



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

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**MEMORANDUM**

**JAN 13 2003**

**January 12, 2004**

**Senate Council**

**From: Phil Kraemer, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education**

**Proposed Change in USP (Oral Communications)**

The USP Committee has spent considerable time discussing the dilemma we face regarding the Oral Communications requirement of USP: an excessive and growing demand for courses that cannot be met. The problem is not merely funding, but rather it includes an insufficient number of qualified instructors to meet the needs of our students. The Department of Communication discussed several options that address this problem with the USP Committee. These proposals were based on thorough and careful analysis that included comparisons with benchmark institutions and best practices. The Department concluded that only one option is tenable, which is to delete the requirement from USP. The attached proposal summarizes the rationale and recommended action. This proposal is supported by majority vote of the USP Committee as well as by Dean David Johnson of the College of Communications and Information Studies.

The Department of Communication intends to continue offering courses that develop oral communication skills, which will satisfy accreditation requirements of several programs that depend on such courses. The University will continue to assess oral communication competencies of its graduates to ensure that all programs develop these skills in our undergraduates.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with the Senate Council to discuss this proposal as well as some other important issues pertinent to undergraduate education at UK.

Proposal  
USP - Oral Communication Requirement

Given significant enrollment increases at UK over the past three years, expectations for this trend to continue, diminished state funding of the University, and insufficient instructional resources and qualified instructors, the Oral Communication requirement of USP can no longer be implemented without impacting students' timely graduation. Consequently, the USP Committee recommends that the requirement be deleted.

We value the development of oral communication skills, and expect that all programs will strive to meet SACS oral communication requirements as part of their programs. We expect that many undergraduate programs will continue to require completion of existing oral communication courses (COM 181, COM 199, COM 252, COM 281, COM 287, TA 225) as part of their major program. For those programs that decide to meet the SACS requirement in alternative ways, we expect them to employ appropriate pedagogical and assessment strategies to develop oral communication skills in their students.