



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Communication Technologies Pique Student Interest

by Jacob Tyree, Class of 2014

Over the past decade society has become more intrinsically fused with technology as both alter and shape the path of the other. In order to keep up with the rapid pace of technological development,



Sally Jackson

Professor Sally Jackson and PhD candidate Liesel Sharabi are educating students on the current impacts technology has on society. Sharabi has been studying interpersonal relationships and how the Internet

facilitates the social processes of relationship development and maintenance. Professor Jackson has developed a course designed to give students hands-on experience with cutting-edge informational communication technologies, while examining any potential unintended consequences of its use in society. Sharabi's course, "Interpersonal Relationships and Technology," has been exciting students since the Summer of 2013. "We cover everything from how people initiate, develop, maintain, and dissolve their relationships through communication technologies to issues surrounding identity, deception, and privacy on the Internet." Her course explores these ideas through a variety of lectures, class activities, discussions, films, readings, and a final project where each student must apply course concepts and develop their own communication technology. "By doing this, [students] are able to hone their research and writing skills while also learning how to turn abstract theoretical concepts into concrete ideas." Sharabi's course is updated every semester

so that students are being exposed to the most current, cutting-edge research and communication technologies. Students leave her course being able to answer the question 'What effect is technology having on our relationships?' Whether or not technology is inherently good or evil, "it is changing our relationships in complex ways."

Much like Sharabi's course, Professor Jackson has restructured her course, "Communication Technologies and Society," which provides insight into how different technologies and society have altered each other's paths in the past, as well as examining current theories on what outcomes to expect in the future. Her newly redesigned course aims at: 1) achieving higher levels of personal competence in the use of new communication technologies, 2) developing a deeper understanding of how communication technology has developed over time and how it is likely to develop in the future, 3) improving judgment about whether and how communication technology is involved in social and cultural change, and 4) raising awareness of the effects the uses of technology have on other people and making reflective decisions that take these effects into account. However, unlike other traditional lectured college courses, Professor Jackson has developed a system where students learn through hands-on projects that they must complete throughout the semester. These projects range from examining personal social networks, to creating an artifact at the campus's Fab Lab (the Champaign-Urbana Community Fab Lab is a small-scale workshop for computerbased innovation, design, and

fabrication), to exploring social influence scoring, to Internet infrastructure and obsolete technologies, to microwork's untapped potential. According to Professor Jackson, these projects are not just for students to learn about course concepts and material, but to also prepare them for a lifetime of responsible choice under conditions of great change. "Communication Technologies and Society" not only transforms views of technology and society, but it opens up career options and improves daily life.

Both of these are revolutionary communication courses that provide students with a better understanding of how this rapid technological world is changing, while providing life skills that extend beyond the classroom. As technology continues to further expand and impact our societal and cultural views, society will also influence the development of technology. These two courses are the beginning of an era that concentrates on exploring this new field of study in communication.



Alumni in Residence Wendi Ezgur conducts an ideation session in Professor Sally Jackson's "Communication Technologies and Society" course in November.

headlines . . .

ENDURING CHANGE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION



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Speaking of...Communication

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Liberal Arts & Sciences

As a speech communication alumnus (BA '91), one thing I value about our department at Illinois is how it consistently balances its tradition of excellence while adapting to the ever-changing aspects of the field of communication. Our department's history goes back almost to the beginning of the University, with the creation of a chair in rhetoric and oratory in 1884. Over the past century and a quarter or so, the changes have been consistent and remarkable; for example, over the years our department name has changed 10 times. With all the changes in how people communicate, it is easy to become fixated on the newest technology, platform, or device. Yet as important as those changes are, our department has remained steadfast in its commitment to excellence and in its recognition of the lasting importance of our traditional focus on the art of discourse. It is wonderful to be part of a department that is both enduring and constantly adapting to ensure that future students will get a state-of-the-art education.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2013-14, and we are proud to have had a prominent place in that history. As testimony to the consistent significance of our place within the college, four individuals with direct ties to our department have been named to the LAS Gallery of Excellence. You can read about Marie Hochmuth Nichols, Jesse Delia, Jean Driscoll, and Howard Griffith in this issue. Moreover, we have every reason to believe that people from our department will continue to play a major role in LAS and beyond. For instance, as some of you have heard, Barbara J. Wilson, our former department head (2002-08), has begun her tenure as dean of the College of LAS. We are proud to have her leading the college to greater excellence in its second century.

