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COM 3902
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Course Synthesis and Communication Competencies Review

During my time as an undergraduate student at Curry College, I feel as though I've learned and grown significantly. My growth as a student can be measured from my rigorous class schedule and academic record. My growth as an individual can be measured by getting outside my comfort zone, and participating in five internships. The communication and liberal arts courses I have taken have provided me with fundamental competencies that I will carry throughout my professional career. There are nine learning outcomes of the communication major: *oral communication, written communication, research and theoretical competency, historical recognition, aesthetic sensibility, adapting and innovating, critical thinking, personality identity, and application/development*. Today, I will be deeply exploring how Curry College has contributed to my success as a student through the learning outcomes of a communication major.

To begin, *oral communication* can be defined as "Students will understand the preparation and presentation competencies necessary for oral communication in a variety of contexts, as both a speaker and a listener, and for a variety of audiences," according to Curry's Board of Trustees. My courses with Professor Sinnott, Professor Nelson, and Professor Holbrook have helped my oral communication skills tremendously.

COM 2010 Public Speaking 3 credits

An introductory course in public speaking. Chief emphasis is placed upon the delivery of carefully prepared speeches and major attention is given to collection of materials, style, audience analysis, and outlining.

COM 2100 Managerial Communication 3 credits

Students will be introduced to the theoretical and practical principles of organizational structure, culture and management in relationship to all aspects of communication skills.

Students will explore various organizations and will participate in managerial case studies virtually and face to face. Students will be introduced to motivational concepts and communication skills necessary to become more effective managers and leaders. Students will manage and be managed by peers for individual, team, and class assignments.

COM 1030 Career Speech: Voice & Articulation 3 credits

Designed to help improve your vocal presentation, this course will introduce you to the development and production of American Career Speech. Individual progress will be charted through prepared presentation and class exercises. We will train the ear as well as the voice; the listener as well as the speaker. The dedicated student will notice enhanced vocal versatility and personal projection.

COM 3015 Advanced Public Speaking 3 credits

This course is designed to build and expand upon COM 2010: Public Speaking. The chief emphasis is placed upon the understanding and application of the principles of effective speech communication and public speaking by preparing carefully delivered speeches that are appropriate for your audience, the speech purpose, and the assignment. Attention will be given to public speaking strategies, research, the "3 Vs" of message impact (visual, vocal, verbal), supplemental media use (e.g. PowerPoint), and the effective delivery of different types of speeches used extensively in business and the professions.

COM 3040 Persuasion 3 credits

Applies and investigates the various modes of persuasion including propaganda, mass communication, and public speaking with an emphasis on application and analysis of persuasive techniques.

The *Public Speaking* course gave me a basic understanding of public speaking, and taught me how to properly format and deliver an effective speech. The *Managerial Communication* course gave me the confidence and clarity as a speaker, and ultimately taught me how to gather information and use research. In *Career Speech: Voice & Articulation*, Professor Holbrook helped me develop my listening skills, as well as learn how to properly articulate and enunciate words. Although I found this class to be challenging, I realized that I used to slur my words together, and speak too fast. After this course with Professor Holbrook, I now speak my sentences with much more clarity and efficiency. The *Advanced Public Speaking* course enhanced my initial skills from *Public Speaking*, and I allowed me to curate more speeches specific to my target audience. Lastly, the *Persuasion* course taught me the different

forms of persuasion, as well as how to gather information to use it to my advantage, and change one's point of view.

Secondly, Curry's Board of Trustees defines written communication as, "Synthesis and analysis of the written text; proficiency in utilizing standard forms of writing and grammar for a variety of audiences in multiple contexts." As a communication major, I'm fortunate to have gained the necessary grammatical skills early in my education.

COM 2230 Writing for Communication 3 credits

The communication field requires specialized reading and writing skills. This course will equip students to thrive in any of the varied fields within the area of communication. Students will sharpen skills used in absorbing, analyzing, and processing information, and develop a clean and clear writing style.

COM 2900 Multimedia Journalism 3 credits

Covers the basics of reporting and news writing. Emphasis on lead writing, interviewing, researching and preparing news stories. Discussion of libel laws and ethics. Students will also be introduced to blogging, and video/audio reporting techniques for use on the Internet.

COM 3960 Communication Research 3 credits

This course provides an overview of the research process and examines various types of research methods as they relate to the study of human communication.

One of my favorite courses thus far, *Multimedia Journalism*, taught me how to properly organize thoughts so my paper is cohesive. Professor Moura focused heavily on the inverted pyramid, which is a great technique to know in the public relations industry. The inverted pyramid is how journalists write, and can be incredibly beneficial to public relations professionals when they pitch media. Additionally, she taught me how to use different writing styles based on an audience and platform. For example, the way one would write for a newspaper is much different than how one would write an Instagram post. In my *Writing for Communication* class with Professor Barrett, I learned proper spelling and grammar. Professor Barrett also taught our class how to summarize ideas in writing, and get straight to the point. In my *Communication Research* course, Professor MacDougall instilled in us the usage of proper

citations and bibliographies. Additionally, I learned how to create an annotated bibliography in his course, which I had never done prior.

