate courses.

We expect no effect of the doctoral degree program on any other institutional resources such as instructional and laboratory space.

B5. Procedures for Academic Advising, Supervision, and Evaluation

Students new to the program will be advised by the Director of Graduate Studies until they have selected an adviser from among the full time tenure track faculty members in the Department. Students are expected to select an adviser by the beginning of the 4th semester in the program and will receive advisement from that individual for the remainder of their program. Together with the adviser, the
doctoral student will determine a plan of study, select members (2 individuals in addition to the chair) of a qualifying examination and a dissertation committee (these may be different committees or comprised of the same individuals). The chair and committee will guide the student’s progress through the remainder of the degree program.

Doctoral students must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or better; falling below will put a student on probation for a semester. Falling below for two semesters may indicate that a student is not capable of doctoral work, and, if funded, the Department may choose to withdraw funding for that student. The Department may also choose to decline to continue the student in the doctoral program. The Department will look at doctoral students’ progress through the program and GPA on a semester by semester basis.

Students who have completed graduate level courses prior to entering our doctoral program will have their graduate courses evaluated for credit within our Program by their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

B6. Resources and Support Programs

Our doctoral program will benefit from a rich network of relationships that faculty have forged with other departments and research institutes in the University as well as with other institutions off campus. These relationships have given rise to joint research projects, joint educational programs, and a strong network of professional associations. Among these are the following:

- We will continue to nurture our strong historical relationship with the Department of Sociology, expecting that our students will continue to take courses (especially methods courses) and work with faculty in that department who share interests in communication (Prof. Ron Jacobs is one very prominent example).

- Three of our faculty members – Guney, Harrison, and Stromer-Galley – are associated with the College of Computing and Information’s Department of Informatics (Prof. Guney has a joint appointment with that Department; Professors Harrison and Stromer-Galley are affiliated faculty). The same three faculty members also collaborate and affiliate with UAlbany’s Center for Technology and Government. These collaborations have yielded several research proposals, one of which has been funded, and one team-taught graduate course.

- Through the efforts of Prof. Anita Pomerantz, we maintain a joint MA program with faculty in the School of Education’s Department of Educational Theory and Practice.

- Prof. Annis Golden has received funding from the Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities, and plans to continue her affiliation with the Center.

- Prof. Jenny Stromer-Galley is an affiliated faculty member in the Rockefeller College’s Department of Public Policy, and has been successful in receiving funding for her collaborative research project with UAlbany’s Institute of Informatics, Logistics, and Security Studies.
• Prof. Anita Pomerantz is Faculty and Professors Golden and Halkowski are Fellows of the Alden March Bioethics Institute of Albany Medical College and have worked with researchers there on collaborative research possibilities.

• Professor Tim Stephen is President of the not-for-profit Communication Institute for Online Scholarship, which has provided support for graduate students in the Department.

• We maintain cordial relationships with two faculty in the School of Public Health who share our interests in health communication (Professors Jennifer Manganello and Priya Nambisan). In Spring 06, Prof. Manganello taught an undergraduate course cross-listed for communication majors. We expect over time that these relationships will give rise to research projects and cross-listed graduate courses.
## C1. Faculty Information Table
(Adapted from SED guidelines)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>FT/PT</th>
<th>Dept</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>R/E</th>
<th>Articles in Refereed Journals (last 5 years)</th>
<th>External Research Support (most recent academic yr)</th>
<th>Dissertation Load (most recent academic yr)</th>
<th>Number of Advisees (most recent academic yr)</th>
<th>Number of Classes Taught (most recent academic yr)</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Kelli Lammie (starting F'07)</td>
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<td>COMM</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Racial/Ethnic Groups - Black (B), White (W), Hispanic (H), Native American Indian/Alaskan Native (N), Asian/Pacific Islander (A), Foreign (F)*

1- NSF funding '01-'07 ($118,129)
2- Dept. of HHH Funding '03-'07 ($252,301)
3- Received a 1 course reduction due to funded research and sabbatical in '06-'07
4- Dedicated faculty in the Journalism department
5- Drescher Leave (competitive award) Fall '06
6- Joint appointment; also teaches in Info. Tech. Program
7- NSF funding to start '07-'08
C3. ANTICIPATED CHANGES IN FACULTY

Faculty staffing this program are largely new to the Department, 5 of whom have been hired in the past 5 years. More specifically, we have hired 1 full professor in interpersonal communication, 2 assistant professors in organizational communication, 1 assistant professor in political communication, and 1 associate professor in health communication. Two new assistant professors in political communication will join the tenure track faculty in Fall 07 (one of whom has been working with us in a visiting faculty line). On the other hand, one veteran full professor in the department, Prof. Robert Sanders, is retiring effective Fall 07. One other full professor envisions retirement within the next 5 years.