Exciting changes are happening within the department as well. One of the most exciting parts of department life is the constant efforts to keep the department vital through the recruitment of new faculty members. Beginning this fall, Dr. William Barley will be joining us. He recently finished his PhD at Northwestern's School of Communication, and his research examines how people use technologies in the processes of organizing. His work exemplifies our commitment to studying enduring questions of communication, such as how individuals' motives influence how they represent the information that they share with others in their organizations. His work also reflects attention to the impact of the newest communication technologies in organizations, such as scientific institutes and engineering corporations. New scholars like Dr. Barley and several others who have joined us in recent years show how the

communication field can be constantly changing while also providing lasting lessons that will prepare our students for whatever changes happen in society in the future. This issue features more on our new faculty.

We also have a "new" faculty member coming who some of you may remember. After leaving three years ago for a position at UCLA, Dr. Travis Dixon has agreed to return to become the first Communication Alumni Professorial Scholar. As some of you may recall, Professor Dixon is one of the most prolific scholars in our field, and he is renowned for his research on the impact of stereotypical images in media, such as the effects of biases in how races are covered in television news. Like our department as a whole, Dr. Dixon's work is evolving as the communication landscape changes, and he is focusing more of his recent efforts on understanding the impact of newer media, such as the impact of YouTube on people who use it.

We are very pleased to have such a top-notch scholar returning to Illinois. And, I might add that we could not have convinced him to return without the generous support of our alumni (and in particular our alumni board). It was our wonderful alumni who made the creation of the Communication Alumni Professorial Scholar designation possible through their commitment to support the Alumni Professorial Scholar award. This is yet another way that our past is connecting with our future because it represents successful alumni who felt the department prepared them well, helping to ensure that future students will have access to the same quality of experiences and expertise. Our outstanding alumni are one of the department's most important resources in its drive to maintain the tradition of excellence while always changing to meet new challenges and opportunities.

Dr. Trina Wright-Dixon, who many of you will also remember as a former professor, will also return, but to a position in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Access as assistant director. We are excited to have her back doing great things in the University community as well.

This newsletter discusses only a small fraction of the activities happening all the time, but I hope it provides you with a sense of what continues to make the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign such a vibrant place. And by all means, do not hesitate to visit us in Lincoln Hall when you return to campus.

John Caughlin
Professor and Acting Head

LAS Gallery of Excellence Recipients with Department Ties

Marie Hochmuth Nichols: Pioneer in Communication Research Still Influences Her Field



Professor Marie Hochmuth Nichols arrived at the University of Illinois in 1939 to teach and study communication, and she would remain in the College of LAS until her retirement in 1976. During this time she developed what became known

as the "Illinois Tradition" of communication research, which included establishing the study of "public address," introducing scholars to rhetorical theory, and otherwise examining how words influence action.

Jesse Delia: The Former Dean of LAS Is a Renowned Professor and Administrator



Few people have had more success in dual roles as faculty and administrator—and with more benefit to students and the University of Illinois—than Jesse Delia.

In his 43-year career at the University of Illinois, Delia has served as professor

and head of the Department of Communication, dean of the College of LAS, interim provost, and an international ambassador for the University. He has earned a reputation for excellence in all roles.

Jean Driscoll: The Hall of Fame Olympian Has Turned a Stellar Athletic Career into Service for Those with Disabilities



A few years removed from the racing track, Jean Driscoll once joked that any story about her would be greeted with blank stares. That's doubtful. She is one of the greatest wheelchair racers in history and now is a prominent

advocate for people with disabilities around the world.

Driscoll (BA '91, speech communication; MS '93, rehabilitation administration) won the Boston Marathon eight times in the wheelchair racing category. She's been inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, won 14 Olympic and Paralympic medals, and held the women's world record time in the marathon for 17 years.

