

Communication Across the Curriculum Assessment 2008

This document describes the current Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC) program and its assessment measures, processes, and results. It concludes with recommendations for next steps in CAC program administration and funding.

Executive Summary

IIT's CAC program is designed as a faculty-directed and faculty-approved curricular program that integrates a variety of instructional and assessment activities related to writing and speaking skills. The current absence of a fulltime CAC director has resulted in the need to prioritize more urgent activities (e.g., placement of incoming students) during the 2008–09 academic year, at the expense of outreach to faculty teaching communication-intensive courses. Implementing the full capacity of the CAC program model will require hiring a new fulltime director and allocating additional financial resources to the program to enable more extensive and effective outreach to faculty and students.

Overview of the Current Program Model

The CAC program is a faculty-directed and faculty-approved curricular program in writing and speaking skills. As conceived, the CAC model encompasses both instruction and assessment:

1. Instruction
 - Teaching students (primarily undergraduates) about writing and speaking skills
 - Helping teachers in each discipline to develop effective communication-oriented assignments
2. Assessment
 - Monitoring discipline-based instruction about writing and speaking skills in three kinds of course: Introduction to the Profession (ITPs), communication-intensive (C²) courses in all disciplines, and Interprofessional Projects courses (IPROs and ENPROs)
 - Helping teachers in various disciplines to develop assessment tools for evaluating students' communication activities and assignments
 - Evaluating the overall effectiveness of communication instruction through ongoing longitudinal studies
 - Evaluating students' admission essays in order to determine appropriate placement into specialized writing courses
 - Assessing work by current students whom Educational Services has identified as needing confirmation of proficiency in communication

To accomplish its instructional tasks, the CAC program is designed to integrate a variety of instructional and assessment activities into a single, coherent, system of mutually reinforcing parts, serving students and faculty in different ways to address ascending levels of need:

- At the lowest level of need, online materials offer specific guidelines and techniques for communication assignments in ITPs and “C” courses (developed in consultation with course instructors), and IPROs, along with general instruction about writing
- At a higher level of need, tutors provide individual feedback about writing assignments in the IIT Writing Center
- At the highest level of need, students are required to pass an introductory or advanced writing courses (COM 101/111, Introduction to College Writing; COM 421, Technical Writing)

In other words, the CAC program model is such that students with relatively slight deficiencies can take advantage of course-specific online materials, students with more serious needs can seek help from a tutor at the IIT Writing Center, and students with significant needs can be referred to writing courses.

The CAC program is also charged with coordinating the development and delivery of instructional and assessment materials to individual instructors of “C” courses, which include (but are not limited to) ITP courses and IPROs. For example, CAC staff have given presentations to students in “C” courses about strategies for effective writing in the various disciplines and have also worked one-on-one with “C” course faculty to development communication assignments and methods for assessing them.

The CAC program also collaborates with several university units:

- The **IIT Writing Center**, for the purposes of making tutoring in writing and speaking assignments available to students. The Writing Center includes specialized assistance for nonnative speakers of English by consultants with specific training in Teaching English as a Second Language.
- The **Office of Educational Services**, for the purposes of collecting data to develop reports on the longitudinal assessment of student communication skills.
- The **Undergraduate Studies Committee (UGSC)**, for the purposes of reviewing criteria for “C” courses and assuring that current and proposed “C” courses meet those criteria.

Program Administration

During 2007–08, the CAC program was under the direction of Dr. Amy Stolley (Ph.D., Rhetoric & Composition, Purdue University), who also held a part-time teaching appointment as a Senior Lecturer in Humanities. Although Stolley made a good deal of progress during 2007–08 (see Appendices A and B for reports from fall 2007 and spring 2008, respectively), the program experienced a setback when she left IIT in May 2008 for a tenure-track position.

Stolley’s departure from IIT came in late spring 2008, too late for the 2008–09 hiring cycle for this field. As a result, the program is currently being administered by an

internally appointed acting director, Dr. Greg Pulliam (Senior Lecturer in English, Director of ESL, and Associate Chair of Humanities). He is assisted by Carrie Hannigan, an advanced doctoral student in technical communication.