We have requested the opportunity to search for two new positions in AY 07-08, one at a senior level to replace Prof. Sanders and one untenured position to help fill the needs of our increasingly popular undergraduate and MA program in communication. The College of Arts and Sciences has signaled their support for our doctoral program, and more broadly for our continuing efforts to serve the needs of our growing programs. At the time of this writing, we do not yet know what response will be made to our staffing request. Note that our proposal for a doctoral program has been constructed on the basis of "cost neutrality;" that is, the program can be launched without a need for new resources. However, lost resources, such as those created through retirement, must be replaced.

D. Students: Admission, Support and Enrollment

D1. Criteria and Procedures for Admission to the Program

Applicants to the doctoral program must have a Bachelor's degree. Prospective students seeking admission to the doctoral program are required to submit the following in support of their applications: (a) transcripts from all current and prior academic institutions, (b) three letters of recommendations from academic sources, (c) a statement of purpose for wishing to obtain a doctoral degree from our department, and (d) scores from the Graduate Record Exam, and e) an academic writing sample. International students must include TOEFL scores, and must achieve a minimum score of 580 in order to be considered for admission.

Applicants are evaluated on the basis of their academic performance, letters of recommendation, writing abilities, background (whether they have a social sciences/communications background or something else), and their goals and fit with our department.

The deadline for applying to the program and applying for a graduate assistantship for the Fall semester is February 20th. The Department will begin reviewing applications on March 1, but applications received after that date may still be considered if all open assistantships have not yet been awarded. The deadline for applying to the program without applying for financial aid for Fall semester is July 15th, and for Spring semester is November 15th. Applications received after those dates may be reviewed if there is space for new students.

D2. Types of Students Served

We envision serving two major types of students: (1) students who wish to teach and/or do research in a community college, four-year college, or university, and (2) students who are employed on a full-time
basis and who seek the doctoral degree to add to their professional qualifications or to prepare themselves for future teaching opportunities.

In the first category, we expect students to study on a full-time basis and to seek internal financial aid. Based on experience with our MA program, we expect most of these students to hail from New York or the northeast (although we receive applications from across the country), to be more likely to be women, to include approximately 10% minority students, and to include substantial numbers of students from Europe, China and other Asian countries. We will advertise our program, and recruit new applicants in an effort to attract the most highly qualified students.

In the second category, we expect professionally oriented students to study on a part-time basis and to be self-funded or funded by their employers. While we expect fewer professionally oriented doctoral students than our MA cohort, our proximity to state government and related not-for-profit and educational organizations bears the promise of continuing interest in our program. We have already fielded inquiries from such students.

D3. Types, Amounts, and Sources of Financial Support

Funding for new doctoral students will be obtained by shifting that funding currently allocated to full time MA students. Generally, we receive $9600 in stipends for 11 MA students amounting to $106,090 and full tuition scholarships for each student, amounting to a total of $160,488 in AY 06-07. We expect tuition scholarships to remain stable, while funding for a doctoral student stipend will increase to approximately $11,000 per academic year. This shift parallels a more general institutional policy change to redirect funding from MA students to doctoral students. Within one to two years beyond the institution of the doctoral program, we expect that funding for MA students will no longer be available. We expect that most, if not all, full time doctoral students in the program will receive tuition scholarships and stipends.

We also receive graduate student support from external funding. We currently support at one student a year through funding from the Communication Institute for Online Scholarship (CIOS). We expect one graduate student to be funded for the next two years through an NSF funded proposal, at approximately $20,000 per academic year (covering fall, spring, and summer). We look forward to supporting additional doctoral students through externally funded research in the future.