Driscoll now works as an assistant dean for advancement in the College of Applied Health Sciences, which is renowned for its programs making higher education accessible to people with disabilities. Through University of Illinois and other organizations, Driscoll has traveled as far as Africa to advance the living conditions of people with disabilities.

Howard Griffith: Star Football Player Moves on to Prominent Career in Broadcast



Howard Griffith's name may ring a bell—if not for his athleticism, then for what he has accomplished since he retired from football.

As a star running back and football captain for the University of Illinois,

Griffith (BA '91, speech communication) helped lead the Illini to a 10-win season in 1989 and a share of the Big 10 title in 1990. During the 1990 season, he rushed for eight touchdowns in a victory against Southern Illinois, which set an NCAA record for rushing touchdowns in a game. Griffith went on to spend 11 seasons in the NFL, where he played a significant role for the Denver Broncos in winning two Super Bowls (XXXII and XXXIII, in 1998 and 1999).

Since retiring from the playing field his degree in speech communication came into play as he became a football analyst for television and radio. Griffith is the lead studio anchor for the Big Ten Network's football coverage, and he analyzes the NFL for ESPN radio in Chicago.

For more information about these recipients and others in the gallery go to las.illinois.edu/100.







- 1. Mardia Bishop received a Campus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.
- 2. Ned O'Gorman (on left with John Caughlin) received a College of LAS Dean's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.
- 3. Amy Holland (on right with John Caughlin) received a College of LAS Staff Award.
- 4. Mary Strum (on left with Cara Finnegan) received the Chancellor's Distinguished Staff Award.
- 5. Sarah Madonia (third from left with John Caughlin, Barbara Hall, and Dave Tewksbury), class of 2014, received a College of LAS Intern Award.



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION HOSTS2013 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION MINI-CONFERENCE

Professors Scott Poole, John Lammers, and 12 of their students rolled out the red carpet on behalf of our department to host the 26th annual Organizational Communication Mini-Conference (OCMC) in October 2013. Over 100 faculty and graduate students from communication departments across the Midwest and beyond attended a weekend of panel presentations and poster sessions that highlighted organizational communication graduate students' research.

It is a long-standing tradition that the conference is organized primarily by the graduate students of the hosting university, and for over two decades OCMC has provided a supportive environment where PhD students can get feedback on their dissertation projects as they near the completion of their degrees. The OCMC has grown in size over the past decade because it offers an opportunity for junior scholars to network with peers and with senior scholars, increasing the exchange of ideas across institutions and among young and experienced scholars.

This year's conference began with a workshop on computational social science research methods. As the amount of digital information grows exponentially each year, computational methods (analysis conducted using advanced computing technologies) are emerging as important ways for researchers to investigate humanities, arts, and social science research questions. Professor Scott Poole led the workshop, and presenters from the Institute for Computing in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (I-CHASS), the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA), and the Department of Communication demonstrated text analysis,

This conference rotates each year, hosted by institutions in the Midwest with organizational communication programs. The 2014 OCMC will be hosted by Purdue University's Brian Lamb School of Communication.

advanced data visualization, and machine-learning methods.



Technology allowed for a Skype presentation at the OCMC in a Lincoln Hall lecture hall.



OCMC participants find poster sessions useful to discuss ideas and get feedback on their research.



the University of Nor

Communication Leaders from left: Tyler Balkin, Natalie Arroyo, Korey Davis (class of 2014), Spencer Kennedy, senior, and Emma Goodman (class of 2014) were on hand to welcome visiting OCMC participants.

ILLINOIS HOSTS MIDWEST WINTER WORKSHOP FOR RHETORICIANS

It was a cold day in January, but nearly 75 faculty and students from 12 universities across the Midwest managed to attend the 2014 Midwest Winter Workshop hosted by the department in Lincoln Hall. This annual, regional event for graduate students and faculty in rhetorical studies was first held at the University of Illinois almost a decade ago. It brings together an interdisciplinary group of students and faculty to discuss papers-in-progress and issues relating to research and professional development.

