

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

s o m e t h i n g t o t a l k a b o u t

interpersonal/organizational | rhetoric | performance

In this Issue:

April 2015

- Turning the Page
- Faculty Spotlight
- Alumni News
- UNT Debate
- Student Activities:
 - Lambda Pi Eta
 - NCA Future Pros
- Around Town & Other News
- Looking Forward

Turning the Page



With a heavy heart The UNT Department of Communication Studies officially announces that Dr. Jay Allison, our remarkable and inspiring leader, will step down as Department Chair on August 31, 2015. Dr. Allison joined the department faculty 26 years ago as the sole full-time member of performance studies faculty, succeeding Dr. Ted Colson in that role.

After 15 years of teaching, research, and service in the department, he was tapped to serve as Assistant Department Chair. Two years later he was promoted to Department Chair, where he set high standards and goals for the department. Looking back, Dr. Allison is most proud of several accomplishments, including increasing the number of performance studies faculty, doubling the number of tenured faculty members on faculty, hiring a diverse group of faculty members who are excellent researchers and teachers, and promoting faculty and graduate student research through the creation of research spaces used by our faculty and students today. Because of his ingenuity and persistence the department now boasts a Communication Studies Library (GAB 301), a Computer Mediated Communication Lab (GAB 318), a Communication Studies Research Office (GAB 327), and a Black

Box Theatre (GAB 321). The Theatre is the accomplishment of which he is most proud, primarily because it is so central to the research of the performance studies faculty and because it was so difficult to obtain. Realizing the dream of having a Black Box Theatre required 16 years of constant lobbying the various Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences. Now faculty and students in performance studies have a laboratory space in which explore and perform their creative research. As he relinquishes his role as an administrator, Dr. Allison is looking forward to doing some writing and to teaching more classes, particularly for undergraduates. During his tenure as Chair, Dr. Allison did the majority of his teaching at the graduate level. He is eager to revamp some of the existing undergraduate performance studies courses and to have the opportunity to teach some of the courses he developed but has had little opportunity to teach over the past decade, such as Intertextuality and Performance, which he is scheduled to teach in the fall. The UNT Communication Studies Department is grateful for Dr. Allison's inspiration and service during his time as Department Chair, and although we are sobered by the loss of such an inspiring and nurturing leader, we are excited for him as he turns his attention to new challenges.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Trudeau Awarded as the Performance Studies Scholar of the Year



Congratulations to Dr. Justin Trudeau, who was named Performance Studies Scholar of the Year at the Southern States Communication Association (SSCA) Conference earlier this month. After being nominated by peers, he was selected to receive the award by the executive board of the Performance Studies Division of SSCA. In addition to receiving this prestigious award, Dr. Trudeau and Dr. Holley Vaughn were the sole presenters on an annual conference session entitled *From Page to Stage*, where they discussed *Big Tex is Burning*, a production that they co-directed during the 2014 spring semester at UNT. This panel, which is unique to SSCA, provides performance scholars an entire program slot (an hour and fifteen minutes) for a detailed presentation on a single performance. In being selected for this 7th iteration of *From Page to Stage*, Dr. Trudeau and Dr. Vaughn follow in the footsteps of three previous UNT faculty members who have enjoyed this honor for productions directed at

UNT: Dr. Kelly Taylor, Dr. Jay Allison, and Dr. Rebecca Walker. Dr. Trudeau described the experience as an exciting and unique opportunity to showcase creative scholarship. For those who were unable to attend the production, *Big Tex is Burning* explored the untimely death and resurrection of Big Tex, the beloved state icon of the annual Texas State Fair. The show investigated and confronted Big Tex as a cultural icon and as a synecdoche of regional and national identity, while examining Big Tex as a collective experience of Texan performativity. The show utilized archival and cast generated performative writing materials, as well as intertextual adaptation and staging techniques.

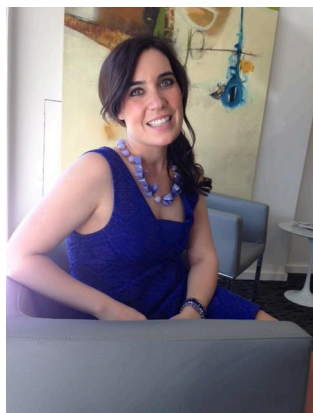
Dr. Trudeau notes that he thoroughly enjoyed the creative process as well as the end result of *“Big Tex is Burning,”* but stopped short of naming it the favorite production of his career. He describes his performances as his children, in that they are all unique and have noteworthy attributes that evoke special memories; consequently, he cannot claim to love one more than any other. In celebrating Dr. Trudeau’s accomplishments, we asked him what he enjoys most about being a performance studies professor. He responded: “I love working in a field of creativity. Every day I get to learn something new and it is never boring. Overall my work is fun.” Further, he discussed his time here as a performance studies faculty member and the opportunities it has afforded him to see so many unique performances pass through the UNT Black Box Theater. “I get to see burgeoning directors and it’s very exciting. I have the opportunity to watch these students grow and direct their own work for the first time.” The UNT Communication Studies department is thankful for and proud Dr. Trudeau’s hard work and accomplishments. We congratulate him again on receiving such a prestigious award!

