

**Assessment of Research Quality  
Communication Science in the Netherlands 2001 - 2007**

## **I Introduction**

### **Scope and context of this review**

This report presents the results of the evaluation by an international review committee of the communication science research 2001 – 2007 at three universities in the Netherlands: the *Universiteit Twente* (UT), the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* (UvA) and the *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam* (VU).

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 for public research organizations (SEP) as published by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) in January 2003. Following the guidelines of the Standard Evaluation Protocol, paragraph 3.2, a Discipline Protocol for communication science research was produced (see Appendix 1).

The international review committee (for short curriculum vitae, see Appendix 2) reports in the present document about its findings.

### **Data provided to the committee**

A self evaluation had been prepared by the participating institutes and sent to the members of the review committee one month ahead of the site visit of the committee. This report contained documentation regarding the level of communication science research in the Netherlands in general, the three participating institutes and the six individual research programs. The self evaluation functioned as the main source of information for the committee.

The self evaluation provided a detailed account of the organization of communication science research in the Netherlands in general, its strategy and its affiliations, the tenured and non-tenured staff and the funding and expenditure. The three participating institutes and each individual research program were extensively described. For reasons explained in the self evaluation report (page iii) the institutional embedding of communication science research at the VU was not evaluated. Information available in the self evaluation is not repeated in this report.

### **Procedures followed by the committee**

Previous to the site visit the members of the committee had four weeks to study the self evaluation in order to enable a preliminary review of communication science research in the participating institutes and the individual research programs.

Unfortunately, prof. Jennings Bryant was unable to travel to the Netherlands for health reasons. Fortunately, prof. Michael Slater was willing to act as the chair of the committee.

The site visit started with the formal installation of the committee by the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the UvA on behalf of the participating universities. During the three days of the site visit, the directors of the institutes and program leaders were interviewed and the three locations were visited. Separate interviews were held with a selected group of PhD students and young staff members (see Appendix 3 for the program of the site-visit).

The interviews with the institute directors and program leaders were facilitated by their well-structured and informative introductory presentations at the beginning of the interviews.

All interviews were held in the presence of the plenary committee. Also the final conclusions and scorings were established in plenary discussions. The site visit was concluded with a short oral presentation by the chairman, in which he presented the general conclusions of the committee to the communication science research community without going into the details of each program.

The committee adhered strictly to the definition of the scores as described in the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP, p. 25):

5: *Excellent*

Work that is at the forefront internationally, and which most likely will have an important and substantial impact in the field. Institute is considered an international leader.

4: *Very good*

Work that is internationally competitive and is expected to make a significant contribution; nationally speaking at the forefront of the field. Institute is considered international player, national leader.

3: *Good*

Work that is competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Institute is considered internationally visible and a national player.

2: *Satisfactory*

Work that is solid but not exciting, will add to our understanding and is in principle worthy of support. It is considered of less priority than work in the above categories. Institute is nationally visible.

1: *Unsatisfactory*

Work that is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc. Work not worthy of pursuing.

## **II Some general remarks on communication science research in the Netherlands**

The main overall conclusion of the committee is that it is quite impressed by the progress of all the programs over the past seven years in general and four years in particular. All programs, although at varying levels, have become increasingly internationally competitive. There is an exceptional trajectory here which, if it continues to grow and sustain, will clearly mark communication science in the Netherlands as a leading center not only in Europe but worldwide.

As stated, each program is at a different stage in an evolutionary process and each program faces distinct challenges. Some are emerging programs, and are outstanding in their potential; others have already established themselves as important players internationally; there are programs of research that in their areas of specialty are among the very best in the world.

The committee has been struck by the momentum, excitement, and enthusiasm among the research groups. In a very short period of time, various researchers and programs are moving into the mainstream internationally. Moreover, while the Netherlands is a small country and there are only a handful of universities with research programs in communication science, between these programs there are excellent complementarities, with distinctive foci yet enough overlap to make possible conversation and collaboration.

Put another way, there is both the critical mass and the momentum here in the Netherlands for significant achievement in communication science. Research programs have achieved or are on their way to achieving highly competitive status internationally.

Although not part of this evaluation, it is important to stress the contribution of the national research school NESCoR in the development of communication science research in the Netherlands. The committee is impressed by the collaborative approach to doctoral education reflected in NESCoR. NESCoR, evaluated favorably in 2005, can be highlighted as a distinctive strength of communication science in the Netherlands.

The committee believes the goal for communication science research in the Netherlands should be to take the next step—not to just be respected colleagues and players in the international communication science community, but to go further and push the field's intellectual envelope, theoretically and methodologically, in the kinds of questions asked and the studies conducted. There are examples of this happening already in the strongest research programs, as noted in the report. The committee believes expanded efforts at cooperation and collaboration not just between research programs, but with other disciplines, will increase the likelihood of research innovation and advancement.

Communication science in the Netherlands has the prospect for more than respect and a place at the table. There is the potential for leadership, for pushing and moving the field, over the next five years. The committee suspects, with continued institutional support, that this increased international leadership will take place. Conversely, reversing this support would reduce momentum at a critical time. The committee recognizes the sizable contributions that communication science in the Netherlands has already made and looks forward to the important contributions to the field that are anticipated from these programs over the next years.

The committee notes that the emphasis on ISI journal publication has strengthened the scholarly impact and international visibility of these research programs and institutes; we applaud the progress of the past few years and, as is noted in the pages that follow, would encourage, beyond a general preference for ISI journals, a particular focus on the top journals in communication science. At the same time, the committee notes that such emphasis should not result in discouraging publication of the kind of major scholarly book that can help cement the reputation of more senior scholars and of the research programs with which they are associated, especially in subfields (e.g. public policy and cultural studies) in which high-quality scholarly monographs are particularly valued.

With this report, the activities of the committee have come to an end. The committee thanks everyone who made this evaluation for the members of the committee such an interesting and valuable experience. The committee expects this report will prove useful in terms of providing 'food for thought' regarding future directions and addressing challenges and will contribute to a further strengthening of the communication science research in the Netherlands in general and the communication science research at the three participating universities in particular.