Co-sponsored by the Departments of Communication and English,

the Center For Writing Studies, the RSA at UIUC Student Chapter, and funded in part by the Student Organization Resource Fee and a Special Events Grant from the Rhetoric Society of America, doctoral students Rohini Singh and Paul McKean were the primary organizers. This year's workshop featured alum Dr. Robert Asen (BA '91), now from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as the keynote speaker. More information and notes from the event can be found at the Department of Communication's Rhetorical Studies Reading Group blog: http://uirsrg.wordpress.com.

"Careers for PhDs in Communication" Symposium Held

Six of the department's PhD alumni were invited back to campus last October to share their career trajectory with current graduate students. Co-sponsored by the Graduate College, 25 students and faculty attended the day's events. The aim was to allow our graduate students an opportunity to see the alternatives to an academic career with a PhD.

The day began in Lincoln Hall with a keynote address given by **Paul Lisnek** (BA '80, MA '80, JD '83, PhD '85).

Dr. Lisnek is a multi-Emmy, Beacon, Cablefax, and Telly award-winning television host and anchor. He is a nationally recognized author and lecturer on communication and negotiation. Paul anchors *Politics Tonight* on CLTV, is the political analyst for WGN-TV, anchors *Newsmakers* (on HLN), *Political Update* and *Broadway in Chicago Backstage* (Comcast Network), and is a frequent guest host on WGN-AM radio. He is also a national lecturer for Barbri Bar Review, the leading bar review prep course in which he teaches Constitutional Law and Ethics. He has also served as an ethics commissioner over Illinois attorneys (and Illinois Supreme Court appointment) for 25 years.

There were two panel sessions, which included Mae Jean Go (MA '77, PhD '82), J.D. Miller (BA '97, MA '98, PhD '02), Erica Bauer (PhD '10), and Steve Klien (PhD '99).

Mae Jean Go is currently a technical architect,
Online Consumer Digital Experience Group at AT&T. She is



Doctoral Symposium participants Steve Klien, Jim Applegate, Paul Lisnek, Mae Jean Go, J.D. Miller, and Erica Bauer pose with their favorite Lincoln Hall resident.

responsible for managing resource assignments for design and info architecture work, and for developing editorial standards for AT&T's customer-facing websites.

J.D. Miller is the director of business development at Runzheimer International, a company that helps modern organizations address the needs of mobile workers by providing the technology, processes, and procedures necessary to effectively conduct business outside the walls of a traditional office. In that role, he directs the sales team responsible for developing new clients in Runzheimer's worldwide business.

Erica Bauer is the director of admissions, community engagement, and external partnerships at Gwendolyn Brooks

College Preparatory Academy, a selective enrollment high school on Chicago's far south side. Brooks College Prep is a Gold Medal School, currently ranked the #13 school in the state of Illinois, according to *U.S. News and World Report*.

Steve Klien is a faculty member at Augustana College where he also serves as Chair of the Fine and Performing Arts Division. As division chair, he also chairs the Faculty Welfare Committee (the tenure, promotion, and personnel policy committee). He has also served on the Educational Policies Committee and the Senior Inquiry Development Committee.

The morning panels were followed by a luncheon where **James Applegate** (MA '74; PhD '78) was the featured alumni speaker. Jim has served as a consultant, helping organizations implement the changes necessary to dramatically increase college access and success for all Americans. For the past five years he served as vice president for the Lumina Foundation. Currently he is executive director for the Illinois Board of Higher Education in Springfield.

The afternoon provided a workshop on the non-academic job search for graduate students, hosted by the Graduate College. Students and faculty (and our alums) counted the day as a success: one which will pave the way for similar events in the future.

ALUMNI IN RESIDENCE: WENDI EZGUR VISITS DEPARTMENT

Wendi (Glick) Ezgur (BA '89) spent a day in the department teaching three of our courses, meeting with students, and having lunch with some of our faculty.

