COMMUNICATION FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

2018

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Communication for the Public Good serves as the guiding principle for the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland. This principle expresses our belief that communication represents the cornerstone of civic life with the aim of advancing the common good locally, nationally, and globally. We trace our history at UMD to 1901 and the creation of the Department of Public Speaking; we honor that history by deepening the centrality of oral communication to UMD's general education mission. And we expand the core mission of the Department of Communication beyond its historical roots with a teaching-learning focus on health and science communication, media and digital communication, political communication and public advocacy, and public relations.

As stewards of this nearly 120-year old department, we seek to re-envision our mission, vision, and values, manage our weaknesses and threats, build on our strengths and opportunities, and envision our priorities, goals, and strategies. With the ideas outlined in this strategic plan, we aim to conduct cutting-edge research in communication science and social cognition, public relations and strategic communication, and rhetoric and political culture, strengthen the educational experience for the next generations of communication students, and enhance our service on campus and within our local, national, and global communities.

This strategic plan is based on the work of an ad hoc committee made up of tenure-track faculty members, professional-track faculty members, staff, and graduate students: Dr. Lindsey Anderson, Ms. Julie Gowin, Dr. Xiaoli Nan, Dr. Shawn Parry-Giles, Dr. Damien Pfister, Ms. Susan Simon, Dr. Leah Waks, and Mr. Gareth Williams. In addition, members from across the department contributed to the shaping of the strategic plan via open meetings and feedback to planning documents during the fall of 2017 and the spring of 2018. Four departmental meetings were held on October 13, 2017, December 1, 2017, January 26, 2018, and April 13, 2018 that allowed for open deliberation on the strategic plan. The final report was approved by the Department of Communication's Departmental Assembly on October 5, 2018.

VISION:

The Department of Communication boldly elevates communication research and learning worldwide for the public good.

MISSION:

The Department of Communication is committed to research that innovates, teaching that inspires, and service that matters. We cultivate our community members' academic, professional, civic, and personal aspirations through communication theory and practice. To advance this mission, we build local and global partnerships that enhance the public good.

VALUES:

Excellence and Innovation

- *Igniting creativity and curiosity*
- *Advancing critical thinking and inquiry*

Empathy and Reasoning

- *Fostering listening and openness*
- *Advocating deliberation and justice*

Diversity and Inclusion

- *Creating community and equity*
- *Promoting diversity and respect*

Ethics and Integrity

- *Honoring rights and responsibilities*
- *Empowering professionalism and principled leadership*

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

STRENGTHS

Quality Programs: Commitment to Excellence

- **Research Centers**

Center for Health and Risk Communication (CHRC) (http://www.healthriskcenter.umd.edu/): The CHRC is one of the few elite university centers dedicated to the study of health and risk communication. CHRC's core mission is to advance evidence-based health and risk communication research to tackle the world's most pressing public health problems. CHRC brings together on- and off-campus experts in a wide array of fields, especially cancer communication, food safety, and risk communication. Within the past seven years, CHRC's core faculty and affiliates at the University of Maryland have received over $17 million in external (mostly federal) funding for cancer communication research, making CHRC a leader in this nationally and globally prioritized research area. CHRC is spearheading a cross-campus initiative to advance the science of cancer communication in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute and key stakeholders at the University of Maryland, including the School of Public Health and the School of Medicine. With significant and continuous research funding and multi-disciplinary collaboration, CHRC continues to advance our university's land-grant mission through engaged scholarship and the cultivation of next-generation researchers.

The Mark and Heather Rosenker Center for Political Communication & Civic Leadership (RCPCCL) (http://www.comm.center.umd.edu/): The RCPCCL unites research, education, and public engagement to foster democratic communication by a diverse people. RCPCCL sponsors the NEH-funded *Voices of Democracy: The U.S. Oratory Project* (voicesofdemocracy@umd.edu)—an online journal and teaching resource—that fosters the study of great speeches and debates in U.S. history for K-12 students, college students, and graduate students. The RCPCCL also sponsors the *Political Advertising Resource Center* that features an analysis of political ads. Reports from these studies of political ads have received coverage in the *Huffington Post*, the *AP*, the *Conversation*, and the *Houston Chronicle*. A new project will launch in the fall of 2018 entitled the *Recovering Democracy Archives: Speech Recovery Project* (RDA) (recoveringdemocracyarchives@umd.edu). RDA recovers and digitizes lesser-known speeches from archives across the country and makes them available for educational purposes. RCPCCL also features the Rosenker Lecture series designed to promote the civic engagement of UMD students. Doctoral students in the Department of Communication are integral to the work of the RCPCCL, and the public events are often targeted to UMD's undergraduate students and interested participants.