## II Universiteit Twente

**Institute: Twente Institute of Communication Research (TWICoR), part of the Institute for Behavioural Research (IBR)**

*Introductory remarks: Although the committee was asked to evaluate TWICoR, during the site visit TWICoR turned out to be an institute with no budget and limited tasks. Therefore the relatively low scores on the assessment criteria are not surprising. In retrospect, it might have been better not to have TWICoR evaluated as a research institute as the research institute functions have largely moved to the IBR, which the committee did not evaluate.*

*The committee feels obliged to conduct the evaluation according to the criteria as it was part of its charge; however, the committee recommends that Twente University and other users of this report attend to the scoring of the individual programs and not the TWICoR score in assessing the research status of these programs.*

Overall score: 3/4

Since 2001, TWICoR has overcome several challenges. A serious fire on November 20, 2002 gutted the offices, archives and facilities of many communication researchers. The researchers have also had to adjust to a considerable reorganization. From 1995 to 2002, TWICoR was embedded in the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences. In 2003 it was moved to the Faculty of Behavioral Sciences and in 2007 the Department of Communication Studies was split into four new departments of Marketing Communication and Consumer Psychology, Media Communication and Organization, Psychology and Communication of Health and Risk and Technical and Professional Communication. The two communication research programs associated with TWICoR – *Communication & Social Influence* and *Design Implementation, and Use of Communication Means* - are currently embedded in the Institute of Behavioral Research (IBR) along with five other programs. As the self-evaluation report indicates, TWICoR, nominally the combination of these two programs, “has retained its status as (informal) research platform within the IBR.” Even though this document serves as a review of TWICoR, it is noteworthy that the committee found that the faculty and students did not identify strongly with TWICoR as an organizational entity. The committee believes this is because TWICoR is not perceived as providing leadership or possessing decision-making authority.

While confronting these challenges, the research staff at TWICoR has doubled between 2001-2007, primarily due to a tripling of Ph.D. students. The number of Full and Assistant Professors have remained largely unchanged while there has been a modest increase in the number of Associate Professors. Research funding has more than doubled but is still heavily reliant (76%) on direct funding from the university. There has been an approximately 500% increase in both Research funds and in Contracts but these still account for only 4% and 18% respectively of the overall budget of TWICoR. The number of ISI-ranked publications has tripled between 2001 and 2007, but is still less than half the number of refereed journal articles.

The committee believes that the future of communication research at University of Twente is at a critical crossroad, as it confronts daunting fiscal challenges on the one hand and intellectually unparalleled opportunities on the other hand. Intellectually, TWICoR is uniquely positioned to take on an internationally competitive role in advancing the study of technology and social behavior. The research collaborations with technologically focused disciplines at the University of Twente positions TWICoR to advance fundamentally new theories of communication in technologically-enabled environments. TWICoR researchers are well positioned to be among the

first to empirically investigate theoretically important questions about communication processes and outcomes in communities and contexts equipped with cutting edge technologies being developed at the University of Twente. In addition, researchers at TWICoR have the opportunity to help design new technologies to enable and instrument communication processes. These technologically enabled environments provide a unique opportunity to develop and test new theories about fundamental communication processes that are not beholden to traditional definitions and measures of communication.

The high level of organizational turmoil weathered by the members of TWICoR over the past 6 years have resulted in some sentiment that the pressure from university administration towards interdisciplinary collaboration with other units at the University of Twente is a necessary survival strategy. The committee feels it is important for the University of Twente administration and the TWICoR leadership to create a perspective where interdisciplinary research is seen as the locus of competitive advantage rather than a strategy of last resort. Using the language of computer software, TWICoR's move to interdisciplinary research is not a bug but a feature. This reframing might be facilitated by strategic short term investments in areas with the highest potential for intellectual advances in communication science via interdisciplinary research.

The committee anticipates that TWICoR will have to address six significant issues in order to respond to the removal of first-stream research funds from January 2008 on and to strengthen its current position.

**1. Integration between multiple themes in the two programs.**

TWICoR has four areas (reflecting the four departments) represented within the two programs. These are (i) media, communication and organizations, (ii) technical and professional communication, (iii) marketing communication and (iv) health/risk communication. While these four themes have each demonstrated their intellectual viability, there is an opportunity for substantial intellectual cross-fertilization of ideas, theories, and methods. For instance, research in organizational communication could be better integrated across the different units. Health/risk communication has important and underutilized synergies with marketing communication as well as technical communication. As it stands, the intellectual profile of TWICoR is less than the sum of its parts. There is need for the development of a more coherent plan to develop an identity for TWICoR that would also serve to delineate its ties to other units within IBR, other institutes especially CTIT, as well as other communication programs in the country via NESCoR.

**2. Balance between fundamental and contract research.**

Researchers within TWICoR have demonstrated their potential to conduct fundamental research in important sub-fields within communication. However, there is a real tension in terms of balancing their research portfolio between fundamental research (with potential for funding from NWO and the STW) and more applied research (with contract funding). Their heavy reliance on contract funding precludes the opportunity to develop the publication record that will attract high levels of future NWO funding. As such they are caught in a cycle of dependency that will prevent them from realizing their intellectual potential for basic research.

**3. Balance between engaging with communication disciplines and other disciplines.**

The University of Twente, with its mission on "technology for life," provides TWICoR a unique opportunity within the Netherlands to conduct and advance communication research in important technologically-enabled contexts such as health and government. The researchers in TWICoR have demonstrated their ability to develop close collaborations with these research communities at the University of Twente as well as practitioner communities in the Netherlands. However, there is a real tension between publishing results in outlets within these domains as opposed to

major communication publication outlets. The committee felt that the collaboration opportunities available to TWICoR researchers make them uniquely qualified to contribute to fundamental research that advances communication theory and science to help understand and enable these technologically enabled environments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In order to realize this potential, it is critical that TWICoR researchers place a substantial portion of their publications in top-tier communication journals. Some of the TWICoR researchers were concerned that this research would not be viewed as sufficiently mainstream for top tier communication journals. The committee is optimistic that communication journals welcome strong theoretical-grounded contributions in these areas. Hence researchers should be encouraged to publish in ISI-ranked communication journals in addition to those published in the ISI-ranked journals in the application domains.

#### **4. Balance between book writing and ISI publications.**

Several members of TWICoR, including senior researchers and students, expressed some frustration with the heavy emphasis on ISI-ranked publications, especially at the expense of books. Indeed some of the researchers at TWICoR are better known internationally for their books than for their ISI-ranked publications. The committee believes that book publications should be recognized if they serve as a capstone effort to synthesize or integrate the researcher's publications in ISI-ranked journals.

#### **5. Balance between mono- and inter-disciplinary research.**

Some TWICoR researchers expressed frustration that their lack of a strong publication record, prompted by their heavy reliance on contract funding, has made them less competitive in terms of mono-disciplinary funding opportunities from NWO. The committee recognizes this challenge, but is optimistic that the recent interdisciplinary initiatives at NWO and the EU 7<sup>th</sup> FP, especially in the area of information technologies, should provide new and exciting opportunities for competitive proposals from TWICoR. The University might consider special research investments in order to help TWICoR do the preliminary research that will make them competitive for these opportunities.

#### **6. Retirement, recruitment and retention.**

TWICoR must prepare for some high profile retirements in the coming years. This will provide TWICoR and the University of Twente to think strategically about recruiting junior and senior faculty in an area that speaks to the strengths within TWICoR and the University's focus on technology and emphasis on interdisciplinary research. Along with recruitment, TWICoR also needs to be more strategic about retention of its junior faculty. This means that TWICoR should significantly improve its current efforts for mentoring junior faculty – especially when it comes to publication strategies and grant proposal writing.