Because Pulliam's role as acting director is in addition to other administrative and teaching responsibilities, CAC activities related to placement and graduation assessment have received priority for 2008–09. For example, Pulliam worked with Undergraduate Admission to coordinate assessment of all incoming students and placement (as needed) into 100-level writing courses. (Similarly, he works with ESL specialist James Dabbert to assess and place entering international graduate students into ESL courses each semester.) Pulliam also evaluates portfolios from students whom Educational Services has identified as needing confirmation of proficiency in communication.

During 2008–09, consultation with discipline-specific faculty is taking place primarily when requested by individual faculty members. Pulliam, Hannigan, Dabbert, and Writing Center consultant Gail Lehman are available to respond to faculty requests to give communication-related presentations to classes and to consult with faculty about assessment of writing. For example, Hannigan is working with chemistry faculty to give presentations to chemistry students about writing, to develop TA-training materials about evaluating lab reports, and to develop rubrics for grading lab reports.

Fall 2008 meetings of both the UGSC and the University Faculty Council have encouraged the (re)formation of a UGSC subcommittee to review communication instruction and assessment on a continuing basis. Additionally, Dr. Kathryn Riley (Chair, Humanities) has consulted with Dr. John Kallend (Associate Dean for Accreditation and Assessment) and Dr. Michael Gosz (Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs) about the need to undertake a search during 2008–09 for a fulltime CAC director to commence in summer or fall of 2009.

Assessment Processes, Measures, and Results

1. External Assessment by ABET and NCA

The Communication Across the Curriculum program was assessed in 2003 by ABET, whose evaluators characterized the CAC program as an “institutional strength” and a “hallmark of the institution” (along with the IPRO program). It was also assessed during the 2006 North Central Association accreditation visit, at which time the external assessment team concluded that “Substantial work is . . . expected in written and oral communication, integrated throughout the curriculum and assessed in the required IPRO projects” and that “Detailed learning objectives for the IPRO experiences have been established in four areas [including Communication Competence] . . . with evidence that rigorous assessment of student performance against these objectives is ongoing.”

2. Placement Activities for Incoming Students

CAC staff evaluate writing samples of incoming students to assess their Basic Writing Proficiency. An earlier placement portfolio for this purpose consisted of diverse genres (including poetry and plays) not clearly relevant to student writing tasks. An internal

review undertaken in preparation for the 2003 ABET evaluation had shown that this approach was not yielding acceptable results. Therefore, a new approach was developed, including a writing sample with new set of prompts (instructions) designed to elicit essays based on typical academic tasks (e.g., describing a process, describing a situation and its effects).

Results of scoring patterns by separate evaluators have been monitored for six years. Pairs of essay evaluators show a high degree of inter-rater reliability, with significantly disparate scores occurring in less than 10% of the cases. Of the four essay prompts (directions to students), three were found to yield consistent results over a three-year period; but a fourth prompt yielded consistently lower scores, and was dropped. Evaluations are consistent over time, with approximately 25% of entering students being required to take COM 101 or 111 each year. Dating from 2005-2006, essay scores are being informally correlated with ACT and SAT scores, so that recommendations are based on multiple measures. This is resulting in very few challenges of test results.

3. Longitudinal Study of Writing Success

Measurement data have been collected since 2006 for the purpose of exploring correlations between placement scores of incoming students and separate but related measures obtained throughout students' undergraduate careers, such as grades in COM 101 or 111, Writing Center usage, overall GPA, grades in "C" courses, grades in ITP courses, semester-by-semester retention rates, and successful graduation. Samples of student writing have also been collected from selected "C" courses for the purpose of comparing how student writing is evaluated by discipline-specific faculty and by faculty who specialize in composition or technical communication. At the current time, a representative body of measurement data and of writing samples has been compiled but remains to be analyzed. This analysis will most likely need to await the appointment of a new fulltime CAC director, who can undertake or supervise this assessment activity.

