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October 27, 2008

PROPOSAL TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Title of Proposal:

Rename the "Ph.D. in Communications" to "Ph.D. in Communications and Media"

Sponsors:

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Brief Description:

The College of Media (formerly College of Communications) proposes to change the name of its Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Communications to a Ph.D. in Communications and Media. This redesignation of the degree reflects the change in the name of its academic home. "Communications" in the title represents the name of the degree from its origin in 1947, while "and Media" indicates its location in a recently re-named College.

Justification:

The Ph.D. in Communications has a distinguished history. It was the first doctorate in communications in North America and the program is known around the world. 300 alumni with Ph.D.'s in Communications have high-level positions throughout the field in teaching, research, and administration. Treating this legacy with integrity, and not creating confusion with future admissions, have been important reasons for keeping "communications" central in renaming the degree.

The University has renamed the College of Communications and the Department of Speech Communication. Given this reality, the most straightforward way to reflect this new nomenclature is by retaining the historic name "communications" and adding the College of Media's name to it, hence the "Ph.D. in Communications and Media" to replace the existing "Ph.D. in Communications."

Using "and" in the degree title is not atypical. 21 Ph.D.'s at UIUC include "and". Deleting it is unworkable. "Media Communications" is ungrammatical. "Communications Media" has no clear meaning. In fact, to our knowledge, no program has either name for its Ph.D. And reversing the two ("Media and Communications") does not represent our curriculum, faculty, and doctoral students as well as "Communications" or "Communications and Media" do. Also it ties the Ph.D. too closely to the program in Media Studies in the College. And it signals more disjuncture from history than is accurate, since there is no current change in curriculum or mission.

Budgetary and Staff Implications:

The name change has no budgeting or staffing implications.

a. Additional staff and dollars needed

None

b. Internal reallocations (e.g., change in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ration, etc.)

None


c. Effect on course enrollment in other departments and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments.

This proposal has the agreement of Barbara Wilson, Head, Department of Communication. Its proposed "Ph.D. in Communication" reflects its academic home, with equivalence to the proposed "Ph.D. in Communications and Media" as indicating its academic home.


d. Impact on library, computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.

None

Clearances:


Department Unit Head

Oct. 28, 2008
Date


Dean of College

10-29-08
Date


Graduate College

11/5/2008
Date

Provost

Date