

March 3, 2008

To: Suzanne T. Ortega, Vice Provost and Dean, The Graduate School

Ronald S. Irving, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Judith A. Howard, Divisional Dean, Social Sciences

John Sahr, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs

From: Gerald J. Baldasty

Professor and Chair, Department of Communication

Re: Additional Response to the Department of Communication Program Review Committee

In the past month, since I filed our formal response to the committee's review, we have continued to work on the issues raised by the 10-year review committee's report. I'm writing to provide an additional update on our work.

We have appointed a series of five ad hoc committees to address some of the issues raised in the report. The committees will complete their work in April, and bring their proposals (or other information) to the full faculty in May for discussion and action.

The committees:

1. Strategic plan on service. The 10 year review committee suggested we re-evaluate the quantity of service work done. This committee is charged with identifying key areas across campus where we should focus service. It is also charged with a broader re-organization and downsizing of current department committees.
2. Strategic plan on hiring. This ad hoc committee will review our 2005 hiring plan, seek input, and bring to the faculty for review and potential revision.
3. Graduate student survey. The review committee, in its meeting with graduate students, found little aspirations for academic careers at top research institutions. We will survey the graduate students to get more information about their views on research careers, research preparation, and how they view our program.
4. Graduate student expectations, performance. This committee will attempt to articulate a more uniform approach to expectations for graduate students (in terms of general performance, research productivity, etc.).

5. Student diversity group. The review committee recommended the creation of a group for students of color. The ad hoc committee will get such a group started during spring quarter.

In addition, our graduate committee is charged with examination of the Ph.D. program. The review committee's report has led to a wide-ranging discussion about the goals and operation of the Ph.D. program. There is support among faculty for creating a higher research profile for the program, and the graduate committee is charged with identifying options.

We have also continued our on-going UW outreach. Several current projects include:

1. We will sponsor a Walker Ames lecturer, Harvard Prof. Yochai Benkler, next year; this is a collaboration with our department and the Information School, Department of Political Science, the Evans School, and the Law School.
2. We are continuing our collaboration with the UW Department of Global Health, and are sponsoring a conference on journalism and global health May 2-3 on the UW campus.
3. We are working with the Evans School to create a privately-funded visiting professorship (with a focus on journalism and civic engagement).