

Contact: Rachel Boon

REQUEST FOR A DEPARTMENT NAME CHANGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA: FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES TO DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to change the department name from the Department of Communication Studies to Department of Communication and Media.

Executive Summary: The proposed department change will allow for more transparent department offerings and to clearly communicate options to existing and future students.

The Council of Provosts and Board Office reviewed this request and recommend approval.

Background:

Description of program. The Communication Studies department is an umbrella department which includes undergraduate and graduate programs in diverse areas: Digital Media, Communication, Journalism, Public Relations, Performance Studies and Communication Teaching. The Interactive Digital Studies program is housed in the department as well.

Proposed name. Department of Communication and Media

Reason for proposed change. The current name, Department of Communication Studies, does not clearly reflect what the program does or what programs are offered. The name of the degree a student earns also does not necessarily clarify what he/she studied or the skill set obtained. In addition, in today's world we deal with a convergence of communication where traditional media, social media, organizational and interpersonal communication are influenced by, and in turn influence, each other.

Consistency with accreditation requirements. The renaming will not affect program accreditation.

Effect on program configuration. There will be no change other changes that emanate from the new departmental name proposed.

Effect on students. There will be very little impact – the only change is the department name. No new programs, majors or minors will be necessary or are planned in relation to the change. Future students may profit from the new name since it will more clearly reflect their qualifications.

Effect on resources. The proposed change will not require any significant new resources. The only additional costs incurred will be for rebranding efforts, letterhead, new brochures and signage.

Date of implementation. Upon approval by the Board of Regents.