- **Faculty Research, Grants, Awards, and Public Intellectualism**

Tenure-track (TTK) faculty members have published over 150 journal articles and book chapters since 2014 and they have published 36 books. TTK faculty members are publishing in the most reputable journals of Communication and related disciplines. Some of these outlets include: *Communication Monographs*, *Communication Research*, *Health Communication*, *Journal of*

Public Relations Research, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, *Public Relations Review*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, and *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*. They are also placing their books in such presses as Baylor University Press, Michigan State University Press, Palgrave Press, Pennsylvania State University Press, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Routledge Press, University of Alabama Press, and the University of Illinois Press.

TTK faculty members have also been involved in bringing in millions of dollars of grants and contracts to UMD from such agencies as: DARPA, Department of Agriculture, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, JIFSAN (Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition of the FDA), Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Health, and the National Science Foundation.

TTK faculty members have won numerous awards on and off campus. A sampling of these include: AEJMC Public Relations Division Lifetime Achievement Award; Basic Course Distinguished Faculty Award (NCA); Bruce Berger Educator Mentor Award (Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations); Emerald Literati Network Award for Excellence; International Public Relations Research Conference Board of Directors Award; Graduate Faculty Mentor of the Year Award, Graduate School (UMD); Helen F. Faust Women Writers Award; Eberly Family Special Collections Library (Pennsylvania State University); Ekroyd Teaching Excellence Award (ECA); Frederick B. Artz Summer Research Grant (Oberlin College Archives); International Listening Association Lifetime Achievement Award; James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award; Marie Hochmuth Nichols Book Award (NCA); Janis Edwards Outstanding Article of the Year in Visual Communication (NCA); Mayhew Derryberry Award (American Public Health Association); Outstanding Graduate Director Award, Graduate School (UMD); Outstanding Dissertation Award (American Society for the History of Rhetoric); Presidential Commendation for Outstanding Scholarly Service from the Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology; Public Relations Division PRIDE Award for Best Article of the Year (NCA); PRSA College of Fellows (elected member); Research and Scholarship Award (UMD); and the Research Development Grant (Organization for Research on Women and Communication).

TTK faculty members have served as consultants for such agencies and universities as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), CIA, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Lamar University, NATO, the National Cancer Institute, Quinnipiac University, Prince George's County Health Department, Salisbury University, State of Maryland's Health Information Exchange, United Arab Emirates (Ministry of Education), and the University of Nebraska.

TTK faculty members have also contributed to public scholarship by being quoted in such press outlets as: *ABC News*, *Al Jazeera*, *Associated Press*, *BBC*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Boston Globe*, *BuzzFeed*, *CBS News*, *CQ Researcher*, *C-Span*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Daily Kos*, *Fox News*, *Medical Ethics Advisor*, *MSNBC*, *NBC News*, *National Journal*, *NPR*, *New York Times*, *Politico*, *Public Relations Week*, *Reuters*, *Voice of America*, *Vox*, *Wired*, *Washington Post*, and *WTOP*.

- **Department Rankings**

COMM at UMD ranked 8th among programs in Communication according to the *Center for the World University Rankings* (2018). These rankings include U.S. and international institutions: http://cwur.org/2017/subjects.php#Communication.

The Academic Ranking of World Universities (2018) also ranked COMM at UMD 13th in comparison to peer programs in the United States and abroad: http://www.shanghairanking.com/Shanghairanking-Subject-Rankings/communication.html.

- **Graduate Student Productivity and Placement**

The department's Ph.D. program continues to attract top applicants who publish in respected venues and secure tenure-track employment upon graduation. Our students have been successful with university-level fellowship competitions, enrolling three Flagship Fellows in recent years. Our students have also received a diversity of campus awards, including: All-S.T.A.R Award (2016); the James F. Harris Arts & Humanities Visionary Scholarship (2016); the Graduate Dean's Dissertation Fellowship (2016-2017); the Michael J. Pelczar Award for Excellence in Graduate Study (2017-2018); Ann G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowships (2017-2018, 2018-2019—two students); and the Mary Savage Snouffer Dissertation Fellowship (2018-2019). A recent graduate won the Charles A. Caramello Award for best dissertation in the humanities completed in 2017. In each of the last two years, approximately 40 of the department's students have presented research at major conferences, and approximately 15 have published articles in peer-reviewed journals, including *Health Communication, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, Rhetoric & Public Affairs, Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and *Health Education*. Two students have published three books—two are textbooks in public relations (Sage) and the third is a book on the Middle East and President Dwight Eisenhower (University of Nebraska Press). At the 2017 National Communication Association Convention, COMM Ph.D. students and alumni won three of the discipline's most prestigious awards: the Gerald R. Miller Dissertation Award, the Diamond Anniversary Monograph Award, and the Stephen E. Lucas Debut Publication Award. In recent years, our students have secured tenure-track positions at such institutions as Mississippi State University, Pennsylvania State University—State College, Texas Christian University, the University of Memphis, the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, and the University of Tennessee. Another has accepted a post-doc position with the National Cancer Institute.