Next, *research and theoretical competency* can be defined as, “Competency in modeling and theorizing basic communication phenomena, and using foundational communication research techniques in basic and applied contexts,” according to Curry’s Board of Trustees. As we are required to take a *Communication Theory* or a *Communication Research* course to graduate, I chose to take *Communication Research* with Professor MacDougall. I have never really taken many research courses, so I found this class to be particularly challenging. Additionally, Professor MacDougall is extremely intelligent, and I found some of the lectures a bit ambiguous. In this class, we learned about different theories and applied them to current situations, as well as how they’re used in communication. Our main project, though, was to compose a 15- to 20-page research paper at the end of the semester. This project taught our class how to find a strong research topic, and present it via paper and presentation.

Curry’s Board of Trustees defines *historical recognition* as, “Knowledge of the history of communication and understanding the transformation and progression of communication on society, both person-to-person and mediated.”

COM 1710 Introduction to Broadcasting 3 credits

Discusses the history of radio and television in the United States, including FCC regulations, impact on society, current trends and themes in programming and advertising.

COM 2790 Principles of Public Relations 3 credits

Publicity, propaganda, and spin are terms used to describe the public relations profession. Students will examine the evolution of public relations from its ancient roots to the modern day. Ethical and legal issues, as well as public opinion and research, will provide a framework on which to build an understanding of how public relations impacts individuals, organizations and governments. The role of public relations and the media will also be explored. In addition, students will be introduced to specialty areas within public relations including special events, crisis communications, community relations and others.

COM 3902 Communication Issues 3 credits

Course will cover historic and current issues in the communications business. Students will present abstracts on a chosen topic, demonstrate competent use of electronic and traditional research techniques, and complete a major paper. This is the only required senior seminar for communication majors.

In *Communication Seminar*, Professor DiManno often discusses the major historical moments of communication history, as well as current issues. It's a useful recap, as I haven't necessarily learned about communication history since my *Introduction to Broadcasting* class with Professor Frank during my freshman year. I particularly enjoy how Professor DiManno encourages the class to engage in a discussion about modern day communication issues, and assigns a weekly reading of Hamlet's Blackberry that discusses present-day communication issues that many individuals are facing. Additionally, she also assigns a "Keeping Current" assignment to each student, where we must research a current communication article, and present it to the class. Overall, I feel that Professor DiManno and Professor Frank have provided me with the necessary tools to understand where technology once was, and where it is now headed. In my *Principles of Public Relations* course, we learned about the history and creation of public relations, and examined what the public relations industry is today.

Next, *aesthetic sensibility* can be defined as, "Competency in understanding the constant interplay between form and content in various communication modalities," states Curry's Board of Trustees.

COM 1010 Fundamentals of 3 credits Communication

The theory and practice of communication from one person to another, in small groups, and before larger audiences. This course allows students to gain a basic understanding of the field of communication and develop skills and self-confidence in a variety of settings.

COM 2020 Intercultural Communication 3 credits

This course will emphasize what happens when members of different cultures interact face-to-face, either casually or in organizational settings. It will focus on the communication behaviors and values common to all cultures and on the differences that divide people. Students will learn to overcome intercultural communication problems by learning how to understand and respect these cultural differences.

COM 2180 Leadership Communication 3 credits

The purpose of this course is to equip students with the understanding and application of communication competencies and communicator style necessary to engage in ethical leadership/followership among family members, the college community, and employment settings. Focus is on communication, specifically the rhetorical style of leaders' abilities to negotiate and inspire people. The course is divided into three sections: basic leadership communication theories and concepts, rhetorical analysis of written and verbal speeches, and self-assessment of communication and leadership styles. The course will involve lectures, videos, case studies, research, and written and oral assignments.

In my *Intercultural Communication* course with Professor Noone, I learned about a variety of different cultures, and how to effectively communicate within. Additionally, I learned how each culture has communication differences, and how it's important to take how a given culture communicates into consideration before traveling. In my *Multimedia Journalism* course, we went over various mediums, and learned when the appropriate time is to use a given medium. Additionally, I learned how the communication model typically impacts the sender and receiver in my *Fundamentals of Communication* course with Professor Kosberg. In the *Leadership* course with Professor Sinnott, I learned how to use different communication styles, and leaders' rhetorical styles. However, my most aesthetic courses at Curry weren't my communication courses – they were courses within my minor of applied computing. The three most aesthetic courses I've taken at Curry College have been *Microsoft Excel*, *Web Page Design*, and *Digital Video Editing*. In *Excel*, there was nothing more satisfying than an organized spreadsheet. A project that our class worked on for homework had color-coordinated tabs, all columns and rows were sized-to-fit, and the Excel spreadsheet was easy to follow. In *Web Page Design*, we learned how to build a website solely from HTML code. Having the ability to create your own website specifically how you want it – colors, fonts, pictures, alignment, etc., is so satisfying. Lastly, in *Digital Video Editing*, I built a wedding video from still images that was beautiful and touching.