Alumni News

New Ph.Ds with UNT Pedigrees! Congrats to our Alumni!



Dr. Sara Shaunfield
(B.A., 2009; M.S., 2011)
University of Kentucky



Dr. Jenna Shimowski
(B.A., 2008)
University of Denver



Dr. Brent Saindon
(M.S., 2006)
University of Pittsburg

UNT COMM Alumni Professionals



UNT alumna Keturi DeLong Beatty recently rejoined the Mean Green family as the Senior Director of Development for the College of Education! Keturi joins the Development and External Relations Office from the Hockaday School in Dallas, Texas, where she served as the Director of Stewardship and Planned Giving. During her time at Hockaday, Keturi also served as the Director of Annual Giving, Admissions Officer and Boarding Recruiter, teacher, and dorm mom. She is very excited and happy to be back at UNT where she has many fond memories of her time in the Department of Communication Studies, where she earned her MA, and where she served as a TA, RA, Assistant Basic Course Director, and as an Adjunct Instructor. In reminiscing about her time in the department Keturi said, "Earning my MA was very rigorous and challenging. I juggled teaching, studying, reading mass amounts, and fine tuning my communication skills. I researched nonverbal communication for my thesis, and what I learned directly impacts my work in Development (building rapport, listening, affect, nonconscious mimicry)." Keturi explained that she will be forever grateful for her experience in the Communication Studies department at UNT and for the professors.

Elizabeth Haas (B.A., 2005) currently lives in her hometown of Flower Mound, Texas, with her husband Chris and their two daughters, Parker and Peyton. As the West Zone Communications Coordinator for Lewisville Independent School District, Elizabeth uses her Communication Studies degree daily and claims it has benefitted her career in multiple ways. Specifically, the public speaking, debate, and performance classes prepared her to speak professionally and to interact with multiple and diverse groups of people. "No day is the same in my job and I could go from speaking with kindergartners or high school seniors to handling a crisis communication situation." Elizabeth also completed two internship courses that she describes as extremely important, not only because they gave her a foot in the door for her current career in school public relations, but they provided her experience and knowledge that helped her determine what career field to pursue following graduation. Elizabeth offered a special thank you to all of her professors and fellow classmates for their role in preparing her to be a successful communicator; "I couldn't have done it without you guys!"




UNT Debate

Debate-A-Palooza

On Friday, May 1st, our UNT Debate team is hosting their annual Debate-A-Palooza event. For those who don't know, Debate-A-Palooza features a day of debates between Mean Green debaters and the members of UNT's COMM 2140 Rhetoric and Argument class. The students in the class come together with UNT debate alumni, faculty, and friends for a day of debate, discussion, and deliberation. The debate topics that will be discussed this year include: free college tuition, drug testing for welfare recipients, energy dependence, and the militarization of police. Debate-A-Palooza will take place in UNT's Business Leadership Building from 2pm to 5pm. This event is free and open to the public. Everyone is invited to attend.

A detailed schedule with topics, times and locations are available at: www.communication.unt.edu/debate-team.



Debate-A-Palooza

May 1st, 2015
2pm - 5pm

Located in the Business Leadership Building

Come join UNT Debate, the members of the COMM 2140 Rhetoric and Argument class, and UNT Debate Alumni for a day of debate, discussion, and deliberation. Watch as these students produce over 20 public debates in one day.

This event is free and open to the public.

Please visit: www.communication.unt.edu/debate-team for a debate schedule with topics, times and locations.

A green light to greatness. DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES College of Arts & Sciences UNT

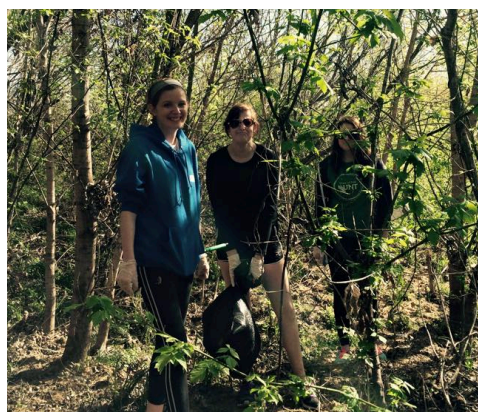
Student Activities

Lambda Pi Eta

Lambda Pi Eta celebrated their return from spring break with a fundraising event, COMM Cabs! LPH officers drove a golf cart around campus, picking up students and delivering them to their classes or vehicles for a \$2 donation. Initially, the event was a comedy of errors, when the golf cart died and the officers were forced to push the golf cart across campus. In spite of this mishap, Lambda Pi Eta pulled off the event in good spirits and created a few lasting memories. Most importantly, they raised over fifty dollars to benefit LPH student programs.



