

Department of Communication

Case Study for the Protection of the Introductory Course

Prepared and Submitted at the Request of the Teaching and Learning Council of the
National Communication Association

Dr. Joshua Frye

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beginning in the 2021-2022 Academic Year, the introductory course in oral communication (at Cal Poly Humboldt, COMM 100: Fundamentals of Speech Communication), met several threats. First an external threat appeared and subsequently an internal threat. The external threat was the passing and implementation of Assembly Bill 928 in the California Legislature. The internal threat that followed a few years later was the reorganization of the General Education curriculum at Cal Poly Humboldt, spearheaded by a new administrator in Academic Affairs. The faculty in the Department of Communication at Cal Poly Humboldt self-organized and mobilized quickly to an all hands-on-deck status. The survival, stature, and integrity of the introductory course would become an ongoing departmental agenda item. As of this writing, that is still the case. So far, the faculty in the Department of Communication at Cal Poly Humboldt have been successful with their manifold strategic responses to these threats, but the survival, stature, and integrity of the introductory course still hangs in the balance. This case study along with the various appendices are intended to be of service to other campuses and colleagues who may be facing—or will face—similar threats in the future. The defense of the discipline and the very curricular foundation on which it was built is the overarching concern.

INTRODUCTION

SWOT analyses are not exactly expected as a necessary administrative maneuver for academic departments. Most academic departments deal with long-term and short-term goals, resource, space, and personnel issues, educational programming, and a plethora of private, professional, and institutional hopes and fears. Ongoing monitoring and managing far-flung external and improbable internal threats were not a core part of our training as academics, nor was it imagined that it would become a regular part of our departmental business conversation.

Having been educated in the longstanding history of the sunny peaks and dark valleys regarding the politics and value of teaching the practice of public speaking in the western world, never would I have imagined that my colleagues and I would find ourselves in the precarious position of mounting a multi-year concerted defense of its credibility, value, and role. I like to imagine we're past the historical low points where public speaking was perceived as unvaluable, or as has more often been the case, the opposite—too dangerous to powerful parochial interests.

The introductory course has celebrated an uncontroversial required and recommended component of a baccalaureate degree for some time now in the contemporary United States. We are all familiar with the recurring statistics from various sources that emphasize the utility and demand for communication skills in the workforce (Association of American Colleges and Universities; The American Management Association; The Bureau of Labor Statistics, etc.), not to mention life writ large. Yet, beginning in 2021, this was precisely the situation we faced at Cal Poly Humboldt—myriad administrative forces with significant political power attacking the need, value, uniqueness and credibility of public speaking and those with the qualifications to do so.

Sadly, as those of us who have received an education and advanced degrees in the field of communication know, this is not a particularly new situation when considering the long arc of history. Rather, it is a very old situation that appears to recur intermittently and manifests with diverse challenges in particular political, economic, cultural, and institutional contexts. These moments (call them rhetorical situations?) then require the very expertise we have obtained in a kind of bizarre and surreal public demonstration of the value of such expertise, all the while individuals and institutions flaunt the statistics of the importance of communication skills on the sidelines without seeing the irony of attacking courses of public speaking and the qualified educators who teach such skills to future citizens, artists, scientists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, managers, and politicians.

BRIEF HISTORY

Within the state of California, there are three distinct systems of higher education: (1) The California Community Colleges (CCC) system with 116 campuses; (2) The California State University (CSU) system with 23 campuses; and (3) The University of California (UC) system with 10 campuses. AB 928 [Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act of 2021] was introduced to facilitate a more efficient curricular pathway for students who have earned an associate degree for transfer to a baccalaureate program in EITHER a CSU or UC campus. The problem is that the CSU and UC offer different GE program requirements.

Oral communication is considered to be one of the foundational GE courses within the California State University system. It is one of the “Golden Four” courses that make up core competencies for future success in college and beyond. The notion of eliminating (or consolidating) the one lower division oral communication skills requirement in any institution within the CCC or CSU for the sake of transfer “efficiency” is highly problematic, particularly at a time in our world and national culture when freedom of expression, well-evidenced, organized, informative communication, and rational persuasion are so crucial, yet increasingly devalued. Yet, because the introductory course was required within the CCC and CSU but not within the UC, oral communication found itself an easy target for the chopping block in the process of negotiating an effective implementation of AB 928 in the state of California.

The Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) was charged with brokering an agreed-upon implementation plan that would be amenable to system stakeholders. Representatives from the UC system proposed the elimination of the required introductory course in oral communication in public colleges and universities in the state of California or the consolidation of the introductory course with the required

course in English composition. This proposal was intended to make the transfer pathway between a California Community College and the UC streamlined and efficient as students continued their academic journey toward a baccalaureate degree. Yet, according to Title 5, Article 5 within the California Code of Regulations, both written and oral communication competence is required within the GE educational breadth of a baccalaureate earning student within the CSU.

This particular happenstance became an external threat with genuine exigence as statewide negotiations for the implementation of AB 928 would immanently affect students, faculty, and communication programming across the state within 139 campuses.

Shortly after this issue was successfully resolved (the introductory course was retained within the required state curriculum and was neither eliminated nor consolidated), another threat, this time internal, emerged. Within our home campus at Cal Poly Humboldt, a new administrator to campus seemed to make it one of their priorities to overhaul the campus-wide GE program. Lo and behold, one of the chief objectives was the broadening of course offerings that could satisfy the Area A (oral communication) requirement within the CSU's Golden 4. This appears to have been motivated by the recent reorganization from the previous identity of Humboldt State University to the new institutional identity as the third Cal Polytechnic university in California following San Luis Obispo and Pomona. The transition to a Cal Poly included the required addition of myriad new programs in areas such as technology, engineering, applied science, and science. As a result of these new programs being developed and brought online, new administrators within Academic Affairs imagined that a complete overhaul of Humboldt's GE program would be a good move in order to facilitate new technical degree programs with higher unit requirements.

STRATEGIC RESPONSES

As these threats loomed large over our departmental business, we aligned on the following set of strategic responses:

Our inward facing communication revolved around developing multipronged strategy and a unified front as a faculty. Our outward facing communication became a divide and conquer strategy with consensus amongst department faculty and consistent messaging to all stakeholders and audiences. Furthermore, for the external threat described above, we opted for the following tactical moves:

External threat

- 1. Environmental scanning...close reading of AB 928*
- 2. Networking within college and university associations and system*
- 3. Writing an official departmental statement (see **Appendix A**) to generate publicity and support on campus for the integrity of the CSU education including the introductory course*
- 4. Working this public support for our position up the ladder to the statewide CSU Academic Senate and then to the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) in CA*
- 5. Building consistent message and encouraged participation and feedback throughout the advocacy process*
- 6. Presenting a resolution (see **Appendix B**) to the Humboldt University Senate and tracked its progress through the system and provided feedback and strategic message coaching to Humboldt State University Senators so they could accurately carry our message further than we could as a department alone*
- 7. Writing a Letter to the Editor (see **Appendix C**) to raise public awareness of the danger of losing an integral component of a liberal arts education and universally valued skill set in California and the U.S.*

Internal threat

- 1. Met with relevant stakeholders such as administrators within Academic Affairs, and faculty colleagues within other colleges and departments, and made appearances with prepared remarks before relevant university committees*
- 2. Drafted MOUs*
- 3. Developed and maintained hardline resistance with messaging focused on a student-centered critique, standard and criteria based (qualifications and assessment)*
- 4. Assessment for public speaking & professional development*
- 5. Networked/organized with other Chairs in system with an eye toward Chancellor's Office liaising if necessary*

KEY RESULTS

Burkean **identification by antithesis** serves as an exemplar with these challenges. Both external and internal threats helped bring our department together in a common struggle. While many if not most academic departments in the contemporary context seem to be in a state of constant internal and external crisis management, it is easy for division and acrimony to take root. If you happen to find yourself in a similar situation, one silver lining is the way in which our faculty fiercely bonded to support each other and work collaboratively with real exigence.

The faculty were able to take a unified public stand against both external and internal threats using multiple strategic responses. Thus far, we have been successful, with caveats. We worked quickly to produce material interventions that would attest to the seriousness and significance with which we apprehended these threats. We were largely successful warding off the elimination or consolidation of the introductory course within the CCC and CSU. This was a major victory.