D4. Projected Enrollment at Program Inception and after Five years

At the inception of the program, hopefully Spring 08, we expect to add 2 new full-time doctoral students to the program and 2 part-time students. Within five years of the beginning of the program, we expect a total of 11 full-time students in the program and approximately 10 part-time students. These numbers are based on discussions with prospective students, some of whom have already indicated an interest in entering into our existing program with Sociology with the intention of transferring to the doctoral program in Communication once that program has been formally launched. We project upper limits on the number of full-time students entering the program based on the amount of financial aid we are able to offer.

E. Facilities
UAlbany's University Libraries are three distinctive buildings -- two on the uptown campus and one on the downtown campus -- providing over two million volumes and ranking among the nation's top one hundred research libraries.

The University Library, opened in 1966, is a 180,912 net square feet building that houses collections and services for the fine and performing arts, business, education, humanities and the social sciences. The Department of Communication receives approximately $19,200 annually in discipline related expenditures; funding from other departments such as Anthropology, Sociology, and Psychology also addresses interdisciplinary needs.

The Governor Thomas E. Dewey Graduate Library for Public Affairs and Policy was dedicated in 1988 and has a total of 12,010 net square feet. Its collections and services are used by the faculty and students of the graduate and professional schools on the downtown campus. These include: Criminal Justice, Social Welfare, Information Science and Policy, and the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy.

The New Library, opened in September 1999, is a multi-purpose building with a strong focus on technology and network access. Its five stories (142,430 net square feet) contain laboratory facilities for computing and digital imaging, information retrieval and instructional technology, electronic multi-media classrooms and seminar rooms, the Science Library on three floors with more than 500 seats for users, including individual and group study facilities, the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives and the Preservation and Digital Imaging Laboratory.

Users from around the world can access services and collections through the Libraries' online systems and award-winning Web site. Albany's Libraries offer an impressive program of information literacy and user education with instruction that ranges from a focus on traditional bibliographic access to innovative collaborative classes integrated into the curriculum.

Beyond these library facilities, the University has an Interactive Media Center that supports the creation of multimedia projects and the digital design of presentations, publications and Web sites. This is the only place on campus to accomplish activities such as assisted Web design, digital recording and editing, sophisticated image editing, creation of PDF files, and the use of analog to digital audio and video for research, instruction, publication and student activities.

The Interactive Media Center is open to all University students, faculty, and staff on a walk-in basis. The IMC is not open to the public. Hardware includes both PC and Mac computers, MIDI devices, scanners, color and black and white printers, and audio/video digitizing equipment. A collection of sophisticated software features Web editors, audio and video applications, image editors, DVD burning tools, and much more. The IMC offers many instructional opportunities, including a large number of free classes. Topics include image and OCR scanning, Photoshop, Acrobat, Dreamweaver, HTML & CSS, and audio and video editing. The audio/visual playback area supports a multitude of formats including earlier formats such as phonographs to providing the latest world-wide video support for VHS and DVD. Wireless connectivity is available in some of the areas in and near the IMC.

In the Department, faculty and all funded doctoral students receive computing equipment (including computers and printers) which is upgraded on a regular basis. The Department is also served by two network printers, supplementary copying equipment, digital recording equipment, television receivers, and DVD players.
All faculty occupy individual offices; all funded graduate students share offices with each other. In addition, the Department has exclusive access to one conference room, one large research room also available for other purposes, and one small computer lab that is used to support research.

The Department is staffed by one Assistant to the Chair, who provides programmatic support for the graduate program, and one secretary.

**F. Expenditures Associated with the Program**

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<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
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<th>When the program begins</th>
<th>After five years</th>
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The doctoral program in Communication is predicated on the assumption of cost neutrality. Figures above represent existing funds available for AY 07-08 within each category; estimates in each category are subject to increases for the program launch date of Fall 08 and for five years after program launch as described below. We do not anticipate decreases in any of these categories for the foreseeable future, except as indicated below.

- Personnel funds are subject to cost-of-living and other increases as negotiated by the faculty union (United University Professionals). We will lose one faculty member in F'07 due to retirement (Prof. Robert Sanders) and gain an new faculty member (Prof. Kelli Lammie). The Department has requested a replacement for Prof. Sanders and one additional position.

- Library funds and funding for supplies and expenses are subject to increases in budgets as determined by the campus financial plan.

