



Department and Program Review Response Letter Communication

June 6, 2025

Dear Anne, Justin, Nikki, Lisa, and Jon,

Thank you for taking part in Department & Program Review (DPR) this year. The DPR process reveals critical connections that link your strengths, needs, values, priorities, and plans to those of the College. Further, it supports our commitment to innovation through continual improvement. We commend your dedication to empowering our students, engaging our communities, and supporting our values. This response to your report is based on what we see as your successes, what you and we identified as challenges, and guidance on how to proceed with the goals and needs you have described.

Successes and Kudos

First, we'd like to celebrate a few of the many strengths of your program. We commend the high level of engagement with the College and community among your faculty, including your two newest hires who are currently in their first year as full-time COCC faculty. In particular, we'd like to highlight the participation of two of your faculty in the Faculty Leadership Training pilot and second cohorts. We also laud your focus on experiential and community-focused classroom activities, a practice that was interrupted by the pandemic but is now coming back strong! And at the state level, you contribute significantly to your professional community through your active involvement with Major Transfer Map and Common Course Numbering committees.

Another of your strengths is in your strong contributions to COCC's Strategic Plan goal of Access – you offer courses regularly at branch campuses and Deer Ridge Correctional Institution, as well as online and remotely. While it can be a challenge to meet all of those student and community needs, your commitment has remained strong over time. Please continue to share that responsibility across all full-time faculty.

Finally, and on a related note, we'd like to underscore the excellent work done throughout your report in connecting your observations, analyses, and goals to larger institutional frameworks such as the Strategic Plan.

Challenges

The Communication program is currently facing several challenges, including small classrooms and inconsistent technology, which can hinder effective teaching and learning. To address these issues, we encourage you to utilize the room survey and furniture request options to advocate for improvements. Submit help desk tickets any time technology is not working well and need attention from IT. And be sure to connect with your dean to explore other solutions, especially as related to technology.

Another concern your report noted is the attrition of BILAPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and People of Color) students. You clearly have a strong commitment to making progress in this area, so we suggest ongoing conversations with your fellow faculty, your instructional dean as well as the Dean of Equity and Well-being could help you develop and implement effective retention strategies. Working with other faculty who are noting similar trends can also be helpful if their efforts have led to greater success in BILAPOC student retention. Additionally, the program may benefit from more targeted comparisons of its performance by benchmarking against similar departments such as Writing (WR) and Math (MTH), rather than the college as a whole. Institutional Effectiveness

(IE) can provide support in generating these specialized comparisons to better inform program development and decision-making.

Goals and needs

Engage in community-based partnerships and pedagogy

This is a great goal and we strongly support you in pursuing it. These efforts align well with Guided Pathways (GP) and can enhance student learning through real-world applications and collaboration. As opportunities and needs arise, connect with other departments to stay aligned with institutional goals.

Modernize classrooms and improve technology

Modernizing classrooms and improving technology will enhance teaching and student engagement. Be sure to submit IT help desk tickets in order to document technology issues and please use the furniture request process to suggest updates to furniture in these rooms. This will help administration remain aware of the persistent challenges faced in the learning environment.

Printer on mid-campus

The student-centered idea of adding a printer on mid-campus, potentially within a computer lab setting, is worth exploring. This could involve creating a mini lab with printing capabilities to improve student access to resources. Work with your dean and IT to assess feasibility, infrastructure needs, and potential support.

Create an Introduction to Communication course

The creation of an Introduction to Communication course is already underway, so you are showing strong progress toward this goal. Stipends will be available through Strategic Plan (SP) funding to support the development of trailhead courses in summer 2025, and your intro course may be one that would qualify. This foundational course will support student pathways in Communication and related disciplines.

Create a COCC event related to Communication

As with the introductory course, this is an exciting initiative that reinforces connections to Guided Pathways. Kudos for making these connections. Faculty should stay in touch with their faculty EP lead (Stacey Donohue) for guidance and coordination. Materials and supplies (M&S) funds can be used for event purchases, and we encourage you to discuss any additional funding needs with your dean.

Determine feasibility of restoring TA classes

Restoring Theatre Arts (TA) classes is a viable goal, provided there is sufficient student interest. If the demand exists, classes can be scheduled, and a request should be submitted through HR to open a part-time faculty pool. To increase accessibility and enrollment, consider offering evening courses or cross-listing with Continuing Education (CE), which may also promote broader community involvement. You might also consider connecting with high school theater communities and local theater groups. These partnerships may provide collaborative opportunities, shared resources, and potential pipelines for future students.

Conclusion

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to student readiness. Together, we can build on our achievements, address the challenges ahead, and meet the evolving needs of our students. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out. We look forward to working collaboratively to enhance the quality and impact of the Communication program.

Sincerely yours,



Annemarie E. Hamlin
Vice President of Academic Affairs



Jessica Giglio
Instructional Dean



Tony Russell
Instructional Dean