However, we are still embroiled in an internal battle over the integrity of the introductory course within or own university. While Fundamentals of Oral Communication [COMM 100] has been the sole course offered at Cal Poly Humboldt that would satisfy the Area A Oral Communication requirement for the GE program, language within the CSU does allow autonomy for individual campuses within the system to develop their own programming to satisfy the statewide requirements. Because of the transition to the Cal Poly designation, this flexibility for individual CSU campus GE programming, and the perceived benefit of streamlining GE unit requirements for new programs, a few other programs have been greenlit for offering their own version of the introductory course within their already existing curricular offerings. Both Computer Science and Engineering have been granted this latitude.

Because of this problematic precedent, other programs across campus have begun clamoring to introduce new course proposals that would satisfy the Area A Oral Communication GE requirement. While the Department of Communication has requested that both the Computer Science and Engineering courses be only conditionally approved, we have been endlessly advocating that the university not just open the floodgates to allow other programs to offer courses that would satisfy the Area A Oral Communication GE requirement. This plea has been primarily grounded in the expectation that only qualified instructors with advanced degrees in the field of communication should be teaching these new courses. This is an ongoing battle and there is no clear end in sight.

In the midst of these challenges, we reached out to numerous allies. One of these allies was the Teaching and Learning Council of the National Communication Association. As a result of our situation in California, as well as several other historical moments where the introductory course has been threatened, the TLC brought a new resolution (See **Appendix D**) before the legislative assembly of the NCA. The resolution passed and is now a part of the official public stance of the NCA and a part of our discipline's

ongoing rhetorical history to defend the survival, stature, and integrity of public speaking within institutions of higher learning in the contemporary United States.

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Some of the results of our efforts can be codified with reference to the following symbolic outputs:

Appendix A. Departmental Statement (with petition for institutional colleagues)

Appendix B. Sense of the Senate Resolution

Appendix C. Op-ed letter

See also [online for full content and audio option](#)

Appendix D. NCA Resolution

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Disservice to Students.

Perhaps most importantly, the ongoing and intermittent attacks on the qualified teaching and learning of public speaking are blatantly harmful to students. In colleges and universities, states and statehouses, across the U.S., the core elements of a liberal arts education are suffering sustained casualties. These assaults are both circumstantial as well as strategic, but whichever the case the potential losses are significant. If the introductory course is eliminated from a curriculum there will be widespread effects on faculties and departments of communication and there will be no clearly comparable or equivalent kinds of learning or replacements. It is well-known among communication scholars that fear of public speaking is an irrationally high-ranking fear in the US. The rise of anxiety and communication apprehension in US culture can be attributed to many things including mental health trends and the global Coronavirus pandemic. There is a negative feedback loop that forms wherein university-level students who are not mandated to take the introductory course will surely not seek it out as a preferred elective due to their likely fear, apprehension, and/or anxiety surrounding public speaking. The emotional intelligence repertoire that can be developed by taking courses such as COMM 100 is also noteworthy. Without communication faculty actively critically monitoring the environment (both external and internal) for threats and responding strategically and vociferously, there is greater likelihood that such courses will become less and less attractive and even available.

Death of Expertise.

Professional expertise has been devalued as of late. This appears to be particularly true for certain disciplines such as communication science and communication arts. Broadly speaking, entire liberal arts disciplines such as History, Religious Studies, and Philosophy have been victimized. The attack on the integrity of qualified instructors of public speaking is not a new occurrence. As far back as Plato's *Gorgias* were those who offered counsel in oratory and message-making deemed sophistic and spurious. Yet, in the contemporary US, there is a widespread attack on many academic disciplines, even Plato's. In academic departments of communication where tenure track and adjunct faculty along with instructors in speech communication teach the introductory course, credentials typically include at the very least an advanced degree in the field of communication along with teaching experience. This is not the case for those in other departments authorized by universities and colleges to teach public speaking and oral communication skills courses. If this is a trend with an uptick, not only is it indicative of the cultural malaise and cognitive dissonance with expertise, it is problematic for accountability to students and accrediting agencies. Those shortsighted enough (whether administrators or faculty) to willingly go along with such trends are in jeopardy of undermining the very legitimacy on which a university stands.

Undermining a Robust Freedom of Speech.