4. IIT Writing Center

Until 2003-04, two writing centers were maintained (one as part of the Academic Resource Center and one as part of the Humanities Department). To centralize tutoring resources, the CAC facility began to share the same space as the Humanities Writing Center in 2003-04, resulting in consistent instructional materials being presented to students in tutoring sessions. In 2005-06, the two tutorial programs merged their staff and resources, with the Humanities Writing Center director (James Dabbert) responsible for supervising the day-to-day activities of all Writing Center staff. Student usage of the Writing Center is well-documented, with a detailed report compiled by Dabbert on a weekly basis. This report documents student attendance and each student's major, native language, and referring faculty member (if any). Beginning in 2007-08, Writing Center consultants also began summarizing topics reviewed in each student's session.

As mentioned earlier, the Writing Center includes specialized assistance for nonnative speakers of English by consultants with specific training in Teaching English as a Second Language. Writing Center usage regularly approaches 150-200 student visits per semester. While open to all students at all levels, the Writing Center gets especially high usage from international students for whom English is a second language. A detailed

summary of Writing Center usage since the 2003 ABET visit is available as a separate document.

5. Development of CAC Website

While part of the original CAC model, the website has not been maintained in an updated version for several years. Technical communication doctoral student Carrie Hannigan is working during the 2008–09 academic year to compile CAC materials for redevelopment of a CAC website. When complete, the site will make instructional and assessment materials more readily available to faculty in the various disciplines, as well as offering resources to students for improving their communication skills.

6. Instructional Materials for Upper-Division Writing Courses

As part of their general education curriculum, students must take 42 credit hours of communication-intensive (“C”) courses. In 2005–06, a content analysis of instructional for upper-division writing instruction was conducted. Prospective employers and employees in four IIT degree programs were interviewed, along with IIT instructors and students in the programs. The skills emphasized in CAC instructional materials and in supportive courses such as COM 421 (required for degrees in the Computer Science department), and COM 423, Writing in the Science Workplace (required for several degree programs in the Biology, Chemistry, and Physical Science department) received a high priority among future employers and fellow employees of IIT students.

7. Instructional Materials for Other “C” Courses

Development of materials for various “C” courses undertaken by Stolley in 2007–08 includes assignments, presentations, sample papers, and evaluation rubrics for courses in chemistry, civil and architectural engineering, electrical and computer engineering, history, psychology, and the Kedge program (a retention program for high-risk students).

8. Surveys of Former Students

According to EBI Engineering Alumni Assessment surveys from 2006, 2007, and 2008, IIT engineering alumni felt that they had been successfully prepared for workplace communication tasks. Complete 2007 and 2008 data are available online at <https://wess.webebi.com/rptweb/RptAdmin/OrderMenu.aspx?OrderMenu=true>. Of particular interest are the following results from the 2008 survey:

- Of 12 factors that respondents were asked to rate, “Importance of Communications” was rated second-highest: 5.85/7.00
- When asked to rate importance of ability and preparation in ability to prepare oral and written progress reports, respondents rated both areas relatively high in importance (5.85/7.00 for oral progress reports; 5.83/7.00 for written progress reports). Preparation for oral and written progress reports was rated as 4.64/7.00 and 5.01/7.00, respectively.

Similar trends were found in the 2007 survey.

9. Professional Development and Programmatic Feedback through Academic Conferences

Faculty and graduate assistants involved in the CAC program have regularly engaged in professional development activities outside the university, describing IIT's programmatic efforts, getting feedback about these efforts, and staying abreast of current developments in the field. Representative activities at professional conferences includes:

- “GenAdmin: Making Sense of/for a New Generation of Writing Program Administrators,” Council of Writing Program Administrators Summer Conference (Denver, July 2008).
- “Fostering Group Collaboration in Your Online Class,” Online Teaching Conference (Oceanside, CA, June 2008).
- “Integrated Online and Digital Resources for Teaching Syntax and Punctuation,” Modern Language Association (Chicago, Dec. 2007).
- “More than ‘Postmodern Moonshine’: A Heuristic for Engaging in Public Discourse About Writing Instruction.” Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s) Conference (Little Rock, AR, Oct. 2007).
- “A Resisting History of WPAs,” Conference on College Composition and Communication (New Orleans, April 2007).
- “A Video-Based Learning Component for Oral Communication,” Midwest Writing Center Association conference (St. Louis, Oct. 2006)
- “Instructional DVD for Oral Presentations,” Council of Writing Program Administrators conference (Chattanooga, July 2006).
- “Analyzing Jobs and Assessing Programs,” Association of Teachers of Technical Writing Conference, in conjunction with Conference on College Composition and Communication (Chicago, March 2006).
- “Creating Course-Specific Instructional Websites about Writing Tasks,” Writing Program Administrators conference (Anchorage, July 2005).
- “Integrating Real and Virtual Space in Communication Across the Curriculum,” College English Association conference (Indianapolis, March-April 2005).