Commitment to Teaching-Learning
- **Oral Communication Program**

(OCP) (https://comm.umd.edu/undergraduate/oral-communication-program): The OCP oversees the General Education courses provided by the Department of Communication (COMM 107 and COMM 200). The OCP prepares students for the communication challenges that they will face in their academic, personal, professional, and civic lives. COMM 107 is the largest oral communication course on campus, providing 3,800 to 4,000 seats per year. To support this endeavor, the Department of Communication houses the Oral Communication Center (OCC), a

learning assistance resource certified by the National Association of Communication Centers. The OCC provided approximately 950 individual peer consultations and 30 group workshops for COMM 107 students during the 2017-2018 academic year.

The OCP/OCC is directed by a leadership team that exemplifies excellence in basic course administration. The program was named an NCA Basic Course Division Program of Distinction in 2014. In addition, the leadership team has prioritized multi-course assessment and the program has emerged as an exemplar for assessment on campus by hosting an annual norming session for instructors from all of the oral communication courses offered at UMD. The program has also built a strong research reputation—producing influential communication pedagogy scholarship that has been published in several peer-reviewed journals and presented at national and regional conferences. These journals include: *Communication Teacher*, *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, and the *Journal of the Association for Communication Administration*. The OCP is also partnering with the Do Good Institute on its Civic Innovation Initiative to train competitively-selected instructors in the principles of group engagement for a COMM 107 assignment.

- **Undergraduate Program**

Communication is among UMD's top ten majors in terms of enrollment. The department averages between 800 and 900 majors per year. To keep the major current, the department will launch its new curriculum in the fall of 2019 or spring of 2020 (upon university approval) that integrates communication theory, research methods, and applied communication courses. The department has also approved four new concentrations that will appear on the students' transcripts (upon university and system approval) for those who complete the requirements. These concentrations include: Health and Science Communication, Media and Digital Communication, Political Communication and Public Advocacy, and Public Relations. Students will be able to pursue internships and careers in these concentrations.

  o *Internships*:

  The Department of Communication places students in competitive internships. Students learn from highly qualified professionals in various fields of interest. Many of our COMM alums are active in recruiting COMM interns. As part of the internship course, students create portfolios that they use in job interviews. Some students have been successful in turning internships into full-time employment after graduation. Several of our majors complete more than one internship before and after they graduate. A sampling of local internships include: the Kennedy Center, Smithsonian Institution, the White House, KGlobal, Linda Roth Associates, American Institute of Physics, The Influencer Collective, International Leadership Association, Pretrial Services Agency, and the Washington Redskins. Students have also been placed in internships across the country, including: Facebook, Warner Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, People's Revolution fashion agency, Veronica Beard, Tory Burch, Berk Communications, Project Soulmate, and Moët Hennessy in New York City. And still others have interned in international locations, including Israel and Australia.

- *Placement*:

Approximately 98 percent of recent B.A. graduates (2017) report that they are employed or have entered a graduate program within six months after graduation, and 91 percent report they are working in a field related to their career objective. Students are working in a diversity of fields, including: Booz Allen Hamilton, CBS Corporation, Children's Inn of the NIH, Discovery Communications, J. P. Morgan Chase, Ketchum, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft, Morgan Stanley, National Geographic Society, Ogilvy Public Relations, Omnicom Media Group, Silicon Valley Communications, SiriusXM, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of State, U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Navy, Under Armour, UMD—Baltimore County, UMD—University College, Vanda Pharmaceuticals, the *Washington Post*, the Washington Redskins, Yelp, and Zerin Business Consulting. COMM graduates have also entered law school (Boston College, Harvard University) and graduate programs (Clemson University, Georgetown University, New York University, and the University of Maryland).

- *Quality of PTK Instruction*:

Our B.A. students also benefit from the strength of the department's PTK faculty members, who advance the mission of our undergraduate and professional studies graduate programs. These individuals have earned Ph.Ds., law degrees, and master's degrees, and many bring important skills from their work in communication fields to the undergraduate classroom. Our instructors have specialized experiences in public relations, archival research, film and television production, conflict resolution, event planning, interpreting and translation, web site design, and social media. Our PTK faculty members are dedicated instructors who enhance the quality of our curriculum in Communication, in COMM 107, and in our MPS degrees and graduate certificates.

- *Quality Undergraduate Studies Staff*:

The undergraduate studies staff at UM-College Park and the Universities of Shady Grove are exceptional and provide quality support for the undergraduate students.

- **Teaching and Learning Transformation Center (TLTC) Collaborations**

Many members of the department's instructional staff are completing the TLTC Launch Certificate or the Diversity Certificate and/or attending TLTC workshops designed to enhance teaching excellence. The department has also organized specialized workshops with the TLTC and the Division of Information Technology. The OCP also works closely with the TLTC.