The dispersed and concentrated efforts to chip away at the survival, status, and integrity of oral communication skill and an applied education in public speaking is anti-democratic. As rhetorical scholars in our field have observed, at times and in places where democracy is thriving, so too is rhetoric. This is true in our educational systems and our public life. At times and in places where democracy is unhealthy, rhetoric is not welcomed. At a very basic level, the teaching, learning, and practicing of public speaking and all of the topical areas that are within its purview parallel the civic virtues inherent in the 1st Amendment. Instructing college and university students in the art and craft of public speaking offers not only all of the marketable dividends continuously observed by the likes of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the American Management Association, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities, it carries with it an even more fundamentally important responsibility for the continuation of more effective public communication in the pursuit of such lofty things as justice and freedom.

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Based on our experience in the past several years, the following formula might serve as a helpful heuristic that will need to be operationalized and experimented with depending on the particularities of the situation you might find yourself in as the defense of the discipline and the protection of public speaking (and listening) continues into the 21st century:

Finding your Voice

- a. Connecting
- b. Collaborating

Using your Voice

- c. Organizing
- d. Message making
- e. Channeling

Making Sure you are Heard

- f. Volume
- g. Distribution
- h. Reception

To: *Cal Poly* Humboldt Faculty
From: The Faculty of the Communication Department at *Cal Poly* Humboldt and supporting faculty
RE: AB 928
Date: Feb 9, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

It has come to our attention that Oral Communication has been identified as a course that could be terminated or consolidated with another General Education Area A course to facilitate the efficiency of the “seamless transfer” of students between the CCC, CSU, and UC systems of higher education in California. While we are in full agreement with AB 928 intentions to coordinate the efficiency of transferability within and between different public systems of higher education in the state of California, we are writing this letter to vehemently oppose the elimination or consolidation of Oral Communication courses in the negotiation and solidification of AB 928s implementation.

It is our hope that the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senate (ICAS) will find a pathway forward to address transfer process issues without adopting a plan that will require CSU campuses to subtract the crucial existing course requirement wherein transfer students acquire and practice public speaking skills. In many cases, it is the ONE course wherein students have a focused opportunity to learn and practice public speaking before going on to other courses and contexts in their educational careers and in their activities post-college wherein this competency is expected.

The [National Communication Association](#) offers this public policy statement on the role of Communication courses and Communication faculty in General Education:

The National Communication Association supports and defends the inclusion of an oral communication course or courses in college and university General Education Requirements and the instruction of that course or courses by faculty trained in the discipline of Communication. The NCA maintains that student delivery of oral presentations without rigorous training and evaluation by Communication faculty does not constitute Communication competency.

Oral communication is considered to be one of the foundational GE courses within the California State University. It is one of the “Golden Four” courses that make up core competencies for future success in college and beyond. The notion of eliminating (or consolidating) the one lower division oral communication skills requirement in any institution within the CCC or CSU for the sake of transfer "efficiency" is highly problematic, particularly at a time in our world and national culture when freedom of expression, well-evidenced, organized, informative communication, and rational persuasion are so crucial, yet increasingly devalued.

In terms of the most important competencies that a student can acquire at the CCC or as a first and second year student in the CSU to help prepare them for success, oral and written communication, and critical thinking are indispensable. According to the [California Code of Regulations](#), Title 5: Education, Article 5 states that students:

“(a) will have achieved the ability to think clearly and logically, to find and critically examine information, to communicate orally and in writing, and to perform quantitative functions” (5 CCR § 40405).”

This clause addresses the necessary educational breadth (GE) required in any educational institution within the CSU to meet the necessary standards for graduation.

Oral communication competency, written communication competency, and critical thinking are core competencies that ANY college-educated individual should excel at and are used in myriad ways in the rest of their educational journey as well as every day in their personal and professional lives. Indeed, the marks of a college education include articulateness in spoken and written word and critical thinking. This has always been so and the prospect of downgrading, combining, or otherwise diminishing any of these core competencies of a college educated individual is highly problematic.

We note that oral communication skills are vital for the emerging California workforce. Employer surveys consistently show that communication skills are vital for success in every occupation. A recent American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) survey found that 89 percent of employers want *more* emphasis on oral communication skills in university education.