Lambda Pi Eta’s philanthropic attitude continued through March and into April with their participation in the Great American Cleanup and their month-long supply drive for Denton County Friends of the Family. The Great American Cleanup was a city-wide event hosted by Keep Denton Beautiful in conjunction with UNT’s Big Event. On March 28th, LPH members pulled on their rain boots and joined together to clean up the waterway site at South Mayhill Road and Pecan Creek. In spite of the wet and muddy environment, the students and faculty in attendance picked up every piece of trash at the site and ended their day with a celebratory meal. The supply drive for Denton County Friends of the Family, which is ongoing, has collected over 700 items!



To balance their philanthropic work, Lambda Pi Eta hosted a “play” break featuring a night of card games with members and fellow students on April 16. Madeline Rodriguez, Lambda Pi Eta President, reported, “COMM and Cards was a fun and relaxing night. After much effort from our Vice President of Social Programing, Cotton Hensley, to pull together all the materials, a group of communication nerds sat down for a couple of hours with some snacks and Cards Against Humanity. Several door prizes were given away. In the midst of all the approaching finals week chaos, it provided a refreshing evening of laughter.”



NCA Future Pros

Last month NCA Future Pros hosted Caroline Parrack, a UNT alumna, as their guest speaker. Parrack graduated from the communication studies department in 2011, and currently serves as Annual Fund Coordinator at the Hockaday School, an independent college preparatory day and boarding school for girls in Dallas, Texas. Parrack spoke about aspects of beginning a career in communication-related fields, including resume building, social media presence, job interviews, networking, and informational interviews. More pointedly, Parrack talked about her experience in event planning, the dos and don'ts of finding a job, tips and tricks for constructing resumes, and even what to wear for an interview. The meeting ended with a round of questions from current students, who left the meeting with greater insight about job hunting and additional knowledge about how to make themselves more competitive in the job market.



NCA Future Pros held their final meeting of the semester, the Annual Career Panel, on April 22 in GAB 321. The featured panelists were all alumni of the Communication Studies Department. The panelists this year included Audrey Lawson, Director of Development at Northwestern Mutual - Park City; Larrah Lewis, Events and Catering Manager at Vaquero Club in Westlake; Leila Scheinman Myers, Account Executive at MNI/Time, Inc., in Dallas; Aida Ramadanovic, Account Executive at CBS Radio in Dallas; and Kris Watson, Vice President at Sanford Rose Associates in Dallas.



These Communication Studies professionals spoke to the members of NCA about a variety of topics, including job searches, networking, graduate school, and salary negotiation. One of the primary topics of discussion was the importance of completing internships. Many of the panelists had completed internships during when they were students in the department. They noted that their internships helped them gain valuable experience and provided them with networking opportunities. Ramadanovic addressed strategies for salary negotiation, and Watson shared personal experiences related to job interviews and offered tips on landing the job. These UNT alumni also discussed the importance of maintaining appropriate social media profiles as individuals contemplate entering the work force, as well as their role in maintaining professionalism and credibility. More than 50 Communication Studies majors attended.

Kylee Ince, President of NCA Future Pros said, "The career panel was a huge success. The students were able to take away valuable information that will help them in their future careers. The guest speakers gave a plethora of advice and tips to the students such as information about resume building and career goals. "



"The alums were great," said Dr. Brian Richardson, faculty advisor for NCA Future Pros. "They are all success stories themselves and were able to demonstrate to our students that their Communication Studies degrees are considered very valuable in the business world."

Around Town & Other News

Introducing Our New Masters of Communication

The UNT Department of Communication Studies proudly introduces our newest Masters of Communication Studies. In celebrating their accomplishments and wishing them success, we asked about their plans after graduation.



Bryan Lysinger: “After graduation I am looking forward to re-entering the workforce and having the time for personal interests and hobbies again. I look forward to working with the department as an alumnus and being able to enjoy more time with my wife.”

Caitlyn Cawley: “I have lived in the DFW area my whole life, so I'm really excited to be moving on to new things after graduation! This summer I will be moving to Pittsburgh. My hopes are to find a job with a local communication consulting group or to teach at one of the great area schools, until I can get my own consulting enterprise on its feet. Feeling confident and driven thanks to the Communication department, and I'm looking forward to finally "growing up!" and enjoying a successful and happy new life.”



Laci Stovall: “This summer I plan on spending as much time as possible enjoying the East Texas weather and small town lifestyle with my family and friends. I also plan to read as many books off of my long list of “books to read during free time” as possible! In July I will be moving out of state to either Mississippi or Oklahoma and beginning law school in the fall. I am very excited and a tad nervous!!”