Summary and Recommendations

In principle, the CAC program represents an integrated approach to teaching and assessing communication in the disciplines. However, in order for the program to achieve its full potential, the administration will need to allocate a line for hiring a new fulltime CAC. In addition, other financial resources will need to be allocated to promote outreach to faculty teaching “C” courses. For example, given appropriate funding, graduate students in technical communication could be paired with faculty in engineering and science disciplines to assist on a regular basis with writing instruction and assessment. Similarly, funding for workshop attendance would provide an incentive for “C” course faculty to become more fully engaged in the CAC program. Finally, funding for staff or advanced graduate students to help with web development and with analysis of longitudinal data would enable implementation of these elements of the CAC program.

Appendix A: CAC Director's Report, Fall 2007

COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM REPORT, FALL 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first two months of the Fall 2007 semester, the Director of the Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC) program interviewed members of IIT's faculty to gauge the current state of the CAC program and evaluate ways in which the program could be developed to better support IIT's faculty and students in their communication intensive courses.

CAC Orientation: Communication in the Disciplines

Rather than supporting a "write to learn" approach for the CAC (which would argue that students benefit from writing traditional academic texts in response to the core concepts of the course they are taking), I recommend that the CAC re-orient itself towards a **communication in the disciplines** approach. This would allow students to gain practical experience composing the kinds of texts they will produce in their future professions (e.g., lab reports, executive summaries, business proposals) and help them gain familiarity with disciplinary discourse conventions. Additionally, this approach is more in line with IIT's mission of preparing its students to be effective communicators in their professions (as opposed to providing them with a general liberal arts background).

A communication in the disciplines orientation will require faculty in each discipline to first determine what "good communication" consists of in their field, taking into consideration questions of audience, purpose, and genre, so that as instructors of C course (and with support from the CAC), they can help students better understand the rhetorical decisions they need to make as writers and speakers.

CAC Initiatives

In order to reframe the CAC program and increase the quality of its services to the university, several initiatives might be undertaken to achieve the program's goals. These initiatives fall under three general categories: program development, faculty development, and student development.

Program Development

- Develop a longitudinal assessment tool to assess students' communication skills.
- Increase publicity for IIT Writing Center and CAC resources.
- Redesign and repurpose CAC website so that content is easily accessible for students and faculty.
- Re-institute the CAC Advisory Committee with stakeholders from across the university.

Faculty Development

- Institute Faculty Development Grants to support faculty who wish to develop and/or enhance communication instruction in their courses.
- Develop and publish a bi-annual newsletter for faculty.
- Organize and implement faculty workshops on specific communication/instructional issues.

Student Development

- Optimize communication instruction in existing courses (Introduction to Professions, IPROs, EnPros, etc.)
- Expand workshop offerings for students to be offered online and in person regarding a wide range of communication issues.

CAC Budget

The initiatives outlined above are achievable, but not without a significant increase in funding for the CAC program. In order to achieve these goals, the **CAC budget needs to increase by a minimum of \$14,000 dollars annually**, which will cover the cost of personnel, communications, technology, and financial support for faculty to participate in CAC programs. A more detailed description of the proposed budget can be found on page 5.

THE CURRENT STATE OF COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTION AT IIT

During the first two months of the Fall 2007 semester, I contacted the Associate Chairs of all undergraduate-degree granting programs at IIT, inviting them to meet to discuss the state of communication instruction in the courses within their departments. As of November 8, 2008, I have met with the following¹:

- Suzanne Mueller, Stuart School of Business
- Steve Sennott, Architecture
- Patrick Ireland, Social Sciences
- Greg Fasshauer, Math
- Greg Pulliam, Humanities
- Ben Stark, Biology
- Faculty, Institute of Psychology

When I met with these faculty members, I posed several questions to each of them as a way of gauging similarities and differences in the ways C courses are administered around campus and to evaluate the feasibility of workshop-based instruction for faculty and students. The questions and a summary of the faculty's responses follow.