- No special equipment, laboratory, capital, or other expenses are envisioned for the program.
• Student support figures are based on existing allocations from the College of Arts and Sciences for tuition scholarships and annual stipend for 11 doctoral students. The cost of tuition is subject to increases as determined by SUNY tuition rates. The cost of stipends assumes an increase for doctoral students over those offered to MA students up to $11,000 in stipend support per graduate student. In addition to this support, we also project external stipend support for two additional graduate students in the amount of $31,000 from NSF and from the CIOS for the first year of the program; this figure is not included in the table estimates.

The academic leadership of the University, including Dean Joan Wick-Pelletier of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dean Marjorie Pryse of Graduate Studies, and Provost and Officer-in-Charge Susan Herbst, have each expressed their strong commitment to the program. The academic leadership of the University has planned for and is providing resources necessary to launch and maintain the program.

G. Academic Quality Assurance

G1. Provisions for Periodic Program Review

As a SUNY institution, departments at the University at Albany are reviewed every 5 to 7 years, with program assessment built into the review process. Our last review took place in Spring 2006, so we would expect the next review to occur in Spring 2011.

G2. Accrediting Agency

Not applicable to our program.

G3. Potential for Doctoral Program to Achieve National Prominence

The Department of Communication at the University at Albany is poised to achieve national prominence. Although the Department has offered graduate programs for over 10 years, it is now staffed by a newly assembled cohort of scholars, some of whom are in the prime of their research careers, and others of whom are young but now beginning to achieve leadership in their fields of inquiry.

The three full professors in the Department lead substantial research projects of their own, which have generated significant publication and funding from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Health and Human Services, and from libraries serving scholars in the discipline.

Our untenured faculty display unmistakable signs of achieving prominence in their fields, with one of our scholars recently receiving funding from the National Science Foundation for her work in political communication and another from the IBM Center for the Business of Government for her work in organizations doing collaborative research in nanotechnology. Two of our other junior faculty have been successful in generating internal support for their projects, which is enabling them to launch substantial research projects, destined we believe for external funding in the future. We have just recently hired two outstanding new faculty members from the Ohio State University and from the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

We have a multi-year history of educating doctoral students in communication that can be brought to bear in the administration of our own program. These efforts have been acknowledged and recognized by our
peers for a moderate level of achievement. In 2004, the National Communication Association conducted a study of the reputation of 108 doctoral granting institutions in communication in which faculty who teach doctoral students in U.S. institutions rated programs within categories of instruction. We were ranked 27th among 39 programs in interpersonal communication, 21st out of 34 programs in communication technology and 25th out of 28 programs in political communication. Thus our current program, which does not offer a degree in Communication, provides a significant platform for growth and development. Offering a doctoral degree in Communication will certainly enable the Department to advance to the next tier of prominence among programs offering doctoral education in the United States and help us to attract the best students.
September, 2007

To: Teresa M. Harrison, Chair
    Department of Communication

From: Donald Hernandez, Chair
    Department of Sociology

Subject: Sociology research methods courses for Communication doctoral students

This is to memorialize our understanding that graduate students in Communication are welcome to take research methods courses in Sociology to fulfill requirements of the proposed doctoral program in Communication, which is now working its way through governance committees on campus, the SUNY System, and the State Department of Education.

More specifically, faculty teaching Soc 509 (Research Methods), 522 (Intermediate Statistics for Sociologists), 535 (Qualitative Research Techniques), 609 (Multivariate Analysis), and 626 (Survey Design and Analysis) have been consulted about and agree to permit graduate students from the Department of Communication to take these courses for credit toward the proposed doctoral program in Communication.
External Review Report

Proposed Ph.D. in Communication

Department of Communication

University at Albany, SUNY

June 2007

Reviewers

Donald Cegala (Ohio State University)
Robert Craig (University of Colorado at Boulder)
Gerry Philipson (University of Washington)

Summary:

The external reviewers visited the University at Albany, Department of Communication, June 27-29, 2007. We met with campus administrators, the Department chair, the graduate faculty in groups representing all specialty areas, and a group of doctoral students enrolled in the current Sociology-Communication joint Ph.D. track. We toured the Department’s facilities and reviewed relevant documents including the Ph.D. program proposal, proposed MA program revisions, faculty CVs, and the Department’s most recent (2006) program review. This report has been jointly authored by the external reviewers and represents our consensus. The remainder of this Report presents our comments following the Albany External Review Template. For reasons detailed below, we strongly recommend in favor of the proposed Ph.D. in Communication.

