2 May 2012 – CORRECTION/2

TO: Paul DeLuca, Provost

FROM: Gary Sandefur, Dean

RE: Request to Change Department and Program Names: Department of Communicative Disorders

CC: Martin Cadwallader, Dean, Graduate School
Jan Edwards, Chair, Communicative Disorders
Jocelyn Milner, Associate Provost and Director, Academic Planning and Analysis
Eric Wilcots, Associate Dean for Natural and Mathematical Sciences, L&S
Elaine Klein, Assistant Dean, L&S

Attachment: Request to Change Department and Program Names: Department of Communicative Disorders

On February 7, 2012, the L&S Academic Planning Council considered the attached proposal which seeks endorsement of the following changes in department and program names:

a. From Department of Communicative Disorders, to “Communication Sciences and Disorders”
b. Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science (MAJ code 216) from Communicative Disorders, to “Communication Sciences and Disorders”
c. Bachelor of Science-Education from Communicative Disorders, to “Communication Sciences and Disorders”
d. Master of Science-Communicative Disorders to “Master of Science-Communication Sciences and Disorders”
e. Ph.D. Minor in Communicative Disorders, to “Ph.D. Minor in Communication Sciences and Disorders”
f. Doctor of Philosophy - Communicative Disorders, to “Doctor of Philosophy Communication Sciences and Disorders”

In addition, it would be appropriate also to revise the name of the course guide Subject Listing, from the current name “Communicative Disorders” to “Communication Sciences and Disorders.” You will note that this list is much more comprehensive than that which appears in the attached documentation; it was expanded after consultation with Dr. Milner (Academic Planning and Analysis), who brought the need for these additional changes to our attention. Because they are consistent with the desire for alignment and clarity of communication with students and external audiences, we propose to include these in the request as well.
Professor Jan Edwards (Chair of Communicative Disorders) was present for this discussion, and kindly responded to several questions raised about the request. In essence, the proposed names align with the names of similar programs, as well as with the accrediting agency for the discipline. In addition to this alignment, these names best describe the department’s work, which does not, in fact, restrict itself to the study of disorders in communication (i.e., speech, language, and hearing): the biological sciences faculty in this department also study healthy physical systems associated with speech, language production and interpretation, and hearing. Furthermore, members of this department study speech and hearing in populations that do not identify as having “disorders” of speech and hearing; these audiences find the current department name offensive.

As noted in the attached materials, the Department of Life Science Communication (LSC, formerly Agricultural Journalism) has expressed concern about confusion with work conducted in that department, as well as with the definitions and terms of art used in the field of Communication. Though similar concerns were discussed in the Department of Communication Arts as well as in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, these departments did not oppose the addition of the word “Science” to the current name. Furthermore, if the proposal is approved, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) will work with all departments that use the word “communication” in their names to ensure that print and online publications explain the various means by which students can pursue an interest in the study of communication. Professor Edwards noted that, were Communication Arts to propose a name change to “Communication Science and Arts”, CSD would not object. In discussion with the L&S Academic Planning Council, members noted that there are few alternatives to using the word “communication” – “communicative” is misleading and confusing and does not align with disciplinary conventions. LSC did not propose an alternative, nor did it object to the fundamental argument that “Communicative Disorders” does not accurately describe this department.

Our council members focused their attention on the substantive question of whether Communicative Disorders has more to gain from this change than other departments might lose if this request is approved. In discussion, it was noted that the proposed name would not be truncated: it would also be likely to be referred to by its acronym (CSD), further reducing confusion. The L&S APC therefore approved the request unanimously. Members stated that they endorsed the change because this name is commonly in use at many peer institutions, that alignment of the name with those peers and with the accrediting agency will help the department within the context of the discipline, and that the “harm” to other UW-Madison departments would be minimal. Council members noted that CSD has does not seek exclusive rights to the phrase “communication science”, as long as all parties using the term take care to draw distinctions when using the phrase, particularly when recruiting new students.

As you can imagine, this difference in opinion is somewhat vexing; I therefore conferred with Dean VandenBosch to consider whether she could envision a solution. She apprised me of her support for this change, and assured me that she will work with LSC to assuage their concerns. We are both hopeful that any confusion can be addressed through improved communication among the departments as well as with current and prospective students.