She joined us in November and taught Professor Sally Jackson's "Communication Technologies and Society" course, as well as two sections of "Interpersonal Relationships and Technology," taught by doctoral student, Liesel Sharbi. The luncheon with faculty included a lively discussion of Wendi's work as well as some reminiscing about her experience with our department as a student. She also met with students individually during afternoon office hours.

Wendi is the CEO of her own company, Leadhead, Inc., an idea generation company that she founded in the early 1990s. She develops innovative products and service concepts for a variety of clients including Kraft, Burger King, and Pepsi. Hundreds of companies have benefited from her unique ability to be strategic while pushing

the limits of possibility. Helping to define the field of ideation, she is recognized as one of the top ideators in the country. (See her website at leadhead.com.)

She traveled with



Alumna Wendi Ezgur discusses her work at a luncheon with several faculty, and pictured here with Professors Sally Jackson and David Cisneros.

husband Michael (BA '89), also our alum, and their three children, who spent their day exploring campus. Please consider being our next Alumni in Residence if you would like to spend a day in our department. Just send a note to communication@illinois.edu or to Barbara Hall at b-hall@illinois.edu.

New Faces: Welcome to Our New Faculty

Cabral Bigman-Galimore



Cabral Bigman-Galimore, a U Penn PhD, joined our department in Fall 2013. Her broad research goals center on advancing understanding of how communication can reduce health inequalities and advance public health. "One of the most exciting aspects of professor Bigman-Galimore's research

is the potential benefits for people who have the most to gain from advances in public health," said John Caughlin. "Researchers have long documented that there are inequalities in health outcomes, and her work is aimed at making a real difference for those who have not always benefited as much as they could from positive developments in health care. We are very excited about professor Bigman-Galimore's research agenda because she is taking state-of-the-art research and theory about communication and audiences, and she is using it to address one of the most socially significant issues of our time."

J. David Cisneros



Also joining the department in Fall 2013, Dr. J. David Cisneros comes to us from Northeastern University, Boston, where he was an assistant professor. His research focuses on the ways in which social and political identities are rhetorically constituted and contested in the public sphere. He

specializes in issues of citizenship, race/ethnicity, Latina/o identity, and immigration.

Cisneros has published studies on government rhetoric, political campaigns, and mass media about immigration and Latina/o communities as well as research examining the rhetorical strategies of grassroots, social protest movements, and ethnic minorities.

Elisabeth Bigsby



Dr. Elisabeth Bigsby, new to the department in Fall 2013, studies persuasive health messages with a particular interest in how people perceive and process information. Her overall interest is to understand how health information influences decisions to engage in health-related behaviors.

Bigsby's research has focused on non- and current smokers' responses to anti-smoking messages; emotional components of and responses to health messages; health disparities; and public opinion and health. Her work has been presented at national and international conferences, and published in both communication and health journals. She has worked on a variety of grant projects, including awards from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and National Cancer Institute Community Outreach and Translation Core (COTC).

Travis Dixon



Returning to the department this fall after three years at UCLA, Professor Dixon is a media effects scholar dedicated to investigating the prevalence of stereotypes in the mass media and the impact of stereotypical imagery on audience members. Much of Dr. Dixon's work has been focused on

racial stereotyping in television news. His more recent investigations examine the content and effects of stereotypes and counter-stereotypes in major news events, online news, and musical contexts. He is returning as our first Communication Alumni Professorial Scholar.

William Barley



Professor Barley joins our faculty this fall. He has recently completed his PhD at Northwestern and is the newest member of our organizational communication faculty. His main research interests concern how individuals and groups use technology to support processes of organizing; particularly

to share and develop knowledge across technical and occupational boundaries. Specifically, he investigates how individuals express their political and pragmatic motives when choosing to represent (or not represent) information to one another, and the effects these choices have upon higher-level group activity. He uses primarily ethnographic methods to examine these phenomena in a number of contexts including: applied atmospheric science, automobile engineering work, children's hospitals, car enthusiast communities, service organizations, and couples driving together. Prior to Northwestern he spent two years studying car culture as an associate researcher at General Motors Research & Design. He holds a BS in cognitive science from University of California, San Diego.