**UT Research program I**  
program leaders:

**Communication and Social Influence**  
prof.dr. Ad Pruyn & prof.dr. Erwin Seydel

Quality	4
Productivity	4
Relevance	4
Vitality and feasibility	3/4

The committee rates the quality of this program as very good. In the evaluation period, an increase in both staff and PhD students has been accompanied by an increase in output. The program is coherent with respect to the focus on social-psychological approaches to applied work in health communication, risk communication, and marketing communication. There is a clear publication strategy with a focus on ISI publications in order to get a name in the field and to qualify for more NWO funding. The quality of the publications is good and in various cases excellent. With respect to the health communication effort, work tends to be published in medical specialty publications and journals of health education. These are fine outlets and certainly should be part of the mix. However, publication of the more theoretically interesting work in journals of health communication and general-interest communication journals would enhance the visibility of the program in communication science. Several recent publications in *Communication Theory*, *Public Understanding of Science*, and *Communication Research* show the feasibility of this strategy. Staff and PhDs are generally enthusiastic, and appreciate the short lines within and between programs. The committee believes that the quality of the program could be further improved by stimulating still unrealized synergies between research in marketing and research in risk and health communication.

The productivity of this program is very high in almost all categories except the monograph category. Various staff members find the latter category important in terms of impact and theory development. The production of journal articles now is at a level that book writing may be considered. Perhaps book writing could also serve the already mentioned limited visibility of the program in communication science, because a substantial portion of the higher ranked journal articles are not primarily within the realm of communication science by faculty whose research program is well-established, if a given book is likely to increase the stature of the faculty member and the visibility of the program. However, we would discourage book publication if it interfered with a movement toward greater publication in more prominent ISI journals, particularly in the communication field, for the program as a whole.

The societal relevance of the program is very high due to the importance of the three domains and the applied focus of the program. An indication for the program's societal relevance is the amount of contract research. The relevance of this program for the field of communication science would be enhanced if the program would direct its publications even more to journals that are more central in the international community of communication scientists. This observation is acknowledged in the program's SWOT analysis.

Viability and feasibility of the program is good though challenged. The applied focus that is firmly rooted in the policy at the level of the faculty is particularly fit to meet the challenge of a period that values multi-disciplinary in addition to mono-disciplinary research. Greater collaboration and cross-fertilization within the program (e.g., between the health/risk communication and the marketing/advertising communication emphases) has the potential to maximize the potential contribution of the program and might help set a tone for other cross-disciplinary collaborations; the theoretical and methodological issues addressed by each area are

clearly overlapping, and progress in one area can inform the other. Conversely, viewing each of these areas as competitive rather than complementary will diminish the potential contribution of the program as a whole. The committee believes that innovation in communication research can flourish in interdisciplinary settings. The program seems strong enough to meet this challenge. On the other hand, the necessity to acquire all its own research funding from external sources may bring the program in a position where it has to struggle just to stay at the level it is at; a primary threat is the uncertainty about graduate school support in future years. Another threat to the viability of the program is the course load that within the present policy will not translate in research funding and faculty lines. Although the program has proven to be successful in attracting contract research, these funds are not easily translated in long-term scientific research projects. The committee believes that an exclusive reliance on external funding to attract PhDs may hinder the program's growth in terms of quality.

**UT Research program II**  
program leaders:

**Design, Implementation and Use of Communication Means**  
prof.dr. Jan van Dijk & prof.dr. Michaël Steehouwer

Quality	3/4
Productivity	4
Relevance	4/5
Vitality and feasibility	4

The research program is addressing issues of significant and growing intellectual and societal interest. Particularly noteworthy is the dual focus on building theory of technologically enabled environments from an interdisciplinary perspective and applying these insights to real world contexts. The research agenda of the program leverages the expertise of the faculty within the program as well as the opportunities for collaboration with other social sciences as well as technologically focused disciplines and research institutes (especially the Center for Telematics and Information technology) within the University of Twente. This configuration positions the program to make unique contributions to the advancement of communication science in technologically-enabled environments from an interdisciplinary perspective. It also embeds the program effectively within the intellectual milieu of the University.

Beyond the University of Twente, the program has developed important partnerships with government agencies, organizations and universities in the Netherlands, including NESCoR. It has also begun to forge useful ties with programs elsewhere in the EU and the US. The program directors are internationally well respected scholars in the communication discipline. They have served leadership roles in the professional associations as well as on editorial boards. In addition, they are effective ambassadors of the communication discipline in other intellectual arenas such as eGovernment and IEEE.

The program has increased its volume of ISI-ranked journal publication seven-fold over the past six years, albeit from a very low base. However the volume is still only half of the number of refereed articles and approximately a third of the number of professional publications. Moreover, there is little placement as of yet in the higher-impact communication journals. It is hoped that, as part of the publication strategy, the trend towards ISI-ranked publication will continue and that it will soon overtake the number of refereed articles, and will move into increasingly significant journals. In particular the committee believes that, in order to make a contribution to fundamental communication science, it is important for the researchers to improve their presence in ISI-ranked journals within the field of communication. Given the high level of societal relevance of the research conducted in the program, professional publications are clearly an important part of the program's mission, especially to engage with Dutch society. However, as part of the publication strategy, there is room to bring the overall volume of ISI-ranked publications into better parity with other forms of publication. The program is one in which several books which are significant in their area (combined with the sharp upward trajectory in ISI publication) have increased the quality ranking over where it might otherwise be; such book publication in this case proved an important adjunct to major journal publication.

The program is improving its production of completed Ph.D. dissertations and has embarked on an innovative program to recruit external Ph.D. students who are working within organizations. This gives the program an opportunity to further engage in scholarship with immediate social relevance. In light of this development, it will be particularly important for the program to further develop their existing structures and mechanisms to help mentor and socialize Ph.D. students in terms of manuscript preparation and grant proposal development.

The committee is of the opinion that the English language title of the program seemed somewhat unclear. While this might simply be an artifact of its translation from Dutch, given the international visibility of this program, it may be constructive to refine the English translation.

Overall, the program has evolved over the past years 6 years to reach a point of inflexion in terms of vitality and feasibility. With the impending addition of a faculty member in the area of Organizations, it is well poised to reach critical mass in terms of scholarship and societal engagement. In collaboration with social scientists, the technological units at the University of Twente and the Center for Telematics & Information Technology (CTIT), the program has the potential for further increases in:

- (i) the amount of basic funding (from NWO and STW);
- (ii) the number of ISI-ranked publications, especially in Communication journals;
- (iii) the number of Ph.D. dissertations and
- (iv) the visibility with external stakeholders in government agencies, professional associations, and universities in the Netherlands, the EU and the US.

### III **Universiteit van Amsterdam**

**Institute:** **The Amsterdam School of Communications Research ASCoR**

**Director:** prof.dr. Claes de Vreese

Overall score 5

The general conclusion of the committee is that within only ten years, ASCoR has risen to become the European leader in communication science and is likely one of the top dozen programs worldwide, in this otherwise largely North American-dominated field. NWO funding has been instrumental in helping talented researchers move into the forefront of the discipline in their areas of expertise, and in increasing the international visibility and reputation of ASCoR.