1. Program

1. Assess program purpose, structure, and requirements as well as formal mechanisms for program administration and monitoring.

The purpose as stated in the Department document we received is clear and consistent with other graduate programs in Communication. The structure and requirements of the proposed Ph.D. program are also well articulated and consistent with other Ph.D. programs in Communication. There are two formal mechanisms in place for monitoring the program, one being the regular mandated program review that will be done again in 2011, and the other is Department monitoring of graduate student progress each semester. The Graduate Studies Committee, faculty advisors, and graduate committees provide sufficient and typical administration of the program. It should be noted that the external review committee was especially impressed with the leadership of the current Chair of
the Department of Communication. The faculty is fortunate to have such a strong, effective leader during this time.

2. **Comment on the special focus of this program as it relates to the discipline. What are plans and expectations for continuing program development and self-assessment?**

The focus of the program consists of five substantive areas of study: interpersonal/intercultural communication, organizational communication, political communication, health communication, and communication technologies. These five areas are reflected in the divisions of the two major communication associations (i.e., NCA and ICA) and, thus, are central to current disciplinary focus. The five substantive areas constitute the current research expertise of the faculty and will remain as the Department focus for at least the next five years. They are not separate program tracks but areas of emphasis within an integrated program in which most faculty members contribute to more than one area of emphasis. The faculty of the Department is aware of the need for a certain degree of flexibility in possibly modifying some substantive areas as the program continues to develop, changes occur in the discipline, and attempts are made to accommodate fluctuations in the marketplace. Thus, the faculty is aware of the need for continued self-assessment and monitoring of the program as it develops.

3. **Assess the breadth and depth of coverage in terms of faculty availability and expertise, regular course offerings and directed study, and available support from related programs. What evidence is there of program flexibility and innovation?**

There is adequate-to-very good breadth and scope in the current regular graduate course offerings. Additionally, reports from Ph.D. students and faculty attest to extensive directed study activity in the Department. Our impression is that virtually all of the faculty are highly actively engaged in the current graduate program and we see no reason for this to change in a negative way once the Ph.D. program begins. (Potentially supportive relations with other programs are discussed in the following paragraph.)

4. **Discuss the relationship of this program to undergraduate and other graduate programs (if any) of the institution. Consider interdisciplinary programs, service function, joint research projects, support programs, etc.**

The main connection between the undergraduate and Ph.D. programs is that undergraduates on balance are likely to experience better quality teaching from Ph.D. students than they now receive from M.A. students. There is a long relationship with the Department of Sociology that has allowed the Communication Department access to a Ph.D. program. It is likely that some relationship with Sociology will continue, but not to the extent it has existed over the last several years. There is the potential for some connection with the Political Science Department and with campus programs related to public policy, health, and bioethics, but there are no formal relationships at this time. One current faculty member has a joint appointment between Communication and the Department of Informatics. This may be a basis for joint research projects in the future.
5. What evidence is there of need and demand for the program locally, in the State, and in the field at large? What is the extent of occupational demand for graduates? What evidence is there that it will continue?

There is clear evidence for the need and demand of the program locally. The Department has a large undergraduate program that can be better served by more advanced graduate TAs. There is no comparable Ph.D. program in Communication in close proximity to Albany (the closest doctoral programs, at RPI and Cornell, are in private institutions and emphasize different specialty areas), and the current graduate program draws heavily from local business and government. There is good indication that the new Ph.D. program will continue to draw from these local constituencies, particularly in political, organizational, and health communication. There is considerable need for the new Ph.D. program at the State level. The only comparable existing Ph.D. program in Communication is at SUNY Buffalo, but the program at Buffalo has a different content focus and is far less oriented to discourse and conversational analysis methods. As indicated earlier, the proposed program at Albany is reflective of mainstream disciplinary directions. The proposed program at Albany is not unique in this regard, but it is distinctive with respect to faculty's multiple expertise in one or more substantive content areas. Albany has the potential of offering a Ph.D. program that is more integrative across disciplinary sub-specialties than is typically found in many Communication departments. Many Communication scholars would argue that there is a need for more integrative programs along the lines of the one proposed at Albany.