We refer this request to your consideration, in hopes that you will allow this department to relinquish a name that has never suited it well, and adopt a name that is well known, endorsed by disciplinary conventions, and which better describes the department’s focus.
December 5, 2011

To: Dean Gary Sandefur

From: Jan Edwards, Chair, Communicative Disorders

Re: Department name change

We are requesting that our department name be changed from *Communicative Disorders* to *Communication Sciences and Disorders*. We would also like to change the name of our undergraduate major and of our doctoral degree from *Communicative Disorders* to *Communication Sciences and Disorders*. The reasons why we would like to change our name are listed below.

1. First and foremost, the proposed name, *Communication Sciences and Disorders*, much more accurately describes what we do than does our current name, *Communicative Disorders*. As the College has recognized by housing our department in Biological Sciences rather than in Social Sciences or Humanities, our discipline is firmly grounded in the biological sciences and in the study of the human organism. Much of our research focuses squarely on normal development and normal processing of speech, language and hearing. One purpose (but by no means the only purpose) that our discipline studies the physical structures that produce and process speech, language, and hearing is so that we have an empirical evidence base for understanding and treating disorders that affect communication.

2. Our current department name is out-of-line with the names of other departments in our discipline, both in the UW-system and nationwide. For example, the umbrella organization in our discipline is the “Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders.” Most departments in the country are called either *Communication Sciences and Disorders* or *Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences*. All but one of the other UW-system schools are called *Communication Sciences and Disorders*. Our current name is confusing to potential undergraduate majors and potential graduate students.

3. Our current department name, *Communicative Disorders*, is offensive to some of the groups that we do research on or teach about. For instance, we do research and teach classes about bilingualism and different dialects of English (such as African American English). We don’t want to imply that either bilingualism or dialect differences are disorders. We also do research and teach about Deafness and Autism and both communities have made it clear that they consider these conditions to be differences rather than disorders.
We understand that there are several other departments at UW-Madison that have the word “Communication” in their name. These include: the Department of Communication Arts in L&S, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in L&S, and the Department of Life Sciences Communication in CALS. We plan to include on our departmental website descriptions of differences between our department and these other departments at locations where there might be confusion for prospective undergraduate and graduate students. For example, an undergraduate area of study in Communication Arts is called “Communication Science and Rhetorical Studies,” so we plan to include on our “future students/undergraduates” page an explanation of the differences between the two departments and a link to the Communication Arts undergraduate major, so as to direct students there. Similarly, one area of graduate study in Communication Arts is “Communication Science,” so we plan to include on our “future students/graduate students” page an explanation of the differences between the two graduate programs and a link to the Communication Science graduate program in Communication Arts, so as to direct students there.

We have appended to this memo responses to this request from the Department of Communication Arts in L&S, the Department of Life Sciences Communication in CALS, and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. As noted above and in the responses from Journalism and LSS, names of different disciplines may overlap. Therefore, we will be careful on our webpage to direct students to the appropriate departments.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.
Email from Department of Communication Arts

Dear Jan,

Thank you for your kind words of congratulations.

And I am sorry that I failed to communicate the outcome of a long-ago executive committee vote. Yes, the Communication Arts executive committee did vote in favor of your department's name change to "Communication Sciences and Disorders."

Best wishes,
Sue

Susan Zaeske
Professor and Outgoing Chair,
Department of Communication Arts
821 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
608-262-2277

-----Original Message-----
From: Comdis Chair [mailto:chair@comdis.wisc.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, June 07, 2011 6:25 PM
To: Susan Zaeske
Subject: name change for ComDis

Dear Susan,

Congratulations on your new position! I just got an email from Gary Sandefur. As you transition to your new position, I just wanted to check with you on a piece of unfinished business. My apologies for not following up sooner. Did your EC ever approve the name change for our department to "Communication Sciences and Disorders"?