The ASCoR leadership is young and energetic; there is a culture of high standards and expectations that is associated with excellence. Several researchers/research groups are at or near the top of their fields internationally. All the programs within the institute are strong and doing important work, with significant external support. Two Vici grants, three Vidi grants and five three Veni grants over the past five years underscore the prominence of this institute. It is impressive that they have done so well given the budget shortfall in 2002-3 and resultant staff cutbacks; the budget growth expected given enrollments and scientific/research success bodes well for future scientific contribution. The increase in ISI productivity in all programs over the past 3 years has been dramatic with a promising trajectory; placement in top journals is especially noteworthy.

ASCoR has critical mass: it is one of largest research institutes of communication science at one institution in the world. The culture of excellence, of mentorship in obtaining NWO support, and high morale suggest that this upward trajectory is likely to continue. Threats to this continued and increased success include primarily the possibility that planned budget expansion is not forthcoming. Since student demand cannot be capped, and such demand is not diminishing and in fact is still increasing, funding for faculty lines must increase to maintain research performance apace with student enrollment growth, or the potential for scientific leadership at ASCoR is unlikely to be fully realized.

It is also the view of the committee that ASCoR is in a position to do more than achieve a respected position in the international communication science community. A program with this level of energy, growth, vigorous leadership combined with youthful enthusiasm, promises to do even more—intellectual and methodological innovation, to help guide and reshape the mainstream. Recent work in MEPC is starting to move in this direction, as is work in MJPO in particular with the recent receipt of the Vici grant.

The committee wishes to provide four suggestions, acknowledging that there may be a variety of ways to accomplish the same end.

#### **1. Interdisciplinarity**

The committee has spoken of the potential for intellectual innovation arising from work at ASCoR. A key way to facilitate this intellectual innovation would be greater efforts at interdisciplinarity, reaching out to other departments within their faculty of social science, and even other faculties and other universities. Also, VU's program is complementary in many ways, and together with ASCoR helps identify Amsterdam as one of the world centers for

communication science; the NESCoR cooperation may facilitate some kinds of collaboration where appropriate. A possible starting point within the UvA might be to work on centers of excellence seed grant initiatives, to further these interdisciplinary ties.

## **2. Thematic working**

The committee suggests continuing and expanding efforts such as the cross-program thematic working groups on immigration issues, to embrace other timely and cross-cutting thematic issues, as well as having cross-program groups looking at shared problems in methodology, and expanding use of the current “mini-conferences” within ASCoR. This also can encourage innovation and cross-fertilization, and also increase PhD student exposure to other colleagues—the one request of a generally very positive, high morale group of Ph.D. students and young faculty. Perhaps each year these may be proposed and one or two themes selected as a point of focus in a working group or two for the year.

## **3. Incentives for above-average performance**

The committee received some comments that ASCoR applies sanctions for inadequate performance but has fewer incentives for above-average performance. It seems to the committee that it may be possible to structure such incentives to push for excellence and greater innovation. For example, success in publishing in one of the top four or five discipline-wide journals in communication (e.g., *Communication Research*, *Journal of Communication*, *Human Communication Research*, *Communication Theory*) might be rewarded with additional research funds, an extra conference trip, etc. A record of continued excellence over a period of years, if funds permit, might be rewarded with opportunities for release time and/or funds to explore new and more high risk/high gain research efforts, or time to do more reflective or in-depth thinking.

## **4. Expanded focus on highly visible publication**

The committee endorses the focus on international journal publication, and suggests even greater focus on top “flagship” journals and identified first tier specialty journals for each program, rather than simply ISI in general, as the primary goal of communication science scholarship, as reflected in the discussion of incentives above. The committee also believes that there can be a place for book publication in communication science for scholars who have been contributing in an ongoing way over an extended period of time in a given area who want and need the time to deepen and organize their thinking. Given the theoretical and methodological foci of the communication science program, it is the committee’s view that book publication is

- a) an option and not a necessity for an influential communication scholar at ASCoR;
- b) is most effective as a complement to and not as a substitute for major journal publication, and
- c) is most useful in building scholarly and program reputation when it serves as a capstone for a major program of research, provides novel theoretical and/or methodological thinking and insight, and is published and promoted by a significant publisher.

Assessment of book publication can be challenging, but assessment of publisher quality, reviews of the book, qualitative assessments of the ways in which the book forwards the reputation of the researcher in his or her area of specialization, and contributes to the recognition of ASCoR, are possible. For younger scholars the committee suggests such ventures should be undertaken only in consultation with senior program leaders regarding how useful a given proposed book might (or might not) be, given their stage of career development. Important, strategically-timed books, though, can enhance both a scholar’s career and the reputation of a research program.

**UvA Research program I**  
program leader:

**Media, Journalism and Public Opinion**  
prof.dr. Klaus Schoenbach

Quality	5
Productivity	4/5
Relevance	5
Vitality and feasibility	4/5

This research group is producing internationally recognized and influential research on the informative role of media, with particular attention to news production, press content, audiences' media uses, processing, and effects. The work is poised to make major contributions to theorizing on core areas of research on both news production and effects. The published work from this group is both theoretically and methodologically sophisticated, a cause and a consequence of their success in securing competitive research grants from NWO. The research has appeared in a number of highly ranked ISI listed journals inside and outside of communications, especially in political science and information science. The steep rise in such publishing is an indicator of increasing quality and prominence of the research generated within this program. A close reading of key publications confirms the high quality of the work being conducted in this program.

High levels of productivity have characterized the research program from 2001-2007, though the nature of this productivity has shifted from books to peer-reviewed ISI publications. Emphasis on ISI listed journals has resulted in a dramatic increase in the FTE production rate over the past 5 years, yielding a level of productivity that is among the highest of the evaluated research programs and comparable to international peers. In prior years, book publication and non-ISI, peer-reviewed journal publications were a larger part of the published products of the program. This shift has been questioned by some within the program, with leadership and junior colleagues both asking whether it is time to start a discussion about whether books and non-ISI journals should be more valued, especially for senior faculty. Such changes may create opportunities for theory building and paradigmatic innovation. The committee also puzzled over the degree to which some of the most productive and widely cited members of this research program were integrated into its activities, especially those who have joined from other programs.

The research conducted by the faculty and Ph.D. candidates within this program has considerable social relevance and a sizable influence on Dutch society through policy and media. Each of the key research projects focuses on understanding important social phenomena and disseminates these findings through scientific, policy, and popular outlets. Members of the group have been responsive to journalistic requests and have garnered press exposure. They have played important advisory roles in social and professional organizations. Although ASCoR in general, and the MJPO group in particular, have been conservative about conducting contract research, they have accepted contracts that contribute to their defined mission, and have produced a regular stream of reports commissioned by external organizations as part of this work. The overall profile of the group is one of a highly relevant set of research projects that are having social influence both inside and outside of the Netherlands.

