May 9, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: James F. Harris
Dean, College of Arts & Humanities

FROM: Phyllis Peres
Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to modify the M.A. in Communication (PCC log no. 06055)

Your proposal to modify the M.A. in Communication has been administratively approved. A copy of the approved proposal is enclosed.

The changes are effective Fall 2007. The College should ensure that the change is fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

CWR/

Enclosure

cc: Richard Ellis, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
    Sarah Bauder, Office of Student Financial Aid
    Mary Giles, University Senate
    Barbara Hope, Data Administration
    Anne Turkos, Archives
    Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
    Gay Gulickson, Graduate School
    Elizabeth Loizeaux, College of Arts & Humanities
The proposal is to remove COMM 602 (Communication Theory) as a required course for M.A students and make it one of several options for theory courses in a theory requirement.
COMM 602 has been taught from a social science perspective, and students from other perspectives, such as rhetoric, would benefit from using those three hours to take theory courses more relevant to their particular research area. Currently, all students are required to take communication theory taught from a social science perspective but not all students are required to take rhetorical theory or public relations theory.

Several of our peer Communication departments only require theory courses in the particular specialty. Northwestern University requires Cultural and Critical Theory for rhetoric students but different theory courses for students studying in other specialties. University of Wisconsin also requires different theory courses depending upon whether students are specializing in rhetoric, film, persuasion, etc. Michigan State requires Communication Theory, but that program is entirely social science. University of Texas has open requirements, leaving decisions about specific courses to the student’s Advisory Committee. University of Georgia is one of few peer institutions still requiring Communication Theory of all students, but it also requires Rhetorical Theory of all students and does not have public relations housed within the department.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree
(Old Program)

1. All students must complete COMM 700 (Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication). This course must be taken during the first semester of a student’s work.

2. All students must complete COMM 602 (Communication Theory).

3. All students must complete six hours drawn from the following methods courses with a grade of “B” or above: COMM 600 (Empirical Research in Communication), COMM 711 (Historical-Critical Research in Communication), COMM 714 (Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Communication Research).

4. Students must remain in good standing within the graduate program. In addition to the requirement of the Graduate School that a student maintain a GPA of 3.0 or above, the Department requires that students promptly complete “incomplete” courses, file required planning documents on time, attend Departmental Colloquia, and move on a steady schedule towards completion of your degree.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree
(New Program)

1. All students must complete COMM 700 (Introduction to Graduate Studies in Communication). This course must be taken during the first semester of a student’s work.

2. All students must complete one of the following theory courses: COMM 602 (Communication Theory), COMM 630 (Seminar in Public Relations Management), or COMM 652 (Contemporary Rhetorical Theory). A second theory course is strongly encouraged for all M.A. students.

3. All students must complete six hours drawn from the following methods courses with a grade of “B” or above: COMM 600 (Empirical Research in Communication), COMM 711 (Historical-Critical Research in Communication), COMM 714 (Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Communication Research).

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