As noted by the doctoral students with whom we met, the current joint doctoral program with Sociology, although a successful program in general, cannot meet the needs that would be met by a Communication Ph.D. The different academic emphases of the two departments are not entirely compatible, and students earning a Ph.D. in Sociology with an emphasis in Communication may have difficulty finding jobs in either field.

The Communication discipline has experienced continued national growth and student popularity over the last 30 years. Faculty positions continue to be widely available at all levels of institutions (i.e., from small liberal arts colleges to major research universities). All indications are that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future. Additionally, certain sub-fields in Communication have experienced growth, and expect future growth, in non-academic positions, particularly in areas such as health and organizational communication, and communication technologies, which are substantive content areas of the proposed Ph.D. program.

II. Faculty

1. What is the caliber of the faculty, individually and collectively, in regard to training, experience, research and publication, professional service, and recognition in the field?

Regarding professional activity such as research and publication, conference participation, and professional service, the faculty overall ranks very favorably. There
appears to be no significant "deadwood" among the graduate faculty. The senior faculty have active research programs and the young, untenured faculty are doing significant research. Two of the senior faculty are especially widely recognized and respected in the field, although one of them will retire in Autumn 2007. The young, untenured faculty are especially impressive and productive. While the young faculty are not widely known within the field, this is likely to change over the next few years. In short, this is primarily a young, energetic, productive faculty with great promise.

A notable aspect of the entire faculty is their multiple specialties among the core substantive content areas. This provides a collective distinctiveness that should greatly enhance graduate study at the Ph.D. level. This is addressed further in the section below.

2. What are the faculty members' primary areas of interest and expertise? How important to the field is the work being done? Discuss any critical gaps?

We will address the last question first because it is relevant to understanding Communication departments' structure overall. No Communication department in the country effectively addresses all of the key areas of study as defined by our two major professional associations (i.e., NCA and ICA). Thus, it is nonsensical to identify gaps in Communication programs in terms of substantive areas of study.

As indicated above, a distinctive quality of the faculty at Albany is their multiple expertise in areas of substantive program content areas. Due to the small number of faculty, this is especially important to the success of the proposed program. Under different circumstances, we would likely argue that the faculty is too small to adequately sustain five substantive content areas. The faculty at Albany is able to do so because virtually all faculty have research interest and expertise in more than one substantive content area. This not only allows the faculty to offer a breadth and depth of courses, but also provides a solid base for research projects that span one or more sub-fields in the discipline. Such integrated research has great potential for innovation in theory and methodological development, which is critical to the vitality of the discipline.

3. Assess the composition of faculty in terms of diversity (race, gender, seniority).

The Department has international faculty but little US racial/ethnic minority representation. However, this is not entirely unusual in Communication departments, as there are an insufficient number of racial/ethnic minorities in the discipline. Still, considerable, continued effort should be made to hire racial/ethnic minorities in the future. The Department is (or soon will be) approximately 80% female. Consequently, if there is any issue with respect to gender, it may be with respect to male hires. One clear matter irrespective of race/ethnicity and gender is seniority. The Department will lose one outstanding senior faculty member due to retirement in autumn. While the untenured faculty is clearly dynamic and cutting edge, they could benefit from senior leadership, especially in the areas of political and organizational communication.
4. Evaluate faculty activity in generating funds for research, training, facilities, equipment, etc.

Most of the faculty have conducted funded research. About half of these faculty have received relatively small, internal grants, while the remainder have received large externally funded grants. Currently, one of the junior faculty has a large NSF grant that begins September 2007. Overall, the faculty has the research expertise and motivation to obtain grant funds.

5. Assess the faculty in terms of size and qualification for the areas of specialization which are to be offered. Evaluate faculty workload, taking into consideration responsibility for undergraduate and other graduate programs (if any). What are plans for future staffing?

An initial concern of the external review committee was the small size of the faculty in relation to the number of specialization areas. However, upon interviewing faculty and graduate students and examining the cross-specialization expertise of the faculty, it is clear that the faculty can effectively offer the five specializations. However, this does not eliminate the need to add faculty lines and retain any positions lost to retirement or departure. There is a particular need to add senior-level positions to provide leadership and guidance for a young, productive faculty. The Department has requested a senior position to replace Professor Sanders, who will retire in autumn, and has explored adding other faculty lines.

6. Discuss credentials and involvement of adjunct and support faculty.

The organizational and health communication faculties discussed existing adjunct support for their programs. This involvement appears appropriate and an important addition to those areas of study.