1. *How are C courses assigned, monitored, or evaluated in your department?*

At this point, there is no standardized method of assigning, monitoring, or evaluating the communication intensive courses and/or assignments in any department. Most faculty responded that the content of a course is determined by the individual faculty member responsible for the course, and while some faculty might be advised that writing or speaking assignments should be incorporated into their C courses, none of the academic units I surveyed have an established protocol for assessing whether or not communication-oriented assignments are being incorporated into the class. Only Humanities provides a guideline for faculty regarding the amount of writing that should be done in a C course (5,000 words), though that is not necessarily audited by the department to determine if it is happening or not.

2. *What types of writing/speaking assignments do students complete in the C courses in your department?*

Most of the writing and speaking assignments faculty assign their students are designed to provide students with the opportunity to practice writing and speaking in the genres most used by their disciplines, though those in the technical fields (e.g, math, sciences) expressed a concern over how to integrate writing into the content of their courses. A breakdown of the kind of assignments used by each department follows:

Department	Typical Writing/Speaking Assignments
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic research papers ▪ Architectural guide books (to accompany a computer building model) ▪ Public critiques of design
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lab reports ▪ Academic research papers ▪ Prompt-based writing assignments (extensive written responses to

¹ The universality of these findings are constrained by the limited number of departments represented in this report; however, the findings—and the conclusions I've drawn from them—will likely be transferable to the departments that I have yet to hear back from.

	homework problems)
Humanities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic research papers ▪ Reading responses/journal entries ▪ Small-group discussions ▪ Individual and/or group presentations
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading responses (which include opportunities for revision) ▪ Proof writing ▪ Oral presentations (for advanced courses)
Institute of Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case studies ▪ Academic research papers ▪ Oral presentations (group and individuals)
Social Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic research papers ▪ Reading responses ▪ Oral presentations (often in groups)
Stuart School of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive Summaries ▪ Product/Service reviews/evaluations ▪ Academic research papers

3. *What are the biggest writing and speaking challenges students in your department display?*

While faculty from each department expressed different concerns regarding their students' communication skills, several issues were common among all of the departments:

- **Sentence-level issues (grammar, usage, etc).** Faculty expressed a concern that students are not demonstrating the oral or written communication skills they need to speak and write fluently in the academy or the workplace. When pressed, faculty admitted this was a concern primarily with international students (and more often graduate students rather than undergraduate students) each faculty member with whom I spoke identified sentence-level communication issues as a significant challenge many of their students face. (Pulliam was the exception to this, in part because of his more nuanced understanding of language learning and writing/speaking skills.)
- **Plagiarism.** Nearly all of the faculty reported a high number of incidences of plagiarism, though they were not able to generalize if they were instances of outright cheating or more nuanced problems with students not understanding how to integrate and cite outside sources into their own work.
- **Student Resistance.** Some faculty reported a resistance among students to any assigned writing tasks. Students claim "I'm an artist" or "I'm a scientist" and don't see writing as a significant responsibility in either of those roles.
- **Unfamiliarity with Academic Discourse Conventions.** Several faculty mentioned that students demonstrated a poor understanding of academic writing; that is, their texts did not effectively respond to issues of audience, genre, or purpose.

4. *What kind of services can the CAC provide to better support your students?*

The faculty with whom I spoke expressed interest in more information about the IIT Writing Center and the services it could provide. They also believed that other faculty in each of their departments would utilize in-class workshops (delivered by CAC staff) that address general communication concerns (such as audience, grammar, writing research papers, etc.) or workshops that were tailored to meet specific assignments and/or disciplinary writing standards.

5. *What kind of services can the CAC provide to better support faculty in your department who are teaching C courses?*

Most of the faculty I interviewed doubted that their colleagues would take advantage of workshops or direct activities that would support them in their efforts to teach C courses.