The quality, productivity, and relevance of the research conducted within this research program clearly indicate a program in good health with strong long-term prospects. Chief among these are a strong record of external support from national scientific foundations such as NWO, though most of this support has been concentrated among senior faculty, limiting research independence by junior colleagues. Another important factor is the long history of cooperation with the Political

Science department at the University of Amsterdam, which bodes well for future interdisciplinary endeavors. Such interdisciplinarity is also enhanced by interaction between this program and members of other programs within ASCoR, NESCoR, and other universities, inside and outside the Netherlands. Senior and junior MJPO colleagues also noted the difficulty of staying informed of each other's work, suggesting another avenue for improvement that has implications for long-term viability. These scholars have taken the leadership position in Europe in their field, are poised to build upon this by taking leadership outside Europe as well.

**UvA Research program II**  
program leader:

**Media Entertainment and Popular Culture**  
prof.dr. Patti Valkenburg

Quality	5
Productivity	4
Relevance	5
Vitality and feasibility	5

The media and youth research group at MEPC are, in the committee's view, emerging as perhaps the "hottest" research group internationally at present in the area of media effects on youth, especially in their work on the effects of the internet etc. The work is ambitious and sophisticated theoretically and methodologically; they clearly have justified the investments by NWO in terms of moving Dutch communication science into the top tier. Members of this team are consistently publishing in the top five communication journals (underscoring their level of theoretical and methodological sophistication), at a rate that likely puts them among the top scholars in communication research in the past 3 years anywhere in the world. Several popular culture faculty have also had significant publication success and have also been very successful in obtaining external funding to support their work on popular culture. The committee is also impressed by the program director's commitment to continuing to press forward with innovative research to answer basic questions of communication science.

The increase in ISI publication over the past 3 years has been striking. In prior years, book publication was perhaps more noteworthy. ISI journal publication is more challenging in the cultural studies/popular culture area; the relative paucity of such journals in more humanities-oriented approaches limits publication opportunity. It seems that various members of the popular culture faculty have been able to achieve such publication, at least to some extent. Nonetheless, the fact that much of the faculty has a popular culture focus with more limited ISI journal publication opportunity does tend to reduce the overall average productivity of the unit, which is nonetheless very good overall.

The relevance of the contribution of the program leader's team to theory development and extension, to understanding of important social phenomena, to publication in top journals, and in responsiveness to press and consequent press exposure, was noted by reviewers. The popular culture effort was also rated as high in social relevance given the importance and visibility of popular culture in society and the relative prominence of faculty's work in this area.

The energy and leadership are clearly outstanding. The track record of external support through government and industry is strong, and the recent support provided to junior faculty bodes well for the future. The success of three younger faculty in obtaining Veni grants is especially encouraging. This performance suggests that program leadership has made a priority development of younger scholars as independent researchers and reducing the dependence on chaired professors as sources of support and funding. Faculty, including the younger faculty, spoke of the considerable assistance, mentorship, and training provided in preparation of such grants. It is especially noteworthy that this process has assisted a talented cultural studies scholar in obtaining a Veni grant; such social science support is rarely received by persons doing qualitative, interpretive work in cultural studies, and speaks very well both for this young scholar and the mentorship provided by the program. The mix of quantitative communication science and more qualitative/interpretative cultural studies approaches has resulted in strains in many communication units worldwide. The inevitable differences in perspectives and values are recognized on occasion at MEPC, but these don't appear destructive in nature, and there are

clearly shared concerns across the faculty about the social use and impact of media content. More important, there appear to be symbiotic benefits; the quantitative research group reports finding the popular culture group's close knowledge of and insight about media content and use patterns and trends very helpful in informing their research. It appears the popular culture group has benefited at least in some cases through mentoring with respect to government funding and perhaps with respect to the culture of journal publication. So long as this culture of mutual respect is sustained, the prospects for this group are bright.

**UvA Research program III      Persuasive Communication**  
program leader:                      prof.dr. Peter Neijens

Quality	4
Productivity	4
Relevance	4
Vitality and feasibility	4

The quality of this program has become very good in recent years. After the cut back of 50% in 2003, the number of faculty has now increased above the level of 2003, mainly by hiring assistant professors. Since 2004, there has been a clear strategy to publish in ISI journals. Several publications are considered to be substantial contributions to the international literature. A plus is the strong awareness that commercial and health communication may be fruitfully combined in research projects. Another strong feature is the close cooperation with SWOCC, The Foundation for Fundamental Research on Brand Communication, which assembles subsidies of commercial organizations in the Netherlands to fund PhD projects. Various program members have gained good reputations as sophisticated researchers. The program has become a visible player in the international community of communication research. Several researchers within the program are prominently present in the national professional field.

Production in terms of the number of ISI publications has steeply increased since 2004 in accord with the program's policy to build a respectable past performance in order to qualify for NWO funding. The numbers of professional and public publications have increased as well. The number of dissertations is increasing. Success in getting research funds at NWO has been limited but this is compensated by the success in getting sponsors through SWOCC.

Societal relevance of both commercial and health communication is high. An indication is the involvement in numerous advisory boards. Members of the program have succeeded in attracting the attention of the international communication community through conference appearances and publications. There is a policy to socialize staff members with different disciplinary backgrounds into the communication field in order to increase the program's relevance for communication science.

The vitality and feasibility of this young program are very good. Although the teaching load is high, ASCOR policy enables researchers within the program to develop research activities and to coach young staff members and PhDs. Because of the teaching load, the program is allowed to hire new faculty with research time. Although hiring faculty in strategic communication is notoriously difficult, the program has proved to be attractive to young researchers. The cooperation with SWOCC contributed to the base level of PhD students. Moreover, the present expansion in health communication opens up opportunities to compete for other funding sources including NWO. The program seems to be in a stage that it can establish a stronger position in the competition for interdisciplinary research funds. The policy at the level of the faculty seems to be highly supportive of this goal. In order to reach this goal the program might explore communal interests with other programs within ASCOR and programs in other departments of the university in the years to come. A final note concerns contract research. Although reservations in this area are understandable, contract research is a way to stay in touch with the fast developments in the professional field and may even lead to innovative ideas; the committee agrees that contract research involvements should be selective, but also would encourage continued contract research

where it keeps faculty in contact with new ideas and methods in the professions, especially on projects in which at least some data may be employed in academic publication.

#### IV Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

##### **Research program I Message Characteristics and Receiver Processes**

program leaders: prof.dr. P. Vorderer and prof.dr. J. Kleinnijenhuis

Quality	4
Productivity	3/4
Relevance	4
Vitality and feasibility	4/5

This research program is by all accounts in the early stages of its development, with the Department of Communication only formed in 2003 and its new director installed in 2007. Nonetheless, the capabilities of this program are greatly enhanced by the international standing of the two program leaders and the strong interdisciplinary connections with NETWORK and CAMeRA, the research institutes dealing with communication science issues at VU that include faculty from arts, social sciences, computer sciences, and economics. The quality of the scholarship produced by the researchers in this growing program has shown a sharp rise in ISI ranked publications, with rates beginning to approach those of leading international programs. This is true even when taking into account some of the recent arrivals to the program who have boosted the already increasing quality of the scholarship.

