

Serial Number #19-20-7D

TO: President David Dooley

FROM: Bahram Nassersharif, Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached BILL titled, the Curricular and Standards Committee Report #2019-20-2: Communication Studies Accelerated Online Degree Completion Program, is forwarded for your consideration.
2. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on October 24, 2019.
3. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
4. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective November 14, 2019 three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; or (3) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum.



Bahram Nassersharif
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

October 24, 2019

ENDORSEMENT

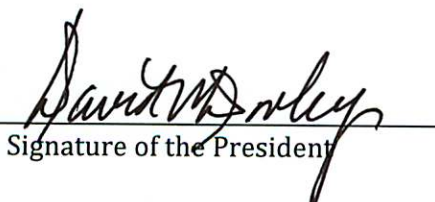
TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

FROM: President of the University

a. Approved ☒.

b. Approved subject to Notice of the Council on Postsecondary Education ____.

c. Disapproved ____.


Signature of the President

11.7.19
(date)

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND FACULTY SENATE
October 17, 2019

Faculty Senate Curriculum and Standards Committee
Report 2019-2020-02

At the September 26, 2019 meeting of the Curriculum and Standards Committee, the following matters were considered and are now presented to the Faculty Senate.

SECTION II
Curricular Matters Which Require Confirmation by the
Faculty Senate

PROGRAMS CHANGES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES:

Communication Studies Department: (Appendix I)
Addition of an Accelerated Online Degree Completion Program in COM:

The Department of Communication Studies seeks an innovative path to enhance student success, including recruitment, retention, and timely graduation, through offering their major online. By creating an alternate strategy of degree completion, the Department extends the learning environments available to our students through mobilizing our technological capacities. Successful online learners will reflect well on the institution through their developed persistence and self-reliance – necessary qualities for achievement in this environment. The program incorporates specific synergies with the Academic Plan 2016-2021.

Communication Studies plans to move forward with an online degree completion program. Currently the initial implementation of the program is expected to primarily target CCRI graduates with a Communication background. Also, the program will follow the RN to BS model of **7-week sessions**. In addition, we expect that students in the major will be able to complete their remaining General Education requirements through courses currently offered as part of RN to BS.

Notice of Change for: Online Degree Completion in Communication Studies
(Accelerated Online Program)

Date: August 30, 2019

A. PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Name of institution

University of Rhode Island

2. Name of department, division, school or college

Department: Communication Studies, Harrington School of Communication and Media
College: Arts and Sciences

3. Intended initiation date of program change. Include anticipated date for granting first degrees or certificates, if appropriate.

Initiation date: Jan. 1, 2020

First degree date: May 15, 2022

4. Intended location of the program.

Dept. of Communication Studies, online administered through Kingston Campus

5. Summary description of proposed program (not to exceed 2 pages).

The Department of Communication Studies seeks an innovative path to enhance student success, including recruitment, retention, and timely graduation, through offering their major online. By creating an alternate strategy of degree completion, the Department extends the learning environments available to our students through mobilizing our technological capacities. Successful online learners will reflect well on the institution through their developed persistence and self-reliance – necessary qualities for achievement in this environment. The program incorporates specific synergies with the Academic Plan 2016-2021.

Communication Studies has been active in online learning for the past two decades.

We developed online classes and online debates in the 1990s, and since have been active in promoting WebCT and SAKAI. Several members of the department have

taken a leadership role in developing online pedagogy at URI. The majority of regularly offered courses in Communication Studies are approved for online delivery; we offer at least 10 online courses per semester and more in the summer. COM100 online is part of RN to BS, and we offered one of the first J-Term classes online in Winter 2019.

Communication Studies plans to move forward with an online degree completion program. Currently the initial implementation of the program is expected to primarily target CCRI graduates with a Communication background. Also, the program will follow the RN to BS model of 7-week sessions. In addition, we expect that students in the major will be able to complete their remaining General Education requirements through courses currently offered as part of RN to BS.

Students will transfer 45 or more credits from CCRI. The program will also be available to students from other institutions who can transfer in 45, or more credits. These students may enter the program with 15 transfer credits in COM. They will need to complete at least 24 COM credits at the 300 and 400 level.

In the case of CCRI, these students will be able transfer up to 18 General Education credits, requiring another 22 GenEd credits (including 15 credits tied to specific GenEd outcomes). Students will be able to complete these GenEd credits through offerings in the RN to BS program—which runs parallel and is well established at URI.

This will leave 14 elective credits for a total of 60 credits needed for the 120 credits required for graduation. At least 42 credits have to be at the 300+ level (including 24 credits in COM).

We expect that students need a minimum of 2 years for program completion. That means we will offer 8 COM courses (24 cr.) for the first cohort. These courses are already approved for online delivery but will need to be adapted to the 7-week format.

Based on the current COM Studies curriculum, students will need these courses at a minimum:

- COM381 (Research Methods), 382 (Communication Theory), 383 (Rhetorical Methods) (required)
- 2 300-level COM Electives (COM3xx)
- 3 400-level COM Electives (COM4xx)

Our current plan is to offer 12 cr. in COM during each year to serve the initial cohort; additional offerings will be available for new cohorts.

Year 1:

2 x COM 3xx, COM381 and 382

Year 2:

COM383; 3 x COM4xx

We have met with CCRI on several occasions, including a recent meeting with Dean Brophy-Baermann. CCRI is committed to promoting the program to their graduating and recently graduated students. It will also offer initial advising in coordination with URI.

We have applied for significant seed funding from the Provost's Office, which was awarded on August 24, 2019.

Program Development: Pre-proposal was approved by JCAP in 2017.

6. If applicable, please include the existing URI catalog language and proposed catalog changes **indicated in Track Changes**.

The following catalog language will be added to the course description of the B.A. in Communication Studies:

Online Degree Completion in Communication Studies

Program Description: The program offers students who have completed 45, or more credits the opportunity to join the Bachelor of Arts program in Communication Studies and complete the remaining requirements for their undergraduate degree completely online. Students will transfer a minimum of 45 credits to the University of Rhode Island. These students may enter the program with up to 15 transfer credits in Communication Studies. Significant course work in Communication, Public Relations, Writing, Journalism, Advertising or Film is preferred, but not required. They will need to complete at least 24 COM credits at the 300 and 400 level.

Students will be able transfer up to 18 General Education credits, requiring another 22 GenEd credits at the University of Rhode Island. They will be able to complete remaining General Education credits through course offerings in the RN to BS program, which runs parallel to the Degree Completion in COM program.

Admission Requirements: Applications may be submitted after completing 45 credits at an accredited Postsecondary Institution with a 2.4 minimum cumulative grade point average. If an applicant has received an associate degree from a regionally accredited institution, applicants must have earned a minimum **2.4 GPA** (on a 4.0 scale), be in good standing and eligible to return to institutions previously attended. Associate degree applicants are not required to submit a high school transcript. Applicants seeking readmissions complete the readmission form.

Application to include a personal statement, current transcript, example of scholarly writing and two letters of recommendation.

Degree Requirements: Degree requirements for participants in the Degree Completion Program in Communication Studies are the same as for students completing a conventional four-year undergraduate degree in Communication Studies as outlined in the University of Rhode Island catalog.

7. Signature of the President

David M. Dooley