Alicia Garavaglia: “After graduation I will return to California and plan to enter the public relations and branding industry. I will continue working for National Association for Graduate – Professional Students as the Director of Relations. My goal is to be hired by a PR firm for non-profit organizations. However, I am most excited for my trip to Europe this summer and spending time on the beach improving my tan and recovering from graduate school.”



We are very proud of these students and wish them the very best of luck on their future endeavors!

This Year's Graduate Performances

THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES PRESENTS

To Seek For Ourselves

Written & Directed by Laura Oliver

December
4th, 5th, and 6th
7:00 PM

Join us for a "Talk Back" after the show on Friday!

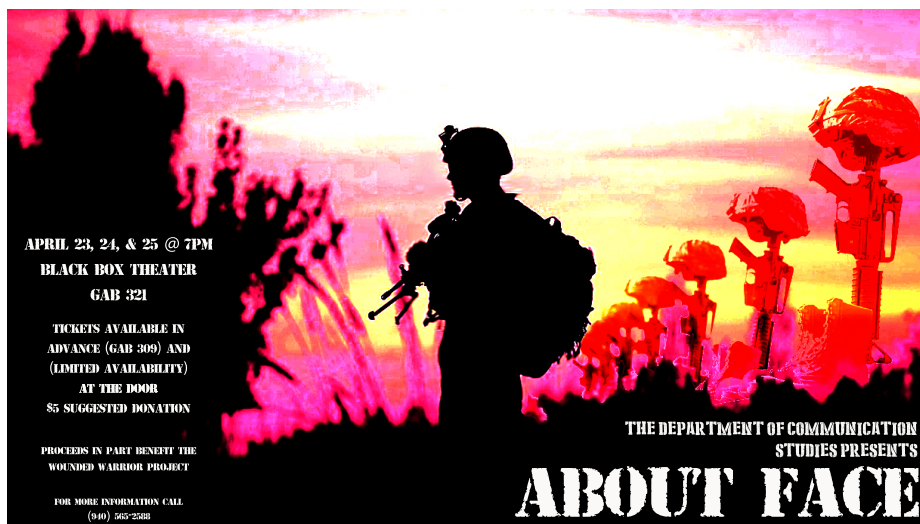
\$5 donation
Please reserve your seat in GAB 309
BLACK BOX THEATRE
GAB 321

To Seek for Ourselves was written and directed by Laura Oliver, and performed by Laura and Cherita Cunningham. This insightful and thought-provoking production was based on an ethnographic and auto-ethnographic study of Black Christian women in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. The moving personal narratives presented in this show attempted to generate reflection on and discussion about the roles of women in black churches and how their identities shape and are shaped by these religious organizations. Through the performance, Laura specifically called attention to race and gender to provide juxtapositions of the black church and black life. Since mounting this production at UNT in December, Laura has also presented and performed *To Seek for Ourselves* at the Patti Pace Performance Festival in New Orleans, and at the Southern States Communication Association in Tampa, Florida.



Provoking the Princess: Unlocking Femininity's Vault, written and directed by Alicia Garavaglia. The performance was a fantastical recreation and deconstruction of gender identities that began with a resident trickster character breaking into Disney's vault and "provoking" three of Disney's animated princesses to question their identities. As part of the performance, the audience was invited to engage and participate in this real and fictional journey of

transformation for princesses who were portrayed by three young dancers. Through the alluring and emotional method of dance, *Provoking the Princess* unveiled the "damned if you do, damned if you don't" consequence of social standards and asked the question, can one ever really reach a fundamentally ambiguous state?



About Face, written and directed by Bryan Lysinger, and co-directed by Sarah Friday, examined how soldiers navigate and maintain personal identity in a military framed by post-9/11 ideals, particularly the Army value of selfless service. The performance also critiqued the Army's response to rising suicide rates among soldiers since 2003. Utilizing an

approach to performance developed by Meyerhold as a starting point for the process, the director and cast provided a masterful critique of the dilemmas faced by today's soldiers. Proceeds from the production, in part, benefited the Wounded Warrior Project. Over the course of its run, the audience donated \$400.00 toward this worthy cause. The cast included: Flora Ceka, Sean-Michael Cohn, Cherita Cunningham, Kevin Howard, Chelsea Lindblad, Emily McCormick, Kennedy Wilks, and Travis Wright.

Looking Forward

Upcoming Events:

Debate-a-Palooza, May 1st at 2pm – 5pm, Business Leadership Building

Lambda Pi Eta Induction Ceremony, May 1st at 7pm, Black Box Theatre (GAB 321)

Department Hooding Ceremony, May 15th at 12 pm, Willis Library Forum

Look for another issue of our newsletter next month.

Keep in contact with us through our website www.communication.unt.edu



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