A close reading of the selected publications confirms that the work they have produced on the content and psychological processing of communication, particularly of new media, is both theoretically and methodologically sophisticated and poised to make major contributions to research on media sociology and communication effects. The committee notes that publication has tended to emphasize journals in psychology rather than in communication and agrees a mix of journals is appropriate given the programmatic focus on media psychology, though the work being done in this program is in the committee's view quite central to communication science. We also agree that certain key journals in psychology, such as *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, are especially attractive given their wide citation rate—psychology being a larger field, their flagships will have greater citation impact. However, an excessive weighting of the balance toward journals in psychology reduces the visibility of this program within the communication discipline, and may dilute the impact of scholarship in this program. The committee would encourage greater publication in lead communication science journals.

The program has seen a rise in productivity since its inception, with 2007 marking a distinct shift in research output in a range of scholarly outlets. This rise in productivity has outpaced the growth of the tenured FTE staff, which has also increased markedly during this period. Experienced researchers here are quite productive and overall productivity is somewhat reduced primarily because of the relative youth of most of the program faculty. The production of refereed book chapters has also increased during this phase of the program. Given the substantial amount of contract work conducted by this program through NETWORK and CAMeRA, this shift toward refereed production has not come at the expense of professional report writing, which also contributes to the relevance of MCRP research. Leadership and staff in the program share an understanding about the advantages of increasing their publishing in ISI ranked journals, and the importance of this for securing grants from sources such as NWO, though NETWORK has been more successful at securing some of these grants. Nonetheless, there is concern that both NWO and many highly ranked ISI journals do not fully value the type of interdisciplinary and hybrid

research (i.e., fundamental and applied research) conducted in the MCRP program although recent funding initiatives at NWO might be more supportive.

The research conducted and planned by those within the program has considerable public relevance through their connections with industry, policy makers, and media. In general, the dual emphases on interdisciplinarity and new media have strong potential for increasing this social impact. Research staff has made the most of opportunities to disseminate these findings through websites, professional reports, popular outlets, and press exposure. The relevance of the program is most directly demonstrated by their strong and growing relationship with various sources of research, especially large multi-national corporations such as Phillips and Nokia. Notably, they have very consciously balanced this applied research with a parallel emphasis on fundamental research, seeking projects that advance basic and applied ends. This contact work has resulted in a number of reports commissioned by external organizations. As integration with and development of NETWORK and CAMeRA institutes continue, the potential for even greater relevance is within reach.

Given the sizable investments in both NETWORK (2,000,000 Euro over five years) and CAMeRA (4,000,000 Euro over five years) by VU, coupled with the energy and enthusiasm of the new leadership core, the feasibility and vitality of the program seems to be on firm footing for the near future. The real question is how the program will continue beyond this initial phase of robust investment. The leadership seems aware of the challenges that confront them in this regard and the strategies for creating workable long-term solutions. These include the issues with building and retaining a strong core of PhD-students, assistant professors, and most importantly, associate professors. All of this is tied to securing large scale grants from governmental or private sector sources. Currently, the VU Board and Rector are supportive of MCRP efforts to secure NWO support, and have provided funding for highly ranked but unfunded proposals. NETWORK and allied MCRP staff have been successful at securing NWO funding, a point that could be highlighted more vigorously to external audiences. Notably, junior colleagues feel they are being given important guidance in how to be more successful in this process, and the high ranking their projects have received (albeit without being funded) suggests they are correct in their assessments. Most promising is the unique and complementary position that this program has created for itself in terms of interdisciplinary research on new media and media sociology. Considering this innovative positioning and forward looking vision that now guides the program, the program label of “Message Characteristics and Receiver Processes” seemed a bit generic. The leadership of this program may want to consider rebranding it to reflect the unique position they seek to occupy internationally.

## Appendix 1

### **Evaluation Protocol for the Assessment of Communication Science Research Period under review 2001-2007**

#### **1. Introduction**

This evaluation protocol is a disciplinary addendum to the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2003 – 2009 for public research organizations in The Netherlands. The SEP stipulates the requirements for research assessments of institutes of the Dutch universities as agreed by the governing boards of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands VSNU, the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research NWO, and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences KNAW. For items not covered in this protocol the provisions of the SEP apply.

The governing boards (*Colleges van Bestuur*) of the *Universiteit Twente* (UT), the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* (UvA), and the *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam* (VU) are responsible for the present evaluation. They appoint the chair and members of the committee. They determine the protocol for the evaluation. They are responsible for the publication of the reports of the committee and for the conclusions to be drawn from these reports.

The assessment concerns communication science research in the Social and Behavioral tradition at universities in the Netherlands.

The main aims of the assessment are, following the SEP 2003-2009:

- improvement of the quality of research through an assessment carried out according to international standards of quality and relevance;
- improvement of research management and leadership;
- accountability to research funding agencies, the government and society at large.

The main criteria to be used in the evaluation are, following SEP 2003-2009:

- quality (international recognition and innovative potential)
- productivity (scientific output)
- relevance (scientific and socio-economic impact)
- vitality and feasibility (flexibility, management, leadership)

#### **2. Units to be assessed**

This research assessment concerns research programs in communication science and the relevant institutes. The institutes and research programs are:

##### **• University of Twente**

Institute: Twente Institute of Communication Research (TWICoR), part of the Institute for Behavioural Research (IBR)

Program I: Communication and Social Influence.

Program leaders: prof. dr. Ad Pruyn & prof. dr. Erwin Seydel

Program II: Design, Implementation and Use of Communication Means.

Program leaders: prof. dr. Jan van Dijk & prof. dr. Michaël Steehouder

##### **• University of Amsterdam**

Institute: The Amsterdam School of Communications Research *ASCoR*

Director: prof. dr. Claes de Vreese  
Program I: Media, Journalism and Public Opinion.  
Program leader: prof. dr. Klaus Schoenbach  
Program II: Media Entertainment and Popular Culture.  
Program leader: prof. dr. Patti Valkenburg  
Program III: Persuasive Communication.  
Program leader: prof. dr. Peter Neijens

• **Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam**

Institute: Department of Communication Science.  
Department chair: prof. dr. Peter Vorderer  
Program: Message Characteristics and Receiver Processes

**3. External Evaluation Committee: profile and expertise**

The assessment will be performed by an independent (inter-)national external evaluation committee.

The review committee consists of a maximum of five members including the chair. Committee members are experts in one or several of the programs of the research institutes under review. Some of them have a background in interdisciplinary research. The members of the committee are well-established scientists with an international reputation. They are fully independent of the research institutes under review.