III. Students

1. Comment on the student clientele the program seeks to serve, and assess the plans and projections for student recruitment and enrollment.

The program seeks to add, in Spring of '08, two new doctoral students to the full-time program and two part-time students. Within five years of the beginning of the program, the program expects to enroll, at any given time, approximately eleven full-time and students and ten part-time students in doctoral study. The program seeks to serve not only students who come from the Albany area and the surrounding region but also to do some recruitment nationally and internationally. Given the demand for the doctoral program already demonstrated locally, nationally, and internationally, the plan and projection are reasonable.

2. What are the prospects that recruitment efforts and admissions criteria will supply a sufficient pool of highly qualified applicants and enrollees?
There are three reasons to think that the recruitment efforts and admissions criteria will supply a sufficient pool of highly qualified applicants and enrollees. One is the demonstrated record of the program's recruitment and enrollment efforts during the past ten to twenty years. The program has in this time demonstrated the ability to attract high quality applicants and enrollees to its emphasis within the Ph.D. program in Sociology. The second is that there is a strong demand nationally and internationally for places in Ph.D. programs in Communication and thus the new program at Albany would be launched during a time of high demand on the part of highly qualified students for such places. Third, the particular curricular program that the Department has designed, and the faculty it has put together, would make it very attractive to highly qualified students locally as well as nationally and internationally.

3. Comment on provisions for encouraging participation of persons from underrepresented groups. Is there adequate attention to the needs of part-time, minority, or disadvantaged students?

Recent success at increasing the diversity of ethnic and national backgrounds of the faculty, as well as the strong presence of women faculty in the program, are factors that could help the new program attract highly qualified students from underrepresented groups. The Department has a good record of experience in supporting part-time students in graduate study, including doctoral level study in the current Communication/Sociology program, and this should carry over into the new program, which has built into it the expectation of serving part-time students.

4. Assess the system for monitoring students' progress and performance and for advising students regarding academic and career matters.

The Department already has successful experience in monitoring and advising students working toward a doctoral degree and this should carry over into the new proposed program. Furthermore, the program proposal provides a well-designed, explicit structure for systematic advising of students and of monitoring their progress through to completion of the degree. In addition to the degree requirements and the schedule for movement toward degree completion, the Department's Proseminar, in which all doctoral students must be enrolled throughout their coursework, has proven to be a highly successful practice for socializing students as research scholars.

5. Discuss prospects for placement or job advancement.

The Department has a good past record at placing students and providing for job enhancement. With the new program, this should only be strengthened, as it will permit students to concentrate in a more focused way on the skills and knowledge that are essential to placement and advancement in the communication discipline.

IV. Resources
1. What is the institution's commitment to the program as demonstrated by the operating budget, faculty salaries and research support, the number of faculty lines relative to student numbers and workload, support for faculty by non-academic personnel, student financial assistance, and funds provided for faculty professional development and activities, colloquia, visiting lectures, etc.?

We are able to address this based on our reading of the "Proposed Ph.D. Curriculum" provided by the Department, our discussions with Department faculty and with students in the Department now studying toward a doctorate in Communication, and our oral discussions with senior administrators at Albany at the time of the site visit. Based on these materials, provided and elicited, we judge that the various resources necessary to launch a Ph.D. program—as these resources are enumerated in the question above—are sufficient for a Ph.D. program of the scope anticipated in the proposal.

TA stipends appear to be low by national standards, but this is a campus matter not specific to the Department of Communication.

2. Discuss the adequacy of physical resources and facilities, e.g., library, computer, and laboratory facilities, internship sites, and other support services for the program, including use of resources outside the University.

At the present time, and for several years proceeding, the Department has supported doctoral study in Communication, and with some success. This success has been possible, in part, owing to the availability of resources provided by the University at Albany as a strong research-oriented university. The faculty and administration of the Department of Communication have, in the recent past, made effective use of those resources and there is every reason to believe that they will continue to do should they mount a doctoral program in Communication. The present faculty demonstrates a strong record of generating external support for research and this establishes a strong foundation for the support of doctoral study and research. And the present faculty demonstrates a strong record of partnering with faculty in several other departments at the University, certainly in Sociology, but in several other departments as well. This, too, suggests that the Department is well poised to launch a successful small doctoral program of its own.