They anticipated resistance based on the grounds of academic freedom (they don't want people telling them how to teach their courses), lack of interest, or time-consuming research obligations. They expected that the faculty members who really needed the support would probably not attend workshops, while those who are already doing a fair job would be likely to seek out further support.

The Stuart School of Business and the College of Architecture have both expressed interest in faculty workshops that are aimed to help faculty develop new strategies for incorporating communication-oriented assignments and projects into their courses. These leads will be pursued going forward.

The Institute of Psychology would like clearer communication between the CAC and the faculty teaching C courses. This would include a more comprehensive identification of what it actually means to be teaching a C course (in terms of assignments, assessment, etc.) that could be communicated to new instructors teaching a C course for the first time.

CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING IIT'S CAC PROGRAM

After gathering data from various departments around campus, it has become clear that there are many strengths of the CAC program in its current form. Among those include a functioning writing center, which services nearly 100 students per semester, an equal distribution of communication-intensive courses throughout the curriculum, and faculty who are committed to providing students with the best writing and speaking instruction possible.

While the curricular structure is currently in place, the goals of the CAC curriculum are not clearly or uniformly being implemented throughout the curriculum. In order to achieve the program goals, I propose several initiatives to further enhance the existing program. These initiatives, outlined below, seek to publicize programs offered by the CAC, build support among the faculty for its goals, and re-integrate the standardized program into the core of the undergraduate curriculum at IIT.

<p>Program Development</p>	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with IIT's Accreditation and Assessment program and each department, develop a longitudinal assessment tool to assess students' communication skills within their major disciplines. <p>Publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better publicize IIT Writing Center and CAC resources for both faculty and students through print materials (flyers, handouts, posters, etc.) so as to increase users. • Redesign and repurpose CAC website so that content is easily accessible for students and faculty. <p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-institute the CAC Advisory Committee with stakeholders from across the university to represent different departments' interests/perspectives regarding communication instruction at IIT. • With the guidance of the re-formed CAC Advisory Committee, revise the Goals Statement for CAC program.
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<p>Faculty Development</p>	<p>Faculty Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Institute Faculty Development Grants to support faculty who wish to develop and/or enhance communication instruction in their courses. <p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and publish a bi-annual newsletter for faculty to provide them resources to help their students develop their communication skills. ▪ Organize and implement faculty workshops on specific communication/instructional issues (e.g., working with ESL students, designing, teaching, and assessing writing/speaking assignments).
<p>Student Development</p>	<p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimize communication instruction in existing courses (in particular, Introduction to the Professions courses, IPROs, and EnPROs) • Expand workshop offerings for students to be offered online and in person regarding a wide range of communication issues. (These workshops could also be adapted to fit specific courses for in-class workshops).

PROPOSED CAC BUDGET

Without an increase in funding, the proposed initiatives to develop the CAC program and the support it provides to IIT students and faculty will be very difficult to implement. Grant opportunities are being pursued to help fund the CAC, but without a financial commitment from the university the program will not likely meet its fullest potential.

Below is a proposed annual budget that is linked to the initiatives outlined previously:

Personnel*			\$80,604
	Faculty Salaries	24,270	
	RA/TA	45,000	
	Benefits	7,134	
	Student Aid	2,200	
	PT Staff/Students ^B (web developer)	2,000	
General Operating Expenses*			2,200
	Office Supplies	500	
	Printing and Reproducing	1,200	
	Interdivisional Req	500	
Communications/Publicity^B			3,000
	Faculty Newsletter	2,000	
	Student Publicity (flyers, bookmarks)	1,000	
Equipment and Resources^B			3,700
	Computer and Accessories (laptop and projector)	3,000	
	Instructional Supplies	200	
	Equip. Rep, Maint, & Re	500	
Faculty Development Grant Fund			13,000
FY08 CAC Budget			\$58,504
PROPOSED FY09 CAC BUDGET			\$102,504
			- \$44,000

* Figures based on FY08 budget.

^B Additions to the existing budget.