• The Chair of the committee is prof. dr. Michael Slater, Ohio State University  
*Michael Slater is Social and Behavioral Science Distinguished Professor at the School of Communication, Ohio State University. He has served as principal investigator of NIH-funded studies of community-based substance abuse prevention efforts, alcohol-related risk perceptions and media coverage, and responses to alcohol advertisements and warnings (representing over \$9 million in funded research grants) as well as conducting investigations of persuasion and media effects, with over 100 publications in these areas. He served as founding chair of the Coalition for Health Communication.*

The members of the committee are (listed alphabetically):

• prof. dr. Hans Beentjes, Radboud University Nijmegen.

*Hans Beentjes is Chair of Communication Science, in particular persuasive communication, at the Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. He is one of the designers of 'Kijkwijzer', the Netherlands rating system for audiovisual media. Besides his research on child and media, Beentjes has published widely about the media use of ethnic minorities and sensationalism in current affairs programs.*

• prof. dr. Noshir Contractor, Northwestern University  
*Noshir Contractor is Jane S. & William J. White Professor of Industrial Engineering & Management Science, Communication Studies, and Management & Organizations at Northwestern University. His research program, on the emergence of factors that lead to the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of dynamically linked social and knowledge networks in communities, has been funded continuously for the past decade by major grants from the U.S. National Science Foundation with additional funding from the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), NASA, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Professor Contractor has published or presented*

over 250 research papers dealing with communication. In 2000 he was awarded the Outstanding Member Award by the Organizational Communication Division of the International Communication Association. He has served on the editorial boards of several ISI ranked journals.

• prof. dr. Dhavan Shah, University of Madison-Wisconsin

*Dhavan V. Shah is Maier-Bascom Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studies and teaches political and strategic communication. He is faculty in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Department of Political Science. His research concerns the social psychology of media influence with particular attention to communication effects on political judgment, public opinion, lifestyle politics, and civic participation. He has authored over 60 journal articles and book chapters and served as principal investigator on grants from Ford, PBS, CPB, Carnegie, Pew, Rockefeller Brothers, C.I.R.C.L.E. and Russell Sage.*

Members of the committee have experience with the organization and management of research at the university level; they are familiar with international scientific cooperation, some of them more specifically with large scale cooperation. At least one of the members has a strong insight in the (organization of) research in The Netherlands.

#### **4. Assignment**

The evaluation committee is asked to assess against international scientific standards the research institutes mentioned under section 2 and their research programs in the period 2001 up to and including 2007. It is noted that some institutes part take in larger research institutes at the different universities. The evaluation only pertains to the part of those institutes that relate to communication science research.

In addition the evaluation committee is asked to reflect upon the various contributions of each institute under review to the discipline and upon the research portfolio they represent for the Netherlands within their field.

#### *Assessment criteria*

The assessment criteria for the institutes as a whole and those for the research programs are similar, but differ in scope and depth. The institute assessment puts emphasis on academic reputation, strategy and organizational aspects, whereas the programs assessments focus on the results and quality of the scientific research and on the future, as stipulated by SEP. The main criteria should always be reviewed in relation to the mission of the institute or group.

The evaluation committee presents its judgment on the criteria according to a five-point scale: excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. An extended description of this scale is given in Appendix 2 of the SEP 2003-2009.

#### *Procedure*

The evaluation committee will have a 2 day visit, including three ½ day visits to each of the three institutes.

The program for the visit will be agreed between the Chair and the directors of the institutes. The evaluation committee receives all relevant material (Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009, this evaluation protocol, self-evaluation documents for each institute as specified in Appendix A to this protocol, additional input and background documents as specified in appendix B to this protocol, and the visiting program) at least four weeks in advance of their site visit.

The Chair may ask, possibly after consulting the other committee members, for additional information from the institutes or the boards.

The committee will meet in a closed session before the site visit after being formally installed by a representative of the Board of the University [the first site visit, TBA]. In that closed session, the committee decides on their working procedure for the visit and for writing the draft report. During the site visits, the committee meets with:

- The director of the institute in question and/ or the faculty dean;
- The program leader(s);
- Any (group of) person(s) of the institute asking to be heard by the committee.

Before each meeting the committee will indicate with whom and about what the interview will be conducted.

At the end of the visit the committee will meet with the university/faculty board to present a first, oral, report. After the visit the committee will draw up a report. In order to avoid any factual errors or mistakes, the chair asks the director of the institutes to comment on the draft evaluation report.

After having received these comments, the committee concludes its evaluation by formulating the evaluation report and by presenting it to the university board for comments. The university board will publish the report. It will discuss the draft report with the dean of the Faculty and the director of the institute and the consequences to be drawn from them.

Together, the self-evaluation document, the final evaluation report and the conclusions made by the board form the results of the external evaluation.

#### *Information*

Each institute provides a self-evaluation document approved by the university board according to the format specified in appendix A to this protocol.

Appendix B lists the additional input and background documents that will be provided to the committee.

#### *Evaluation report*

Following the SEP the committee is asked to formulate its assessment in a report, which is to be made public by the boards of the universities mentioned under section 1, specifying:

1. A review of the each ***institute as a whole***, containing:

- 1.1. A reflection on the leadership, strategy and policy of each institute
- 1.2. An assessment of the quality of the resources, funding policies and facilities
- 1.3. An assessment of the academic reputation of each institute
- 1.4. An assessment of the societal relevance of each institute
- 1.5. A reflection on the strengths and weaknesses each institute has formulated in the self assessment

2. A review of ***each research program*** containing:

- 2.1. A quantified assessment of the quality, productivity, relevance and prospects of the research program (according to a five-point scale specified in appendix 2 of the SEP)
- 2.2. A justification for this quantified assessment, containing:
  - 2.2.1. A reflection on the leadership, strategy and policy of/for the research program
  - 2.2.2. An assessment of the quality of the research staff, (human) resources, funding policies and facilities
  - 2.2.3. An assessment of the quality and quantity of the publications and of the publication strategies

- 2.2.4. An assessment of the academic reputation of the group/program
- 2.2.5. An assessment of the relevance of the program from an academic perspective and from a broader social perspective
- 2.2.6. An assessment of the future perspectives of the program.

The objective of accountability is met by producing a transparent and informative public report of the evaluation's outcomes. To meet the objective of improvement and advice to the research management and the board of the institute, the evaluation committee should feel free to discuss the future of the research and of the institute. For this second objective, the evaluation committee can organize discussions with the institute's scientific leaders during their site visit and draw up a management letter to the board. Matters of personnel policy and sensitive decisions are generally treated in the confidential management letter to the board and do not form part of the public report.

### **Appendix A – Format self-evaluation**

To prepare for the evaluation, each institute is asked to provide a set of documents containing all the relevant information. This documentation reflects both the level of the institute as a whole (A) and the research programs (B) that function within the jurisdiction of the institute. Research conducted outside the scope of a program and other work within the institute may be added separately. Both the level of the institute and the level of the programs are specified comprehensively per year, which means that the factual data of the research programs and other research add up to the total of the institute's data.

