There are 789 communication programs across the country.

What are C-Briefs?

Communication Briefs, C-Briefs, are monthly snapshots of the communication discipline. Each issue of C-Briefs will provide a slice of data about the discipline, based upon data gathered by NCA or available in higher education databases.

In this first C-Brief we offer a list of ways to improve communication department websites. Over the next few months we will post C-Briefs in which we analyze the geographical distribution of communication majors, provide a breakdown of department names by region, and list the number of public vs. private institutions offering communication majors.

C-Briefs will be posted to the Data About the Discipline section of the NCA website on the first of every month.

10 Ways to Improve Department Websites

We recently completed a review of all accredited institutions in the US which offer an undergraduate major in communication. To complete this project, we reviewed 789 department websites. Some websites were excellent; others were quite difficult to navigate. Based on our review, we offer 10 tips for enhancing websites so that they are easily navigable by current and prospective students, as well as faculty from outside the discipline.

1. Use the name of your department consistently throughout the website. Check to ensure that links posted by others (e.g., registrar, Dean's office) use your departmental name correctly and consistently (we found many discrepancies here).
2. Clearly identify the department chair on department home page and display the chair's contact information.
3. Provide the department name on the homepage.
4. Make sure that websites using flash (or something similar) load quickly.
5. Clearly identify a department contact if it is not the chair.
6. Keep all contact information above the fold on the department homepage.
7. Provide the full address of your institution on the homepage (city, state).
8. Clearly identify all communication faculty (adjuncts, TA's) and provide as much contact information for them as possible and permissible.
9. Clearly label the major requirements and degree(s) offered by the department.
10. Use the description of the communication field found at http://www.natcom.org/Default.aspx?id=546 where communication is described or "defined."

Please visit www.natcom.org for more information