Another New Face



The department also welcomes **Neil Baer**, new academic advisor in the Undergraduate Advising Office. He began in February, replacing Megan

Kosovski who moved to Colorado in December. We wish her well in her new life and endeavors there, and thank her for her service in so many capacities to the department. Neil's undergraduate degree is in communication from Fordham University, and he also has an MA in political science from Illinois. He has taken an active role almost from the first week, meeting with students, charting our numbers of admitted students, and doing much in the way of "on the job" training. He has been an integral part of our summer registration process, as our numbers of admitted students have increased substantially. He has also taken the lead with our international students for whom we offer virtual advising.

Events . . .

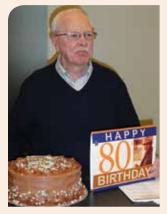
Save the Date: **Chicago Reception at NCA**

Join faculty and graduate students for a departmental reception.

National Communication Association Convention

November 21, 2014 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Chicago Hilton on Michigan Ave., Continental Ballroom B Invitations to Follow



Joe Wenzel celebrated his 80th birthday in November 2013. We presented him with a birthday card filled with good wishes emailed from nearly 150 former students.



Doctoral student **Elizabeth Carlson**, left, was the recipient of the Ruth A. and Charles M. Bowman award this spring, pictured with Mary Bowman, daughter of the Bowmans, and John Lammers, her nominator.



The 2014 Communication Convocation Speaker was **Tiasha Stevenson** (BA 2004).

INVEST IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION'S FUTURE

Ensure continued excellence in teaching, research, and public engagement by supporting the Department of Communication with a gift!

You can designate your gift to:

- Communication Annual Fund, which supports an array of activities
- Joseph Wenzel Undergraduate Support Fund
- Thomas Conley History of Rhetoric Award
- Ruth Anne Clark Student Scholar Award Fund

You can also boost your gift:

 See if your company is listed as one that has a matching gift program (some even double or triple your gift)

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Liberal Arts & Sciences

Welcome Weekend Is 10 Years Old



Ten years ago it was deemed appropriate to invite admitted graduate students to campus for a visit, in an effort to help them with their decision to accept an offer from Illinois. Students were already making trips to visit our department and campus, independently. It was decided that an organized weekend of events was a more efficient use of resources and time, and allowed newly admitted students a chance to meet their likely cohort of peers.

Under the direction of then-director of Graduate Studies, Daena Goldmsith, Welcome Weekend was born. The weekend began on a Friday in March with a luncheon with faculty, followed by an afternoon of office hours, where students met with faculty in their areas of research interest. The day culminated in an evening reception hosted in a faculty home for the visiting "prospectives," current graduate

students, and faculty. Visitors were offered the option of lodging with current graduate students.

The following morning, the visitors attended panels about research and teaching, where current graduate students were the presenters. Generally the day and a half would include a campus tour, and much talk of what it's like to live in Champaign-Urbana, also from the point of view of current graduate students.

In the past 10 years, the format has remained the same, and the weekend is touted as one of the most important events in our department's life each year. As the competition for good students increases every year, allowing them to envision what it is like to study, research, and live here is what Welcome Weekend is all about. The food options have changed, as has the faculty-hosting home, but the outstanding hospitality on the part of current graduate students and faculty can be the deciding factor for making Illinois the place to study. Nearly 75% of admitted graduate students (both MA and PhD) will attend Welcome Weekend each year.

At this Welcome Weekend milestone, we look forward to March 13-14, 2015. ■

Got Internships?

Communication students are eager for realworld experience. We offer our students course credit for interning with organizations that put them to work in a supervised learning setting.

Employers who partner with us report that they benefit from our students' communication skills and gain from evaluating the on-the-job performance of potential employees.

Communication interns are eager to apply what they have learned to the work world.

If you have internship opportunities to offer or would like more information, please contact Kate Ditewig-Morris via email: comm-internships@illinois.edu.

Communication Alumni:Let Us Know What You Are Doing

Please include your contact information along with a list of your accomplishments or personal news from the past year. Send us an email: **communication@illinois.edu.**