Commitment to Diversity
- **ADVANCE Participation**

The department's search committees for tenure-track faculty members participated in the ADVANCE program in FY2017 and FY2018. ADVANCE is designed "to support the recruitment, retention, advancement and professional growth of women and under-represented minority

faculty." And in FY2017, we invited the ADVANCE team to the department to provide a workshop on enhancing our commitment to diversity during the graduate student admissions process. Faculty, graduate students, and staff attended the workshop.

- **Diversity of Faculty, Graduate Students, and Staff**:

The department's diversity statement captures our long-standing commitment to diversity among faculty, students, and staff: *The Department of Communication is committed to promoting a broad spectrum of voices and views resulting from a heterogeneity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality among faculty, students, and staff.*

The department reflects the diversity of UMD and the larger community in terms of class, ethnicity, gender, race, nationality, political affiliation, religion, and sexuality. Such diversity enhances the multiplicity of ideas expressed and productive deliberations fostered across the department.

Commitment to Entrepreneurial and Innovative Programs
- **Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation (GSIT) (**gsit@umd.edu**)**

COMM's GSIT program is only one of two full-service master's programs in interpreting and translation in the United States. The GSIT program offers an MPS in Interpreting, an MPS in Translation, and graduate certificates in Consecutive Interpreting and Translation with specializations in conference interpreting, public service interpreting, translation, and translation and localization project management. GSIT offers opportunities to build important relationships with institutions in the Washington, DC area (and agencies across the country) that have a global reach. GSIT instructors and students also have built relationships with international universities. GSIT instructors work with the United Nations (UN), the U.S. Department of State, IMF, the FBI, the Organization of American States, and the World Bank. Training has also been provided by the UN, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, and Ebay. GSIT students have worked for the following companies (as interns, freelance interpreters or translators, or as full-time employees): Google, the U.S. Department of State, FIFA, the IMF, the World Bank, the Children's Hospital, the UN, the Department of Defense (U.S. Army), Voice of America, the Russian Bolshoi Ballet, various embassies in DC, and a series of international companies working with China or governments associated with the United Arab Emirates and other Middle Eastern governments and companies. The program has sponsored one Fulbright Scholar who visited from Ukraine for a year. GSIT has enrolled and graduated five Fulbright students from Austria, Mauritania, Russia, and Spain (two students).

- **Graduate Certificate in Professional Communication: Enhanced English Fluency** (EEF) (eef@umd.edu)

The department launched a graduate certificate in Professional Communication: Enhanced English Fluency in the Fall of 2017. The mission of the graduate certificate is to help students enhance their writing and speaking fluency in professional contexts. Students can take classes in the 18-

credit graduate certificate online or on campus. The EEF certificate is especially targeted to English as second-language learners and speakers, fulfilling an important need locally, nationally, and internationally.

- **Universities at Shady Grove** (https://www.shadygrove.umd.edu/academics/degree-programs/ba-communication)

The Communication undergraduate program at the Universities at Shady Grove offers students the opportunity to earn a B.A. in communication by specializing in communication studies with a focus in digital and mediated communication. Following the University of Maryland System planning agreement, the COMM program at the Universities at Shady Grove is designed to attract rising juniors and seniors who transfer from two-year or other four-year institutions. The program is highly engaging and prepares students for graduate programs as well as professional careers in communication, including web design and web management, advocacy campaigns, digital marketing and promotions, documentary and storytelling video production, to name a few.

The academic program at Shady Grove is drawing a large number of students from feeder schools such as the local community colleges, particularly from Montgomery College, as well as from programs at College Park. The original enrollment goal was set at 80 full-time students (FTE) a year. However, between 2014 and 2018 there was a rise in both FTEs and headcounts in the program, ranging from 84.2 to 90.1 FTE and 235 to 251 total students.

Communication students have the luxury of taking their digital media and visual communication courses in 30-seat iMac computer labs providing them with the most recent digital software. They also make use of state-of-the-art cameras, lighting, and sound equipment in their digital communication work. Putting their knowledge and skills to work, students complete high quality digital visual projects that also serve the community at large. Storytelling and advocacy projects produced for the community include *The Madison House Foundation*; *The Story of a Local Golf Course*; and a documentary film called *Payne* that won international acclaim and received an international film festival award.