The following guideline is adapted from the SEP:

#### **A. Documentation regarding the level of the institute**

A short characterization of the institute is provided, including:

- Name of the institute
- Date of establishment
- Institutional affiliations and formal responsibilities
- Research area and mission
- Formal co-operations and relations with other national and international research establishments

#### A.1 Mission statement.

Description of the mission.

#### A.2 Leadership

On the basis of an organization chart, including the names of the program leaders, the formal leadership and steering mechanisms of the institute are explained.

A description is provided of the decision-making procedures, management style, means of motivation, communication and control and processes of improvement and innovation.

#### A.3 Strategy and policy

Explanation of the research area together with the mission in a historical and future context: changes in research subjects and strategies and plans for the short and long term. The actions taken on the basis of the conclusions of the previous research assessment will be evaluated. And an explanation of the strategy and policy within the wider organisational context of the institute: university, National Research Schools in which the institute participates, the national and the European context.

#### A.4 Researchers and other personnel

The actual personnel policy is explained, including recruitment, selection, training, personal development opportunities, mobility and exchange policies. The SEP distinguished tenured staff

from non-tenured staff. This is applied using the distinction between full, associate, and assistant professors, as well as (non-tenured) post-doc's and PhD students.

Table 1

<b>Research staff at institutional level</b>								
<i>Name and present title</i>	2001	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
FULL	Entire institute	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte
ASSOCIATE	Entire institute	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte
ASSSTANT	Entire institute	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte
POST DOC	Entire institute	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte
PhD students	Entire institute	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte	Research Fte
Total research staff	Entire institute	Sum	Sum	Sum	Sum	Sum	Sum	Sum

## **Appendix 2. Members of the external review committee**

### **prof. dr. Michael Slater, Ohio State University USA (chair)**

Michael Slater is Social and Behavioral Science Distinguished Professor at the School of Communication, Ohio State University. He has served as principal investigator of NIH-funded studies of community-based substance abuse prevention efforts, alcohol-related risk perceptions and media coverage, and responses to alcohol advertisements and warnings (representing over \$9 million in funded research grants) as well as conducting investigations of persuasion and media effects, with over 100 publications in these areas. He served as founding chair of the Coalition for Health Communication.

### **prof. dr. Hans Beentjes, Radboud University Nijmegen**

Hans Beentjes is Chair of Communication Science, in particular persuasive communication, at the Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. He is one of the designers of 'Kijkwijzer', the Netherlands rating system for audiovisual media. Besides his research on child and media, Beentjes has published widely about the media use of ethnic minorities and sensationalism in current affairs programs.

### **prof. dr. Noshir Contractor, Northwestern University USA**

Noshir Contractor is Jane S. & William J. White Professor of Industrial Engineering & Management Science, Communication Studies, and Management & Organizations at Northwestern University. His research program, on the emergence of factors that lead to the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of dynamically linked social and knowledge networks in communities, has been funded continuously for the past decade by major grants from the U.S. National Science Foundation with additional funding from the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Rockefeller Foundation. Professor Contractor has published or presented over 250 research papers dealing with communication. In 2000 he was awarded the Outstanding Member Award by the Organizational Communication Division of the International Communication Association. He has served on the editorial boards of several ISI ranked journals.

### **prof. dr. Dhavan Shah, University of Madison-Wisconsin**

Dhavan V. Shah is Maier-Bascom Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studies and teaches political and strategic communication. He is faculty in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Department of Political Science. His research concerns the social psychology of media influence with particular attention to communication effects on political judgment, public opinion, lifestyle politics, and civic participation. He has authored over 60 journal articles and book chapters and served as principal investigator on grants from Ford, PBS, CPB, Carnegie, Pew, Rockefeller Brothers, C.I.R.C.L.E. and Russell Sage.

### **Drs. Klaas Deen (secretary)**

Klaas Deen is free-lance academic consultant. He was former staff member at the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA) and director of the Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU). He has acted as secretary of several research and education evaluation committees in the Netherlands.

### **Appendix 3 Program Research Assessment Communication Science 2008**

#### **Wednesday June 11, 2008**

- 12.00: Opening, by Prof. dr. Edward de Haan, Dean FMG/UvA (location: UvA -OIH / Room E102). Lunch served  
14.00: Taxibus to the VU, Metropolitan gebouw, De Boelelaan 1081, A'dam. Room: Z 113  
14.30: Arrival + Tour  
14.45: Dean (Prof. dr. B. Klandermans)  
15.15: Program leaders (Prof. dr. P. Vorderer and Prof. dr. J. Kleinnijenhuis)  
16.15: Coffee  
16.30: Research community  
    Junior researchers: Wouter van Atteveldt, Tilo Hartmann, Eyal Oren, Ghazanfar Siddiqui, Janet Takens  
    Senior researchers: dr Enny Das, dr Elly Konijn, dr Peter Kerkhof dr Dirk Oegema  
17.15: Committee meeting  
18.00: Taxibus to Amsterdam  
19.00: Dinner

#### **Thursday June 12, 2008**

- 09.00: Arrival UvA (room E102) + tour  
09.30: Director (Prof. dr. Claes de Vreese)  
10.00: Program I (Prof. dr. Klaus Schoenbach)  
11.00: coffee & tea  
11.15: Program II (Prof. dr. Patti Valkenburg)  
12.15: lunch (committee only) Room C.003  
13.00: Program III (Prof. dr. P. C. Neijens)  
14.00: Dean (Prof. dr. Edward de Haan)  
14:30: Research community  
    (Dr Eva van Reijmersdal, Dr Stijn Reijnders, Esther Rozendaal (MSc), Andreas Schuck (MA),  
    Hilde Voorveld (MSc) & Dr Hajo Boomgaarden)  
15.15: Committee meeting  
16.15: End  
18.00: Dinner  
19.30: Taxibus transport to Twente,

#### **Friday June 13, 2008**

- 09.00: Arrival UT, incl. tour (Building: Cubicus; room C138)  
09.30: Dean (Prof. dr. Hubert Coonen)  
10.00: Director (Prof. dr. Erwin Seydel)  
10.30: Program I (Prof. dr. Erwin Seydel & Prof. dr. Ad Pruyn)  
11.30: coffee

11.45: Program 2 (Prof. Dr. Jan van Dijk & Prof. dr. M. Steehouder)

12.45: lunch in the Faculty Club (committee only)

13.30: Research community

Dr. Thomas van Rompay, Dr. Mark van Vuuren, Claartje ter Hoeven (MSc),

Somaya Ben Allouch (MSc), Willem Pieterse (MSc), Dr. Ellen ter Huurne)

14.15: Committee meeting, preparation preliminary conclusions, preparation report.

16.00: Presentation preliminary conclusions (Restaurant Faculty Club van de UT, Drienerlolaan 5,

16.15: Borrel (Faculty Club)

17.30: Committee departure for Amsterdam

**Saturday June 14, 2008**, Departure or free day for committee members with departure Sunday