Thanks!
Yours,
Jan

Jan Edwards
Professor and Chair
Department of Communicative Disorders
University of WI-Madison
Madison, WI 53706
Email from School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Hi Jan. Today I met with the School of Journalism & Mass Communication Executive Committee and I'm afraid that there was virtually no enthusiasm around the table for your department's proposed name change; as a result, I will not be able to send a memo of support from our School. The conversation ranged over a number of different concerns, but I think it all comes down to the feeling that "Communication Sciences" is just too broad a phrase for us to support granting it to any single unit (even our own). You should know that we have also declined to support similar requests in the past from other departments (some of which are named in your memo below). I'm sorry we can't be more helpful in your effort to rename your department in a way that better reflects the kind of research and teaching that you conduct.

Best,
GREG
Greg Downey
School of Journalism & Mass Communication (Professor & Director)
School of Library & Information Studies (Professor)
Department of Geography (Joint Appointment)
Department of History of Science (Affiliate Appointment)
Internships in the Liberal Arts & Sciences (Director)
University of Wisconsin-Madison
5112 Vilas Hall
821 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
USA
http://www.journalism.wisc.edu/~gdowney http://uncoveringinformationlabor.blogspot.com
gdowney@wisc.edu
(608) 695-4310
Hi, Jan,

Here are the arguments that LSC faculty raised - I am simply passing along word for word: First, communication sciences is often used interchangeably with communication research, and in fact, the first two links that come up in a google search for “communication sciences” refer to a wikipedia entry for our discipline and to a communication department.


http://communicationsciences.uconn.edu/

Second, communication science is what many of us do. In the past folks may have distinguished the “art” of communication a la comm arts or journalism from the “science” of communication in disorders etc. but that is no longer true, and as the communication discipline has matured, many of us describe our work as communication science – especially those of us who do empirical or even quantitative work. Another department using this term now for a different discipline simply does not represent and distinguish what all of us do on campus.

Finally, one of our flagship journals is “communication research.” nobody will reasonably distinguish between the “communication research” and “communication science” labels, and the communication research field at Wisconsin was just ranked among the very best in the country. In short, the current label “communication disorders” distinguishes the department nicely from the three other units whose work intersects in the communication field. A name change would confuse donors, alumni, prospective students, and current students. A name change is fine, but not one that uses the “communication science” label, i.e., one that many of use to describe our work and discipline.

I can produce a letter along these lines. Thoughts? Jacquie

Jacqueline C. Hitchon McSweeney
Professor and Chair
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Madison, WI 53706
Voice: 608 262 0184
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To: Jocelyn Milner, Associate Provost and Director, Academic Planning and Analysis
From: Jan Edwards, Chair, Communicative Disorders
Re: Department name change
Date: May 3, 2012

The purpose of this memo is to clarify some additional questions that you raised with respect to the 12/5/2011 memo from me requesting a department name change.

The questions that you raised were the following:

1. What will happen to students currently enrolled in one of the department’s undergraduate majors or to current graduate students?

Response: Once the name change is approved, we plan to use the new name for all currently and subsequently enrolled students in all of these programs.

2. Does the proposal have faculty support and how and when was the decision made:

Response: This proposal has strong support from faculty. It was discussed and voted on in the faculty meeting of 10/11/10 and the vote was 14: in favor; 1: opposed; 5: abstain. Since that time, support from the faculty has grown even stronger and I am often asked by many faculty members when the name change will be approved.

3. Does the proposal have support from students?

Response: We have not formally polled students, but informal conversations with both undergraduate and graduate students shows very strong support for the name change, for the reasons discussed in the 12/5/2011 memo.

4. Have the implications of the name change for teacher certification been discussed with the School of Education?

Response: Yes. I am enclosing a memo from Cheryl Hanley-Maxwell, Associate Dean for Teacher Education, which states that there are no negative implications of the name change for teacher certification.
5/3/2012

Jan Edwards, Professor and Chair
Department of Communicative Disorders
University of WI-Madison
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Jan:

Changing the name of the Department of Communication Disorders should pose no problem in relation to teacher licensing by the Department of Public Instruction. I will need to notify them of the change once approved, so please notify me when the process is complete.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hanley-Maxwell, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Teacher Education