As a result of the third cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 3), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

**Actions agreed upon for the coming academic year**

1. **Curriculum**

   a. Assessment. The department agrees to continue ongoing work in assessing student learning and advising needs. The department has already established student learning goals, and has formed an assessment committee and a capstone committee to lead work in assessing student learning. The department will develop formal assessment mechanisms for new core and capstone courses to be put into place next year.

   b. Revision of Undergraduate Curriculum. The department is currently considering four or five models for a restructured undergraduate curriculum and will choose one model at the Fall 2001 department retreat. The department has agreed upon the basic vision of the new curriculum: earlier gateway courses for earlier specialization, fewer required courses greater flexibility. Results of the department assessment initiative (student work, surveys) will be used to inform curriculum revision. Dean Mezey suggested that the department consider resource implications of the specializations; and that it separate out those curricular reforms that could be accomplished within current cost models, and those that require larger commitments.

   c. Servicing new degree programs. The department will hire faculty for the new M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations in the coming year, since these are major growth areas for the department. The department will also seek to hire new staff to support this degree program.
2. **Faculty**

a. **Service Load.** In the coming year, the department will develop a rotation system for faculty service on committees. It agrees to monitor more closely the service obligations internal to the department so that junior faculty will not continue to be overburdened with service. The department has already developed some measures to protect junior faculty’s time (such as not letting them chair committees with heavy workloads). Dean Mezey suggested that the department reassess its heavy reliance on committees as an internal governance mechanism.

b. **Part-time and Adjunct Faculty.** The department has developed several ways to integrate part-time and adjunct faculty into the department and facilitate quality control for part-time and adjunct faculty. The department maintains personnel files, holds competitive interviews for these positions, hosts an orientation for new part-time faculty, conducts teaching workshops, and requires classroom observations by junior non-tenured faculty. The department will continue to monitor the quality of part-time faculty and will consider having senior faculty members take part in some classroom observations.

3. **Resources**

a. **Improved Resource Allocation.** In the past five years, the numbers of enrollments and majors in Communication has increased significantly. The department and Dean agree that the method of calculating enrollments needs to be clarified, especially given the discrepancies in numbers reported by the new PeopleSoft system. The department has submitted specific budget proposals to the Dean, who has agreed to consider the proposed resource requests. The department requests that Dean Mezey consider the requests in light of the increased enrollments.

b. **Staffing.** The department is planning to undertake two faculty searches for next year, then two more the following year. This would mean four new full-time, tenure-track lines over the next two years to teach in the new MA in Advertising and Public Relations, and to support a new undergraduate curriculum. The department has proposed this plan to the Dean as part of its resource request to be considered.

**Issues on which there is joint commitment to continue working**

1. **Curriculum: Offerings on Multiple Campuses.** The department faculty members are willing to teach courses at other campuses (e.g. Barat) to reach a more diverse group of students. The Dean/EVP
encouraged the department to think about taking its graduate-level courses to Barat, especially now that the MA in Advertising & Public Relations has been approved, since one of the university’s goals is to reach “Goal Two” students.

2. Faculty: Service Load. The department agrees to consider its current reliance on internal committees and will consider having conversations about faculty governance within the department.

3. Resources: Development of a Media Center. The department will begin conversations first among its faculty, then with other departments (Art, English) and schools (Theatre, Music, Commerce) about the possibility of creating a media center. The media center would provide a central place to serve multiple programs, supporting activities in media/film, journalism, art, web design, radio/sound recording, marketing, etc. The department would like to start with existing resources and develop a space on the fifth floor of SAC, then gradually develop a center over the next three years. The department faculty recognize the faculty and the administration need to agree on a trajectory with respect to the media center. The department’s initial conversations about a media center will address how the media center would relate to the new undergraduate curriculum, and how the center would link to other disciplines. The EVP and the Dean agree that the media center is a definite possibility in the long-term (4-5 years) given the university’s plans for facilities development on the Lincoln Park Campus.

Issues noted for further discussion

1. Curriculum: Offering More Courses in the Liberal Studies Program. The department would like to propose a Communication course in the First Year program on public speaking/oral communication. Dean Mezey pointed out that the department is currently well-represented in the Liberal Studies Program through courses that count as Domain requirements. New courses in the First Year Program or in the Domains would need to be proposed to the Liberal Studies Council.

2. Institutional Support. The department seeks broad institutional support for its new initiatives, such as its new undergraduate curriculum and a Media Center. The Executive Vice President applauded the department for its willingness to cross the traditional disciplinary boundaries, noting that Communication is deeply rooted in the Arts & Humanities, while moving in a technical-professional direction as well. The EVP supports cross-departmental and cross-college collaboration and encourages the department to continue its conversations about a Media Center.

3. The department stands ready to participate in conversations and planning concerning a possible ninth college in the area of communications broadly understood.
University-level Issues and Commitments

During Cycle 3, the unit program review self-studies raised several issues that have important university-wide implications. In subsequent conversations about these major issues, the units, the deans, the Academic Program Review Committee members, and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs all have recognized the need for university-level coordination in the following areas: a) developing appropriate staffing models to support growth; b) assisting units in the transition to the PeopleSoft student administrative system and in getting the maximum benefits from it, such as identifying and counting double majors, enforcing prerequisites, and securing better information and support for student advising; c) providing research assistance to units through university-level research offices; d) improving support for advising, especially in light of PeopleSoft; e) facilitating cross-college collaboration within DePaul with respect to new programs of study. To follow up on these common issues and determine the appropriate courses of action needed to address them at the university and unit level, the Academic Program Review Committee and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agree to do the following:

1. The Academic Program Review Committee agrees to prepare a summary report on Cycle 3 to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs which discusses these and other issues that have important connections to other university-wide initiatives. That report will be made public, along with the Memoranda of Agreement.

2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agrees to direct the appropriate university-level offices to work with the units and their deans to determine how to effectively address these issues.

3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will require a progress report in June of 2002 from the appropriate university offices that will be shared with the Academic Program Review Committee.

Acknowledgements

The APRC thanks the unit’s review committee for its work in this cycle. The review committee has done a thorough job on the self-study, and has involved the Department faculty very well in the process. The department has already made significant progress on some of the major issues raised during review, and the APRC supports its work on future initiatives. The EVP and the Dean also thank those involved in APR for making this process work. It is an important part of the university’s monitoring and maintaining academic quality.

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A hard copy of this document was signed by:

Chair of the Unit Review Committee
Department Chair/Program Director
Chair of APRC Subcommittee
Chair of APRC
Dean of the College
Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs
Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs

*The hard copy with signatures is on file in the Office of the Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs and is available upon request.*