Commitment to Creating Campus, Community, and Government Partnerships

- Members of the department have established important public and private partnerships. The CHRC has been integral in forging ties with the National Cancer Institute, JIFSAN, the medical school at UMB, and the School of Public Health at UMD. These relationships have resulted in grant support for research projects and the hiring of one of our doctoral students as a post-doc with the NCI. Research faculty working with START are producing research for the Department of Homeland Security and NOAA. Health and crisis communication faculty have established health literacy campaigns with schools in the state of Maryland and are also working to advance county-wide health care programs or pursuing grants with the CDC. Colleagues working with ARHU's African American History, Culture, and Digital Humanities (AADHum) project have forged strong connections with the National Museum of African History and Culture. The RCPCCL has established relationships with local, state, and national archives across the country to recover public speeches buried in archives that were delivered by African Americans,

Native Americans, Arab Americans, Asian Americans, LGBTQ Americans, and women. Public relations faculty have also created strong ties with public relations firms and public relations departments in organizations; undergraduate students have completed projects for UNICEF and the Safe Center, for example. And other faculty have worked with the Office of Community Engagement to establish service-learning opportunities in the city of College Park.

- The OCP team is building strong connections across campus and the discipline. Beyond collaborating with the Do Good Institute, the OCP has worked closely with the Teaching and Learning Transformation Center, (earning an Elevate Grant to develop an online presentational speaking course) as well as the Office of Undergraduate Studies (conducting annual norming sessions and collaborative assessment projects). Based on the needs of constituents across campus, the OCC is developing science communication programming for graduate students. And the OCP is piloting COMM 107 sections designed for business students, STEM students, and students interested in the Do Good Initiative.

- In addition to the partnerships previously noted, GSIT students have provided *pro bono* support to human trafficking survivors (UMD's Safe Center), people in the state seeking legal support (People's Law Library), bilingual speakers at UMD seeking to understand state health insurance policies (Department of Residential Facilities and Non-Exempt Staff), social workers employed in the juvenile justice program with the State of Maryland, and bilingual parents in area schools during parent-teacher conferences. And GSIT is developing relationships with Ebay, Facebook, and Google to coordinate internships.

- Many TTK faculty members are affiliate faculty members or work closely with other departments and institutions: African American Studies, Do Good Institute, Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity, the Middle East Institute, MITH, School of Public Health, START, and Women's Studies.

Commitment to External Funding and Alumni Development
- **Mark and Heather Rosenker Estate Gift**:

Mark Rosenker (a COMM alumnus) and Heather Rosenker have pledged an estate gift to the Department of Communication for approximately $4 to $6 million. This extraordinary gift will help bolster the future of the department well into the twenty-first century and beyond.

- **Success With External Funding:**

The department received a gift of equipment from Jack Cassell (former CEO for Conference Systems, Inc.) to outfit the GSIT lab—the Cassell Lab (estimated donation is $237,808). The donation was made in the name of Mr. Cassell's mother—Carolyn Cassell—and his sister—Donna Ratcliffe—UMD alumnae of Education. The department also received a gift of $25,000 for our COMMunity Fund from Barbara Guiltinan and Ed Guiltinan, members of the UMD Parent/Family Advisory Council and parents of a COMM major.

- **Scholarships and Other Donations:**

Donations for undergraduate scholarships and awards have been made by Dan Cronin (alum), Ryan Swann (alum), and Professor Elizabeth Toth and Mr. Richard Toth. And a scholarship has been made in the memory of Chaim and Miriam Bentzlovitch (parents of Dr. Leah Waks). The Grunig lecture is also supported with an estate donation from b.j. Altshul (former instructor).

Administrative Support
- **Quality Staff Support**

The work of the department is enhanced by the quality of many of its staff members. Some possess M.A. degrees, are pursuing doctoral or master's degrees, and are advancing their qualifications by pursuing bachelor's degrees. They bring a diversity of experiences and skills to the program that are integral to the work of the department. Many of the staff have worked in the department for ten years or more, showing a strong commitment and loyalty to our program.

WEAKNESSES
Salaries and Research Support
- The stipends for Graduate Assistants and PTK faculty members are especially low, making it difficult for these members of our instructional staff to live in the Washington, DC metro area. Many are forced to take on overloads and second or third jobs to earn enough money to cover their expenses. Low stipends and the high cost of living affect the recruitment of graduate students to our program; and low salaries and stipends affect job satisfaction for all employees, especially those paid on a per class basis.

- Staff salaries are not sufficiently competitive and the limited merit and cost-of-living raises and the difficulty of receiving raises means that staff salaries are stagnant. Long-term salary stagnation can negatively impact job satisfaction and promote staff turnover.

- TTK faculty salaries are not competitive with some of UMD's peer and aspirational peer institutions, meaning that we have struggled at times in recruiting faculty to the program. The number of jobs in Communication and related fields means that some members of our TTK faculty are recruited to other programs. The lower salaries, salary compression, and high cost of living affect retention, elevating the likelihood that faculty members may relocate to other universities.

- Travel and research resources are also not competitive with peer and aspirational peer institutions, negatively impacting the recruitment of graduate students and tenure-track faculty members to our program. It also means that graduate students, TTK, and PTK faculty members are forced to spend their own money for convention travel and research support. Graduate students have minimal support for their dissertation research and TTK faculty members have minimal support for their research. Staff members also do not have sufficient support for career enhancement.

