UCSB's Department of Communication is ranked No. 5 in the country by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, the university announced Monday. UCSB is the only California university in the top 20 in this field and climbed from eighth to fifth in just a year.

"I am thrilled to see that our Department of Communication has moved into the top five globally, but not at all surprised," Charles Hale, dean of social sciences, said in a news release. "The strength of departmental faculty in all four dimensions — research, teaching, professional activities and service — is truly outstanding, and they richly deserve this important recognition. I extend to them my hearty congratulations."

Department chair Norah Dunbar said the faculty and students are the reasons for the ranking.

"The communication faculty at UC Santa Barbara work very hard to stay on the cutting edge of what communication research should really be about — they study social media and new technologies and how those affect relationships and organizations in a variety of ways," Dr. Dunbar said in the news release. "We also have a strong graduate program. Our graduate students work side-by-side with faculty on our research teams and

in our labs — and the research that we do could simply not be done without them."

The department is smaller than most of the other schools in the top 20, Dr. Dunbar pointed out. The "fact that we are so highly ranked speaks to the quality and importance of the work being done because these world rankings reflect the quality of publications as well as the prestigious awards that faculty have won," she said. "For such a small department to achieve this is something for UC Santa Barbara to be proud of."

The fields that the faculty and students work in are "interpersonal communication, media communication and organizational communication," according to the news release.

The rankings come from Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), which ranked more than 4,000 universities across 54 subjects in the life sciences, natural sciences, medical sciences, social sciences and engineering, according to the news release.

Shanghai Rankings first published rankings in 2003. UCSB placed highly in other subjects by Shanghai Ranking, including seventh in electrical engineering and 12th in physics, according to the ranking website.

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