Colleagues representing the dozens of CCCs, CSUs, Communication courses, and faculty on the ICAS will grapple with particular concerns about how AB 928 will be implemented in the weeks and months ahead. At *Cal Poly Humboldt*, our Communication faculty know that public speaking is vital to our students’ success. We need a GE curriculum that meets our students where they are educationally and experientially. Furthermore, Oral Communication skills are foundational for student success as articulated in [WSCUC’s core competencies](#):

Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to document that students acquire knowledge and develop higher-order intellectual skills appropriate to the level of the degree earned. This documentation is a matter of validating institutional quality and providing accountability as well as setting the conditions for improvement of learning.

CFR 2.2a states that undergraduate programs must “ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking.”

If folks think that oral communication is not essential, all one needs to do is look at the level of national political discourse to note that we have lost our abilities culturally to engage in

constructive dialogue and communication. If anything, it seems that more and better training in oral communication traditions and skills is essential at this historical moment.

We look forward to learning more about how discussions of AB928 unfold, and we thank you for taking time to read this letter, and your work on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joshua J. Frye, Professor of Communication

Maxwell Schnurer, Professor of Communication

Scott T. Paynton, Professor and Program Leader, Communication

Laura K. Hahn, Professor of Communication

Romi C. Hitchcock Tinseth, Lecturer, Communication

Aaron Donaldson, Lecturer, Communication

Ross Mackinney, Lecturer, Communication

Vicky Sama, Chair, Department of Communication and Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

Kirby Moss, Assistant Professor, Journalism

Andrea Juarez, Lecturer, Journalism and Mass Communication

Deidre Pike, Associate Professor, Journalism and Mass Communication

Jessie Cretser-Hartenstein, Assistant Professor, Journalism and Mass Communication

Cliff Berkowitz, Lecturer, Journalism and Mass Communication & Faculty Advisor for KRFH (student run radio)

L. Rae Robison, Assoc. Professor of Theatre

Russell Gaskell, Faculty, Department of World Languages and Cultures-Spanish Program

Michael Goodman, Department of Philosophy

Dave Jannetta, Assistant Professor of Film, Art + Film Department

Ben Marsschke, Professor, Department of History

Suzanne Pasztor, Professor of History

Elisabeth Harrington, Associate Professor, Music

Troy Lescher, Associate Professor, Theatre Arts

Joseph C. Dieme, Professor of French and Francophone Studies

Tony Silvaggio, Chair, Department of Sociology

Kate Foley-Beining , Lecturer in German, World Languages and Cultures

Lisa Tremain, Chair, Departments of English & Philosophy

Nikola Hobbel, Professor of English Education

David Stacey, Professor of English, Emeritus

Monty Mola, Chair, Department of Physics & Astronomy

**CAL POLY HUMBOLDT
University Senate**

**Sense of the Senate Resolution on
AB 928, General Education Core Competencies
& Advocacy for Oral Communication at Cal Poly Humboldt**

XX-20/21-[University Senate February 22, 2022](#)

WHEREAS: Assembly Bill 928 requires the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates of the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges, on or before May 31, 2023, to establish a singular lower division general education pathway that meets the academic requirements necessary for transfer admission to the California State University and the University of California; and,

WHEREAS: The ASCSU has been charged to provide a sense of what CSU faculty think are the most important competencies and GE priorities to inform negotiation on what will be included in the 34 units of the common GE pathway; and

WHEREAS: This GE consolidation risks the elimination of Oral Communication (Area A1) general education across the CSU; and

WHEREAS: Oral Communication is a foundational skill for all hands-on learning, an essential part of our WASC accreditation standards, vital for the California workforce and a fundamental part of all polytechnic learning; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the University Senate of Cal Poly Humboldt affirms the utility of a common transfer GE pathway across the CSU, California Community College and University of California Systems, and be it further

RESOLVED: That Oral Communication is a distinct and core competency of lower division general education as identified in Cal Poly Humboldt's Institutional Learning Outcomes and required by Title 5 Code and university accreditation via WASC Senior College and University Commission's (WSCUC) Core Competencies assessment, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the University Senate at Cal Poly Humboldt support the inclusion of Area A Oral Communication in the lower division GE pathway; and be it further