Workload and Class Size
- A heavy workload affects faculty, staff, and graduate students. The size of the major means larger class sizes for many TTK and PTK faculty members and graduate student instructors. The smaller numbers of TTK faculty members in relation to the number of undergraduate and graduate students also means higher teaching and service loads. Apart from the performance and writing-intensive classes, COMM majors have few opportunities to complete seminars in classes with enrollments under 35, eroding the teaching-learning ideals of the university.

- The advising office is also understaffed given the volume of appointments for one advisor and a second who provides part-time advising support. The business office with two exempt staff is stretched with the large number of employees in the department (approximately 120 across the department), the increase in grant applications, three revenue-generating programs (GSIT, EEF, and Shady Grove), and the expansion of the Oral Communication Program.

- The normal teaching load for Ph.D. students is four classes per academic year, which is more than the normal load in other ARHU departments. Many students also pick up overloads each year, which can erode time-to-degree and overwork the graduate students who are also full-time students.

Workplace Climate
- The department continues to address concerns with workplace climate. The low salaries and stipends as well as the heavy workload exacerbate climate issues. Other issues were raised during our climate initiative in FY17, our strategic planning process in FY18, and the chair's review in FY18. These include: the need to ensure that all members of the department (TTK, PTK, graduate students, and staff) feel included and feel as if they have a voice in department matters; the need for transparency in departmental decision making; the need for greater clarity and transparency with the promotion processes; the need to address space constraints in the department, especially for those who share offices; the need for efficiency and accuracy with business office transactions; the need to build more trust and positive engagement across areas of the department (research areas); and the need to build community across the department.

Diversity of Under-Represented Minority Faculty Members
- The department has yet to make significant advances in diversifying its instructional faculty (TTK and PTK faculty members and graduate students) in terms of under-represented minorities (URMs). Approximately ten percent of TTK faculty members, eight percent of PTK faculty members, and 19 percent of Ph.D. students meet URM criteria.

Revenue-Generating Programs Running Deficits
- The department's two revenue-generating programs are running deficits. The department's program at the Universities Shady Grove (B.A. degree) and the Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation (M.P.S. degree) are not covering the costs of administering

these programs and/or the costs of instruction. None of the salaries for these programs are hard budgeted, which means the revenue from tuition has to cover the costs of instruction and administration. In both cases, the revenue generated from tuition is not covering the costs of administering the programs. A dip in enrollment for GSIT in FY18 disrupted GSIT's gradual expansion of enrollment numbers. The increase in tuition costs did not cover this dip in numbers. To be viable programs, the enrollment needs to grow for both programs and the costs of instruction needs to be reduced.

Lack of Community for Undergraduate Students and COMM Alums

- Undergraduate students represent the largest constituency in the department, yet the department has not devoted sufficient energy to building a strong sense of community with its majors. Public Relations students have a stronger sense of community because of their shared classes but the department has yet to build a similar community with the majors as a whole. And without that sense of community, the ability to build relationships with our alums is hindered. The department has yet to develop a vision for strengthening such relationships with undergraduate students and our COMM alums.

OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Location

- Given the importance of Communication research and the past partnerships already established, the department is poised to strengthen relationships with federal and state institutions and other museums in our area (e.g., Department of Health and Human Services, the National Museum of the American Indian, the Holocaust Museum, Belmont-Paul Women's Equality Center, Rainbow History Project) as well as health agencies, archives, public relations firms, and other organizations. Such partnerships can open up opportunities for students and faculty and also provide opportunities to pursue external funding.

- The department also wishes to forge more collaborations with other colleges, schools, and departments on campus to enhance its interdisciplinary research and teaching-learning opportunities.

Popularity of the Communication Degree

- At a time when universities are seeing a decline in humanities majors, the enrollments in communication departments continue to hold strong. The American Academy for the Arts & Sciences reported that communication represents the only humanities discipline that has shown an increase in undergraduate degrees. Our enrollment numbers have remained steady over the past five years. We are the largest major in the College of Arts & Humanities and remain among the top 10 majors at UMD. In 2018, *The Princeton Review* ranked the field of communication second to "Computer Science" as a "Top 10 College Major . . . . based on research covering job prospects, alumni salaries, and popularity." A demand exists thus for communication graduates with bachelor degrees, explaining why so many of our graduates secure jobs in a diversity of areas after graduation: "business,

14

advertising, human resources, public relations, government, education, media, and social services."(1)

- A demand also exists for Ph.D. graduates in Communication. As previously shown, our Ph.D. graduates are hired in tenure-track positions, some at peer and aspirational peer programs, and others are working in a diversity of careers in health research, politics and government, academic administration, and non-profit positions.

Increase in Tenure-Track Faculty Members
- Since our last strategic plan in 2010, we have increased our TTK faculty members from 16 to 21. This increase has reduced the student-TTK faculty ratio from 51:1 to 40:1. This increase has led to more TTK faculty members in the undergraduate classroom.