Curry's Board of Trustees defines *adapting and innovating* as, "Competency in

interpreting and adapting communication messages to global audiences in a constantly changing media environment.” This learning outcome goes hand-in-hand with *critical thinking*, “Critical evaluation of the credibility of both source and information in order to make informed, ethical communicative choices (or decisions).”

COM 2112 Conflict Management 3 credits

Understanding the basic concepts involved in the management of conflict situations, such as understanding attitudes about conflict and message patterns in conflict interactions, and exploring a variety of methods designed for effective conflict management in interpersonal and organizational contexts.

A few courses that I have taken that have really challenged my critical thinking abilities were *Introduction to Mass Communication*, *Managerial Communication*, *Persuasion*, and *Conflict Management*. These courses were taught as guided learning, and I felt that during each class, new challenges and topics were brought up. These courses have provided me with tangible skills that I have been able to apply to my internships. For example, *Managerial Communication* taught me how to build a strong cover letter and resume. Additionally, this course also taught me how to be prepared for the unexpected with jobs and job interviews. In *Persuasion*, I had to create a 15-minute persuasive presentation, and compete with other students in the class. This competitive presentation taught me how to create a presentation that was compelling and organized, and how to influence my audience. Working with 4 different public relations agencies has also taught me how to critically think in a fast-paced environment. There were several times that I was assigned an ambiguous project, and I had to figure out the project on my own with an early deadline. Additionally, my *Multimedia Journalism* and *Communication Seminar* course taught me about fake news, and how you cannot believe everything you read. Therefore, it’s important to verify the accuracy of a given news source.

Throughout my four years at Curry College, I've developed a *personal identity*. *Personal identity* is defined by Curry's board of trustees as, "Awareness of the self in process and its impact on interaction with others." This course competency has helped me identify strengths and weaknesses, work with a variety of personality types, and grow throughout communication field work. I have learned many of these skills throughout my internships, but primarily in my first internship with Hollywood Agency in Hingham, Massachusetts. My first internship with Hollywood Agency was the stepping stone for the rest of my internship experiences. It taught me necessary skills such as how to behave in the workplace, dress professionally and come to work on-time, take responsibility and give credit where it's due, and make smart choices. Additionally, my internships have taught me that it's crucial to be able to work with different personalities. You cannot simply pick and choose who you work with, especially with clients. In order to succeed, I've learned that having a flexible and adaptable attitude is pertinent.

The last course competency, *application and development* is defined as, "Through experiential learning opportunities, researching communication industries, and exposure to professional journals, students will develop career interests allowing them to prepare to use their communication skills in the professional world." When I reflect on my experiential learning opportunities, I get an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the opportunities that I've had. In my current internship with MSLGROUP, a leading global public relations agency, I constantly explore trade publications and websites for my clients. I've had 4 agency internships, and one in-house internship with a healthcare staffing agency. All of my internships have provided me with great connections from my coworkers and clients. Also, I've learned how to act professionally early on, and feel fully prepared as I am about to embark on a new journey – a full-time job.

As Curry College is a liberal arts college, we're required to take a variety of CLAC courses in different areas of study. There have been many CLACS that I have enjoyed, and related to communication. Math has always been something I've struggled with, therefore, taking *Statistics I* was incredibly hard for me freshman year. I had to go to tutoring every week, and I nearly withdrew from the course. I worked incredibly hard, attended every class, but was still hardly passing the exams. Although I haven't used a statistics equation since, learning how to communicate with my professor and tutor was extremely beneficial. My *Writing Workshop I* and *Writing Workshop II* courses were excellent, and taught me essential writing skills. The writing workshops that Curry provides gave me an understanding of how my future in *Multimedia Journalism* and *Writing for Communication* courses would pan out. My *Ethics* course with Professor Manter was one of my most challenging and interesting courses since attending Curry College. I not only learned about lifestyle ethics, but communication ethics as well. Ethics taught me so much about myself, my values, and how to make moral decisions. This knowledge will be beneficial in any job I pursue, especially because there are often many unethical situations that occur in a workplace. Truthfully, I believe all students at every college and university should be required to take an ethics course, as it completely changed my perspective on life.

In conclusion, my communication courses paired with my CLAC courses have provided me with tools that I will carry on throughout my professional career. Although there were a few CLACS that were challenging, I simply changed my perspective, and learned another lesson from them. As I reflect on this paper, it's satisfying to know that I have accomplished several of the Communication Major Learning Outcomes.