

## **Communication ESLO Committee Annual Report for Academic Year 2016-2017**

### **Members of the Committee:**

- Aja Bettencourt-McCarthy
- Monica Breedlove
- Roger Lindgren
- Matthew Schnackenberg
- Christopher Syrnyk
- Matthew Search, Chair

### **Charges to the Committee:**

- Evaluate / approve courses tagged as Communication ESLO courses
- Support the Assessment Commission during this year's Communication Assessment activities

### **Summary of Committee Activities:**

Over the course of this year, the Communication (COM) ESLO committee began the process of evaluating courses which fulfill Oregon Tech's COM ESLO outcomes. To facilitate that process, the committee was obliged to completely revise the COM ESLO outcomes list, and create approval criteria for Foundation and Essential Practice level COM ESLO courses.

The Committee was also charged with assisting the Assessment Commission by creating a new COM ESLO assessment rubric for use in this year's assessment effort, based on the new list of COM ESLO outcomes, and by providing other support activities.

### Fall Term

The committee, with input from the Communication Department, revised the COM ESLO outcomes list; the goal behind that redesign was to produce a list of outcomes that could be objectively applied to all COM ESLO courses (Foundation, Essential Practice, and Program-Integrated). The committee then created a new assessment rubric derived from that list of outcomes.

The committee elicited COM ESLO course submissions, then divided those courses into three tiers:

- Tier 1 – existing courses that currently fulfill Communication General Education requirements (and which should require no / minor changes to meet COM ESLO requirements)
- Tier 2 – existing courses that are not currently Communication General Education courses, but which may meet (or may be modified to meet) COM ESLO requirements
- Tier 3 – new courses

After attempting to review an initial set of tier 1 courses (SPE 111 and WRI 227), the committee found it necessary to review and revise the existing policy and approval criteria for COM ESLO Essential Practice courses (with input from the Communication Department). The committee also made minor clarifications to the COM ESLO course approval form, to streamline future submissions.

### Winter Term

The committee finalized and approved the new policy and approval criteria for COM ESLO Essential Practice courses. The committee then reviewed all submitted tier 1-2 courses, provided feedback to all faculty who had submitted courses for approval (including a list of evidence / modifications that would be necessary for course approval), and requested resubmission of all courses. Upon resubmission, the committee reviewed the following tier 1 courses:

- COM 225 – Essential Practice; approved with modifications (the course must require COM ESLO foundation coursework as prerequisites; the course materials must specify that students include written work that meets Essential Practice outcomes).
- WRI 410 – Essential Practice; approved.

The committee supported the Communication ESLO Assessment process by planning and hosting two rubric workshops (one for the Klamath Falls campus; one for Wilsonville). The committee also provided one-on-one training sessions for selected degree programs.

The committee reviewed and responded to questions forwarded from GEAC (refer to Appendix A).

### Spring Term

The committee reviewed the following tier 1 courses:

- SPE 111 – Foundation; under review.
- WRI 121 – Foundation; under review.
- WRI 122 – Foundation; under review.
- WRI 227 – Essential Practice; approved.
- WRI 327 – Essential Practice; approved.
- WRI 350 – Essential Practice; approved.

While reviewing the Foundation-level courses, the committee determined that there was no existing policy or approval criteria for COM ESLO Foundation courses. The committee began the process of drafting that policy (with input from the Communication Department).

The committee also discussed the WICHE Passport, and reviewed existing passports from other institutions to determine a recommended set of passport courses in the Oral Communication and Written Communication passport blocks. Based on that review (refer to Appendix B), the committee's recommendations are:

- Outgoing passport – Students who complete all COM ESLO Foundation courses will fulfill the Oral and Written Communication passport blocs.
- Incoming passport, Oral Communication – SPE 111. Rationale: almost all passport institutions include coursework that meets the outcomes for COM ESLO Foundational oral communication; it is likely that students with incoming passports have met those outcomes.
- Incoming passport, Written Communication – WRI 121. Rationale:
  - Almost all passport institutions include coursework that meets the outcomes for the COM ESLO introductory foundation for written communication (WRI 121); it is likely that students with incoming passports have met those outcomes.
  - While many passport institutions include coursework that meets the outcomes for the COM ESLO advanced foundation for written communication (WRI 122), about 30% of passport institutions do not (or do so using courses that fulfill other Oregon Tech ESLO requirements, but not COM ESLO requirements). There is no certainty that students transferring in a passport will have met Oregon Tech COM ESLO outcomes in this category. The committee recommends against granting WRI 122 credit for incoming passports.
  - Very few passport institutions include coursework that meets COM ESLO Essential Practice outcomes; the committee strongly recommends against granting COM Essential Practice credit for incoming passports.

The committee also notes that students transferring a passport can still receive transfer credit for WRI 122 and Essential Practices courses; students who can demonstrate that they have met COM ESLO outcomes will therefore not be disadvantaged.

#### Action Items for the 2017/18 Academic Year

- Finalize and approve a policy and approval criteria for Foundation courses
- Review, revise, and approve a policy for Program-Integrated practice courses
- Review and approve existing COM ESLO Foundation courses
- Review and approve Tier 2 and 3 COM ESLO Foundation courses

## **Appendix A – Questions for the Communication ESLO Committee (with Responses)**

**CM1:** Many programs are interested in specifying a course that best prepares students for communication within their discipline/profession; can you share high-level detail on the options being developed by the Communication department in this direction?

**Response from the COM ESLO Committee:** The course list provided to GEAC represents all of the courses that have been submitted for approval. Based on feedback from GEAC, the COM ESLO committee, and the degree programs, the Communication department has plans to develop and submit two courses in the Fall 2017 term (WRI 3xx: Writing in the Health Sciences, and WRI 3xx: Writing in Engineering), with pilot offerings scheduled for the Winter and Spring 2018 terms.

**CM2:** Will new COM electives (generally) be 300-level? At present, a number of programs slot WRI227 in the first year, which is not ideal. Use of higher numbers for practicing-level COM would help signal the “right place” in the curriculum for them to sit.

**Response from the COM ESLO Committee:**

- All currently planned additions to the COM ESLO Essential Practice list are 300+ level courses.
- WRI 227 will not be renumbered. WR/WRI/EN 227 is the common course number used in Oregon public universities and community colleges for an intermediate-level technical communication course, so renumbering WRI 227 would likely lead to confusion in the transfer approval process. However, the Communication department plans to make substantial changes to the structure of the course (and potentially resubmit for approval) during the Fall 2017 term; the planned changes will both enable the course to integrate more gracefully with most degree programs' first- and second-year curricula, and bring the course in line with other WR/WRI/EN 227 courses throughout the state (easing transfer approval).

**Appendix B – Review of WICHE Passport Institutions: COM ESLO Outcomes**

Institution	Foundation Outcomes			Essential Practice Outcomes	
	SPE 111	WRI 121	WRI 122	WRI 227	300+ level EP course(s)
Blue Mountain CC	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets	Does not meet
Dakota State U	Meets	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
Lake Region CC	Meets	Meets	Meets	May Meet	Does not meet
Laramie County CC	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet	Does not meet
Leeward CC	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet	Does not meet
North Dakota State CS	Meets	Meets	Meets	May Meet	Does not meet
Northern State U	May Meet	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
Snow College	May Meet	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
South Dakota School of Mines	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Meets	Does not meet
Southern Utah U	Does not meet	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
U Arkansas CC	Meets	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
University of North Dakota	May Meet	Meets	Meets	May Meet	May Meet
Utah State U	Meets	Meets	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet
Utah Valley U	May Meet	May Meet	Does not meet	May Meet	Does not meet
Weber State U	May Meet	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet	Does not meet
Western Oregon U	Meets	Does not meet	Meets	Does not meet	Does not meet

Meets	Passport includes course/s which meet Oregon Tech COM ESLO course outcomes
May Meet	Passport includes course/s which may meet Oregon Tech COM ESLO course outcomes (depending on which course students use to satisfy Passport requirements)
Does not meet	Passport does not include course/s which meet this Oregon Tech COM ESLO course outcomes