Number of Communication Alums
- Given the size of our major, we have a large community of COMM alums working across the United States and in many countries worldwide. Building stronger relationships with our alums will provide important resources for our students, our department, the college, and the university as a whole. Many of these alums have been most successful in starting their own businesses, working in local, state, and federal government agencies, producing films and documentaries, serving in the military, forging careers in the news media, working for NGOs and philanthropic organizations, supporting the work of health care organizations, and entering careers in public relations, business, marketing, and sales.

Strong STEM Focus at UMD
- UMD is well known for its STEM focus, opening up opportunities for collaboration with Communication. Communication scholars are moving into the realm of digital humanities, data analytics, augmented and virtual reality, and neuroscience. Opportunities for collaboration exist between Communication scholars and UMD's MITH, Graphics and Visual Informatics Laboratory, Program in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science, the Language Science Center, the School of Information Science, the School of Public Health, among others. Developing relationships with these STEM programs will foster research collaborations for faculty and students and open up more opportunities for pursuing external funding.

THREATS
Diminishing Hard-Budget Support from the State of Maryland
- The budget reductions have reduced the hard-budget support for our graduate assistant and PTK stipends. The department is consequently having to raise more soft funds to cover the costs of GA and PTK stipends; soft funds also cover most of the costs of our PTK

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[1] "Communication and Humanities Degrees," American Academy for the Arts & Sciences, 2018, https://www.amacad.org/content/research/dataForumEssay.aspx?i=22869; and "Top Ten College Majors," *The Princeton Review*, 2018, https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/top-ten-college-majors.

instruction. The diminishing hard-budget support for PTK faculty members and GAs also means that when merit money is allocated, minimal merit support is provided to increase the stipends for GAs or PTK faculty members. The reduction in hard-budget funds for GA and PTK stipends means that the department has had to reduce the support provided to GAs for dissertation research. The department has also not been able to increase convention travel for employees.

- The ratio of undergraduate students to TTK faculty (40:1) means that the department is having to raise a sizeable amount in soft money to cover the costs of instruction for the major. The small size of the department's tenure-track faculty in relation to its large population of undergraduate majors presents a financial hardship for the department and results in large class sizes (required classes often have 100 or more students and the average class size for non-performance classes and non-writing-intensive classes is 35 for TTK faculty members and 45 for PTK faculty members). With more TTK lines, the department's reliance on soft funds to pay for delivering the major would lessen and we could eventually reduce the size of our classes.

- The reduction of hard-budget support means the department cannot properly staff its Undergraduate Studies Office, inhibiting the amount of advising support we can offer to our undergraduate majors and overburdening our 1.5 FTE advisors. NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) recommends one advisor for every 300 majors.

Reduction in Retention Raises and Salary Compression Support
- UMD has offered support for salary compression and ARHU has offered past support for retention. Yet, the limits in such support moving forward will negatively affect TTK faculty retention as more of our colleagues will receive offers from peer and aspirational peer institutions.

Reduction in Support for COMM at Universities of Shady Grove
- The shifts in distributing tuition revenue (e.g., loss of revenue from students who transfer from UMCP to Shady Grove) and the increase in other charges (e.g., rent) have led to an increase in budget deficits in the COMM Shady Grove program.

Insufficient Support for the Oral Communication Program
- The original agreement for delivering COMM 107 no longer provides the support needed to run this general education requirement. The cost the department receives per class ($6000) over 88 sections does not allow the department to pay PTK instructors a competitive stipend and provide sufficient support for administering the oral communication program.

Space Limitations
- The department's space limitations mean that approximately 20 PTK instructors are sharing one large room and 25 graduate students are sharing one large room. Several staff members are required to share one room. Approximately 20 GSIT instructors share one

desk in one room. The CHRC lacks the space needed to conduct research for its grant-supported research. The RCPCCL does not have any space allocated to it. The OCC has a small space to accommodate the nearly thousand students who visit each year. And the department is in need of more classroom space and community space. Members of the departmental community report that the lack of space contributes to departmental climate issues.

PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Priority One—Bolster Excellence in Research and Teaching-Learning: The goal is to build on the department's excellence in research and teaching-learning.

Strategies:

- The Center for Health and Risk Communication is sponsoring a department-wide research program each year that creates research teams among faculty members, graduate students, and undergraduate students.
- The Rosenker Center for Political Communication & Civic Leadership integrates graduate students and undergraduate students in the work of the *Voices of Democracy Journal* and the *Recovering Democracy Archives: Speech Recovery Project*. Faculty and students are also involved in events designed to foster productive deliberation in support of the public good.
- The Oral Communication Program involves faculty and graduate students in pedagogy research.
- The department will co-host (with the Department of English) the Rhetoric Society of America Institute in the summer of 2019.
- TTK faculty members are working together on implementing the revised undergraduate curriculum to enhance the coordination of the four different concentrations.
- TTK faculty members applying for large research grants are eligible to request graduate student support for one semester to prepare a grant application.
- The department provides graduate student support to TTK faculty members to edit journals.
- The department routinely approves of course releases as part of grant applications from TTK faculty members.
- The TLTC is presenting workshops in COMM, targeted to departmental requests and interests in enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Priority Two—Enhance Community Climate: The goal is to take further steps to improve departmental climate.