RESOLVED, That The University Senate ask that ASCUC Statewide Senators advocate for the

inclusion of Oral Communication as a distinct course in the consolidated model; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the University Senate of Cal Poly Humboldt stands in opposition to University of California control and framing of general education revision; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the University Senate of Cal Poly Humboldt request that ASCSU leadership and the Chancellor's Office incorporate these points in any negotiations on what will be included in the 34 units of the common GE pathway; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the timeline for any GE changes allow for good faith consultation and mutually agreed upon collaboration with the CSU, CCC, and UC to ensure effective campus implementation, including campus flexibility to determine mechanisms of implementation; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the University Senate of Humboldt State University requests that the CSU provide evidence of ongoing mutually agreed upon collaboration, correspondence or verbal exchange of any process or practice of collaboration between the CSU, CCC, and UC in regard to implementation of AB 928; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the attached letter from the Communication Department and supporting affiliated faculty be read at the University Senate and added to the permanent record for Cal Poly Humboldt; ; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this resolution be distributed to Chancellor Castro, EVC Alva, ASCSU Chair Collins, President Jackson, Provost Capps, the HSU Integrated Curriculum Committee; the HSU GEAR Curriculum and Assessment Committee, and the CSU Council of Academic Senate Chairs.

OPINION > COMMENTARY

My Word | Communications skills even more essential now

By [THE TIMES-STANDARD](#) |

February 27, 2022 at 2:57 a.m.

By Joshua Frye

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In terms of the most important competencies that a student can acquire at the CCC or as a first- and second-year student in the CSU to help prepare them for success, oral and written communication, and critical thinking are indispensable. According to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5: Education, Article 5 states that students:

“(a) will have achieved the ability to think clearly and logically, to find and critically examine information, to communicate orally and in writing, and to perform quantitative functions” (5 CCR § 40405).”

This clause addresses the necessary educational breadth (GE) required in any educational institution within the CSU to meet the necessary standards for graduation.

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We note that oral communication skills are vital for the emerging California

If folks think that oral communication is not essential, all one needs to do is look at the level of national political discourse to note that we have lost our abilities culturally to engage in constructive dialogue and communication. If anything, it seems that more and better training in oral communication traditions and skills is essential at this historical moment.

We look forward to learning more about how discussions of AB928 unfold, and we thank you for taking time to read this letter, and your attention to this important matter.

Joshua J. Frye is a professor in the communications department at Cal Poly Humboldt. This letter was co-signed and supported by 11 other members of the communications faculty.



The Times-Standard

National Communication Association–Resolution Supporting the Inclusion of the Foundational Communication Course in U.S. College and University Core Requirements

Whereas, the National Communication Association is the largest scholarly association in the world dedicated to the study and teaching of Communication and is an integral community of thousands of Communication scholars, teachers, and practitioners.

Whereas the National Communication Association is committed to prioritizing and enhancing the foundational communication course in institutions of higher education

Whereas the foundational communication course is central to upholding the principles and practices of effective human communication

Whereas the foundational communication course signifies that communication is its own discipline with unique contributions to both higher education and to the world at large

Whereas the foundational communication course has been central to the communication discipline from an instructional and disciplinary perspective and for supporting the health of graduate programs and disciplinary association membership interests

Whereas the foundational communication course is central to the teaching of communication skills by faculty with a background in the discipline of Communication to a wide array of instructional constituencies

Whereas the foundational communication course is central to the teaching of communication skills (such as monitoring and presenting your self, practicing communication ethics, adapting to others, practicing effective listening, expressing messages, identifying and explaining fundamental communication processes, and creating and analyzing message strategies), by faculty with a background in the discipline of Communication to a wide array of instructional constituencies

Whereas NCA supports and defends the inclusion of a communication course or courses in college and university core requirements including the multiplicity of approaches that it signifies and the instruction of that course or courses by faculty trained in the discipline of communication

Whereas NCA maintains that student delivery of presentations in hybrid, online, or in-person formats without rigorous training and evaluation by Communication faculty does not constitute Communication competency

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION affirms the fundamental value of foundational communication skills for all students, reaffirms the importance of its teaching by trained communication experts, and advocates for the inclusion of the foundational communication course in the university core curricula of institutions of higher education