

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

July 1, 2004

To: Gregory Palermo, Chair
Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Council

From: Michael Mendelson, Chair
ISUComm Ad Hoc Steering Committee

Cc: Provost, Ben Allen
Associate Provost for Academic Programs, Dave Holger
Faculty Senate President, Sanjeev Agarwal
Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee Chair, John Schroeter

This report summarizes ISUComm's major activities during Spring 2004. It also outlines plans for the Faculty Senate (FS) discussion of the ISUComm curriculum in Fall 2004. Because we will detail recent activities in a report to the FS prior to the fall discussion, this bi-annual report to the Academic Affairs Council will be brief.

Summary of Spring 2004 Activities

First-year communication pilot courses. We offered four pilot sections of the ISUComm version of English 105. All sections emphasized WOVE pedagogy, or the integration of written, oral, visual, and electronic communication. They also coordinated readings and assignments around the theme of the "informed citizen," and all were taught in a Learning Community format, with all four sections periodically meeting together to establish a shared community. A comprehensive assessment of these pilot sections, conducted by RISE, will be presented in our fall report to the Faculty Senate.

In Fall 2004, we will offer approximately 25 sections of English 104/5 taught in an ISUComm format. In preparation for these courses, we are providing extensive training in WOVE pedagogy for the new ISUComm teachers, with a series of workshops in May, another in August, and continued meetings throughout the school year. We are also in discussions with the LAS Curriculum Committee about possible experiments with a four-credit course that would "amalgamate" English 104/5, elements of SpComm 212, and Library 160.

Consultants. ISUComm Consultants offered communication-instruction workshops to Engineering, Education, and Design, as well as to the university at-large through the CTE. Department-level activities continued in Engineering and began in Education. The Consultants also held discussions with college curriculum committees in Education, Engineering, and FCS, and with faculty from LAS. During these meetings, plans were made for the consultants to focus on a limited number of colleges and departments in FY05 and to concentrate their attention on a finite set of communication abilities particularly requested by our host departments and colleges. A review of the consulting process will be included in the FS report.

Additional Activities. In partnership with the Office of Admissions, we continued discussions of curricular integration with the Iowa Community Colleges. ISUComm was the keynote topic at the annual Iowa Community College (CC) Conference, and we made additional presentations at the Iowa CC English Teachers' Roundtable. In addition, we included four teachers from DMACC in the WOVE teacher-training workshops offered in May and August.

Finally, ISUComm hosted the first national discussion of multi-modal (or WOVE) communication studies at the annual convention of the Rhetoric Society of America (RSA). We were invited to offer a three-day workshop in WOVE pedagogy for teachers around the country at the RSA conference in 2005.

Outline of the ISUComm Report to the Faculty Senate

Prior to the discussion of the ISUComm curricular plan by the FS in the fall, ISUComm will deliver a report on the pilot projects and assessment data from both the foundation-courses and communication-across-the-curriculum initiative involving the consultants. The basic structure of this report was outlined by the FS in the ISUComm motions passed in Spring 2003. The nature of the report and the schedule for its presentation was corroborated by the Senate's officers on April 6, 2004.

The Report. The ISUComm report to the FS will involve information presented in three related formats. First, a written report of approximately 20 pages, including a summary of the RISE assessment, will be delivered to the FS in early Fall 2004. The report will focus on the ISUComm curricular plan, including the new approach to the foundation courses and the communication-across-the-curriculum component for communication instruction in the major. The report will culminate in catalog copy that will operate as the "voting" document representing the ISUComm curricular plan.

Second, supplemental information about all aspects of ISUComm will be available on the ISUComm Web site, and the written report will contain regular references to Web links where appropriate information can be found. Third, on the floor of the Senate, we will make a ten-minute PowerPoint presentation about the ISUComm curricular plan and answer any questions. Taken together, these three formats—written report, Web site, and PPT presentation—should provide Faculty Senators with the information needed to deliberate effectively about ISUComm.

The Schedule. The ISUComm Steering Committee will deliver its written report to the FS Curriculum Committee on the first day of the Fall 2004 term. We will also send copies to the FS President and to AAC. The FSCC is alert to this schedule and will take up ISUComm at its first fall meeting. Assuming approval by FSCC, and subsequently by the AAC and the Executive Board, the ISUComm initiative could come to the Senate floor in early fall, in time for the ISUComm-related catalog copy to be included in the 2005-'07 catalog.

We would be pleased to respond to any questions, and we would appreciate any suggestions that might enhance the process of reviewing ISUComm. We will also alert AAC to any significant developments in our plans that might occur prior to the delivery of our curricular report in the fall.