—Submitted by Amy Ferdinandt Stolley
November 13, 2007

Appendix B: CAC Director's Report, Spring 2008

COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

PROGRAM REPORT, SPRING 2008

During the Spring semester of 2008, the Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC) program continued its outreach attempts to foster both student development in the area of communication skills. The work of the CAC has been inhibited by financial constraints, but considerable effort has been made to raise the profile of the program among faculty and students.

	Initiatives Identified, Fall 2007	Goals Accomplished, Spring 2008
Program Development	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with IIT's Accreditation and Assessment program and each department, develop a longitudinal assessment tool to assess students' communication skills within their major disciplines. <p>Publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better publicize IIT Writing Center and CAC resources for both faculty and students through print materials (flyers, handouts, posters, etc.) so as to increase users. Redesign and repurpose CAC website so that content is easily accessible for students and faculty. <p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-institute the CAC Advisory Committee with stakeholders from across the university to represent different departments' interests/perspectives regarding communication instruction at IIT. With the guidance of the re-formed CAC Advisory Committee, revise the Goals Statement for CAC program. 	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CAC Director has worked with IIT's Accreditation and Assessment program to prepare for the assessment of the communication skills of students in the Engineering Departments. <p>Publicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity continues to be a priority, though with the CAC's limited budget, little has been done to raise the profile of the program through print resources. Instead, the Director has continued to advocate for the program through face-to-face interactions with faculty and students.

Continued on next page

	Initiatives Identified, Fall 2007	Goals Accomplished, Spring 2008
Faculty Development	<p>Faculty Incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute Faculty Development Grants to support faculty who wish to develop and/or enhance communication instruction in their courses. <p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a bi-annual newsletter for faculty to provide them resources to help their students develop their communication skills. Organize and implement faculty workshops on specific communication/instructional issues (e.g., working with ESL students, designing, teaching, and assessing writing/speaking assignments). 	<p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director delivered two workshops to 1/2XX faculty introducing them to the CAC, its resources, and the role it can/should play in their classrooms. Consultation with faculty interested in implementing communication instruction into their courses. (Summers, Kedge Program; Giannone, Psych 180; Iverson, HIST 384)
Student Development	<p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimize communication instruction in existing courses (in particular, Introduction to the Professions courses, IPROs, and EnPROs) Expand workshop offerings for students to be offered online and in person regarding a wide range of communication issues. (These workshops could also be adapted to fit specific courses for in-class workshops). 	<p>Curricular Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to develop online and in-person workshops with CAC tutors. Workshops will be able to be re-purposed for other classes and assignments. (See Appendix) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading/Writing Strategies (Psych 180) Writing Strategies and Error Identification (Kedge) Conducting Research, Thesis Statements, and Organization (HIST 384) <p>Support for Student Writers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing support for Biology students' writing projects (working with Ben Stark).

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES THE CAC DIRECTOR (SPRING 2008)

In addition to the efforts outlined above, the CAC Director has also participated in the following:

- Ongoing management of Writing Proficiency Examination for students intending to graduate who have yet to demonstrate basic writing proficiency.
- Management of Writing Placement Exam for incoming students for the Spring 2008 semester (December 2007-February 2008).
- Ongoing management, leadership, and guidance CAC Writing Center Tutors

PROPOSED CAC BUDGET

Without an increase in funding, the proposed initiatives to develop the CAC program and the support it provides to IIT students and faculty will be very difficult to implement. Grant opportunities are being pursued to help fund the CAC, but without a financial commitment from the university the program will not likely meet its fullest potential.

Below is a proposed annual budget, revised from our discussion in November, that is linked to the initiatives outlined previously:

Personnel*			\$80,604
	Faculty Salaries	24,270	
	RA/TA	45,000	
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	Faculty Newsletter	2,000	
	Student Publicity (flyers, bookmarks)	1,000	
Equipment and Resources^B			3,700
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	Instructional Supplies	200	
	Equip. Rep, Maint, & Re	500	
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PROPOSED FY09 CAC BUDGET			\$102,504
			- \$44,000

* Figures based on FY08 budget.

^B Additions to the existing budget.

APPENDICES

Include sample workshop materials developed by CAC Director and CAC Tutors during the Spring 2008 Semester.