Strategies:

- Put into practice productive strategies of *public deliberation and active listening* where every member of the community feels empowered and supported to engage in deliberations about departmental initiatives.
- Enhance positive relations between faculty, graduate students, and staff by providing more opportunities for engagement.
- Consider unique issues facing the different members of the department (TTK and PTK faculty members, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students).
- Involve PTK instructors and staff more fully in the departmental community.
- Foster a culture of appreciation across the department.
- Add a new department award for a member whose actions enhance departmental climate.
- Enhance the colloquium series to promote positive community engagement.
- Create greater transparency with promotion criteria and department decision-making.
- Foster research and teaching-learning incubators (research collaborations, sharing of research, and teaching ideas).
- Create opportunities for enhanced engagement between faculty and undergraduate students.
- Solidify a process for assigning mentors and conducting peer reviews for PTK faculty.
- Strengthen the efficiency of the business office by revamping the travel reimbursement process.

Priority Three—Implement New Undergraduate Curriculum: The goal is to implement the new curriculum and concentrations and to build excitement around teaching-learning in the department.

Strategies:

- Create teams to plan, teach, and assess new curriculum (required courses) and the new concentrations.
- Build positive energy around teaching the new undergraduate curriculum.
- Prioritize the quality of teaching-learning in the department by committing to the Fearless Teaching Framework (https://tltc.umd.edu/fearless) and support instructor participation in the TLTC workshops.
- Foster a research environment for undergraduate students in order to socialize them for graduate study.
- Reinstitute course directors for classes taught by graduate students and PTK faculty members.
- Enhance our specializations in health and science communication, media and digital and communication, political communication and public advocacy, and public relations.
- Create a process for approving new courses; streamline the number of seminar courses; regularize more 498 courses (as approved); omit courses no longer taught; and update names of courses where relevant.
- Encourage more undergraduate students to complete internships.

- Enhance our course offerings in service learning and create criteria for turning existing courses into applied and service-learning courses.

Priority Four: Solidify Strategies to Enhance Departmental Innovation and Revenue Generation: The goal is to increase revenue for the department and to make revenue-generating programs profitable.

Strategies:

- Increase enrollment and decrease expenses with two of the department's revenue-generating programs: GSIT and UM Shady Grove.
- Enhance recruitment for the Graduate Certificate in Professional Communication: Enhanced English Fluency.
- Pursue more internal grants at UMD in support of pilot research projects that will be attractive to external funders.
- Increase soft funds through summer and winter term teaching and Freshman Seminar to raise stipends for graduate students and PTK instructors, to enhance travel and research support for graduate students and TTK/PTK faculty members, and to increase development support for staff.
- Develop a strategic plan for enhancing development activities, fund-raising opportunities, and alumni relations.
- Feature summer workshops targeting professionals in oral communication, writing, and interpreting/translation.
- Provide support for the pursuit of external grants and contracts.
- Reallocate some of the tasks in the business office (e.g., travel) to provide more support for grants and contracts.
- Explore the development of departmental textbooks.

Priority Five: Define Hiring Priorities in the Department: The goal is to create priorities that will guide the future hires in the department of TTK and PTK faculty members and staff in support of the department's research and teaching mission.

Strategies:

- Increase the number of TTK faculty members to reduce instructional costs and to maintain and build the department's research reputation; the target goal is 30 TTK faculty members by FY28.
- Define hiring priorities for TTK faculty members to advance the research and teaching mission of the department.
- Prioritize the hiring of under-represented minorities in new TTK and PTK faculty hires.
- Strategize the teaching assignments for TTK and PTK faculty members given the new curriculum at UMD College Park and the need for additional TTK faculty to teach at UMD Shady Grove.

- Prioritize positions that fulfill the strategic plans of COMM, ARHU, and UMD.
- Prioritize positions that enhance the creation of community partnerships and/or external funding opportunities.
- Prioritize adding a new undergraduate advisor position.

Priority Six: Enhance Campus, Community, and Government Partnerships:

The goal is to establish additional campus and community partnerships.

Strategies:

- Create a task force to strategize and promote partnerships across campus (and UMB) and within the larger Washington, DC and Baltimore metro areas, involving research collaborations, internships and service-learning opportunities, philanthropic and community support.
- Use the COMM Centers to enhance community engagement.
- Envision global partnerships with universities internationally.