V. Comments

1. Summarize the major strengths and weaknesses of the program as proposed with particular attention to feasibility of implementation and appropriateness of objectives for the degree offered.

Major strengths of the program as proposed include: 1) a young, energetic, talented and research-productive faculty working in cutting-edge specialty areas and approaches; 2) strong, stable leadership from the Department chair, and high morale and collaborative spirit among the faculty; 3) most faculty members have expertise across multiple content areas, which enables the Department to support several areas of emphasis with a relatively small faculty and creates the potential for a uniquely integrative
Communication doctoral program; 4) a well-planned, realistic program proposal; 5) the Department’s success in conducting the current joint Ph.D. track in Sociology, which bodes well for the success of the proposed program; and 6) needs and opportunities at the local, state and national levels indicating demand for the proposed program.

Weaknesses of the program as proposed include: 1) a relatively small and junior faculty that could benefit from the stability and mentorship that would be provided by a strong set of senior scholars in some specialty areas; and 2) most graduate courses will combine research-oriented doctoral students with a larger number of MA students with more applied interests, which has the potential to create problems for both the Ph.D. and the MA program.

With regard to the first weakness, we believe that the program as proposed can be launched successfully with the current faculty, given their overall strength and their multiple expertise across content areas. Additional senior faculty hires would, of course, strengthen the program.

With regard to the second weakness, the Department is fully aware of problems that may arise in meeting the distinct needs of Ph.D. and MA students in the context of a small doctoral program and has several realistic and well-considered strategies in response. These include, at the doctoral level, a new doctoral level communication theory seminar, the proseminar (a successful mechanism in the current program targeted to doctoral students), content distinctions between 500-level and 600-level courses, special attention to doctoral students in mixed seminars, the use of classroom techniques that exploit the advantages of a mixed group (e.g., the potential synergy between research and applied interests), directed research projects, and independent studies.

2. In what ways will this program make a unique contribution to the field? In the case of doctoral programs, please address in particular the likelihood of the proposed program achieving national prominence.

The proposed program will be a typical Communication doctoral program structured around recognized mainstream specialty areas in the field. It will make a unique contribution by virtue of the particular set of content areas and methodological approaches offered. The involvement of most faculty across more than one specialty areas also creates the potential, as we have noted, for a uniquely integrative program with creative collaborations across usually isolated subfields.

The potential for national prominence is indicated by the quality and productivity of the current faculty. Notably, the Department achieved respectable rankings in three sub-disciplinary areas in the 2004 National Communication Association doctoral program reputational study, even though it does not yet offer a doctoral degree in Communication.
3. Include any further observations important to the evaluation of this graduate program proposal and provide any recommendations for the proposed program.

This is strong program proposal in our judgment. We recommend approval of a Ph.D. program in Communication for the University at Albany. Given the potential for excellence demonstrated in the proposal, we also recommend that the University at Albany consider bolstering this program with additional senior faculty positions.
Sept. 21, 2007

To:      Marjorie Pryse, Dean
         Graduate Studies

From:    Teresa M. Harrison, Chair
         Dept. of Communication

Subject: Response to External Review Report

Our Department has now received and considered the report by external reviewers of our proposal for a doctoral program in Communication at the University at Albany following their visit to campus in late June 2007. This memo constitutes a response to their report.

We are delighted to receive a strong recommendation from the external review team in favor of the proposed Ph.D. program in Communication. The review team’s recommendation has acknowledged the centrality of our Department’s substantive areas of study to the discipline as a whole, while at the same time underscoring the need to the retain degrees of flexibility with these areas as changes occur in the discipline and as our program continues to develop. We have pursued a careful program of hiring that has brought faculty members to the Department who are able to contribute to more than one of our content areas, a quality that has the potential to produce innovations in theory and research while at the same time offering a distinctive and fruitful approach to graduate education. As the reviewers note, our faculty is young, energetic, and productive.

Our proposal has been prepared under conditions of institutional resource constraints and is founded on the principle of resource neutrality. It draws upon our substantial number of regularly offered graduate courses, our long term collaborations with other departments on campus, and our existing record of experience with doctoral education. A doctoral program in Communication would enable the Department to continue to provide doctoral education, but with the additional advantages of enhancing our ability to recruit the best students and providing them with the appropriate disciplinary credential.