

Contact: Rachel Boon

REQUEST TO TERMINATE THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Approve the request by Iowa State University to terminate the Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office staff reviewed the proposal and recommend approval.

Description of program. Speech Communication (SP CM), a major in the Department of English, was designed to help students develop their understanding and appreciation of the human communication process and enhance their oral and written communication practice.

Reason for proposed termination. While enrollment in several of the skill-based SP CM courses continues to be robust, interest in the SP CM major has been declining for at least the past five years. There are currently fewer than 10 majors in the SP CM cohort. Competing majors like Communication Studies (COMST) are viewed as offering a broader, more workplace-applicable course of study; because SP CM focuses heavily on rhetoric, it is considered less appealing among prospective students. The department is therefore requesting that this program be permanently discontinued.

In addition to the major, SP CM has offered general education courses as well as a SP CM minor, which would be retained under the current proposal. The specific courses in the SP CM major to be eliminated are:

SP CM 305 Semantics
SP CM 313 Communication in Classrooms and Workshops
SP CM 322 Argumentation, Debate, and Critical Thinking
SP CM 327 Persuasion
SP CM 404 Seminar
SP CM 412 Rhetorical Criticism
SP CM 416 History of American Public Address
SP CM 495 Directing Speech Activities
SP CM 497 Senior Seminar
SP CM 499 Communication Internship

Effect on current students. The department has devised a plan that will allow current SP CM majors to complete their degrees within three years. Using the SP CM courses that remain and substitutions when needed, advisors will work with these students to define pathways that achieve their learning and career goals while also meeting graduation requirements.

Application, Enrollment and Completion Trends.

	Applications	Enrollment	Completions
2022	16	10	4
2021	16	10	8
2020	19	18	4
2019	10	14	10
2018	18	20	11

Impact on resources. The department is expected to save \$75,780 by eliminating the ten courses above. No reductions in staffing are anticipated as a result of this change. Faculty and staff who currently teach courses in the SP CM major are well-versed in their subject areas and teach a wide variety of other courses, so the additional teaching capacity created by discontinuing the major can be redirected to fill gaps left by other cuts.

Impact on workforce. Workforce needs are not expected to be affected because of the existing undergraduate Communications and Communication Studies programs at all three Regent Universities. In addition, the retained SP CM minor will still address the oral skills sought by employers.

Alternative programs. The Speech Communication program was the only one of its kind in the state. ISU will continue to offer the more popular COMST major. In addition, SUI offers its own B.A. in Communication Studies, and UNI offers a B.A. in Communication.

Effective date of termination. August 2023.