

DEPARTMENT OF
Communication
Studies

Spring 2016



NEWSLETTER

From the Chair... Steve Schwarze



I'm happy to share that we are having another successful year in the Department of Communication Studies. Both students and faculty members have garnered honors for their research; several students have earned acceptance at top graduate programs around the country; we have continued to build co-curricular opportunities; and, we had a very positive program review this past fall.

At this year's National Communication Association convention, **Alan Sillars** received the Mark Knapp Award for career achievement in the field of interpersonal communication. A panel of scholars gave glowing tributes to Alan and his professional and personal contributions to the field. At the Western States Communication Association convention, a research group under the direction of **Steve Yoshimura** earned top paper honors during the Undergraduate Research pre-conference. The students on the project included **Tyler Morgan, Mackenzie Salitsky, Katjana Stutzer, and J.R. Thomas**. Congratulations to these award winners!

Our students also had a banner year in their applications to top graduate programs around the country. Among the current MA students, **Eean Grimshaw** will be attending the University of Massachusetts, **Leah Johnson** will be heading to Arizona State University, and **Mackensie Minniear** will be going to the University of Nebraska. In addition, undergraduate **Patrick Bujold** will be attending the University of Colorado and former graduate student **Megan Cullinan** will be starting at the University of Utah.

The department's co-curricular opportunities have been especially active this year. Most notably, **Betsy Bach** and **Sara Hayden** led students to Central Europe for the second time to study Nazi and Soviet

propaganda. They conduct a two-credit class on the subject at UM during the fall semester and then take students through Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic during Wintersession. The **UM Debate Team** participated at tournaments around the region and sponsored its first high school speech and debate tournament on campus. The department's honor society, **Lambda Pi Eta**, revived a career and networking night featuring alums **Justin Amintrout, Lucy Beigle, Bryce Bennett, and Rachel Gregg**.

Finally, the department had an excellent program review. This process takes place every seven years, and includes a self-study report compiled by department faculty, reviews from upper administrators, and an external evaluation by a senior scholar in the discipline. The department got very positive feedback about faculty strengths in research, teaching, and mentoring; the quality of our graduate program; and high levels of satisfaction among undergraduates. We have already implemented changes in undergraduate advising and professional training for graduate students in response to recommendations. In addition, we are considering potential areas for curricular development in strategic communication and health communication that align with broader university initiatives.

Overall, the department is in very good shape in spite of the budget and enrollment challenges facing the university. We have maintained our number of undergraduate majors while most other social science and humanities departments have seen enrollment declines, and we have been able to protect TA lines and funding for online and adjunct-taught courses. With strong demand for a curriculum that offers something to students all across the university, COMM continues to position itself as a vital program at UM.

This will be my last note as Department Chair. My colleague **Greg Larson** will take the reins starting in Fall 2016, and I wish him the best!

Faculty Updates

David Airne. David Airne entered his 5th year serving as the director of the Debate program. He was the tournament director at the high school tournament hosted by the debate program for the first time since the 1970's. He also authored a chapter on Issue Ownership Theory in the newly published *Praeger Handbook of Political Campaigning in the United States*. David presented work in argumentation theory at the annual MEA conference in Billings, MT. and has continued to do outreach with the high school speech and debate programs in the state through guest lectures, coaching support, and working on a new handbook for the high schools.

Betsy Bach. Betsy was again involved with Sara Hayden in preparing and teaching their fall semester 2015 course on Nazi and Soviet Propaganda, and subsequent Wintersession trip to Central Europe (see related stories). She has also taken on the preparation and teaching of Communication in Non-Profit Organizations (with much assistance from Joel Iverson), and enjoys it immensely, in addition to her other courses.

Betsy is delighted to be taking sabbatical in the fall to finish up two research projects. The first, with UM alums **Dr. Connie Bullis** and **Dr. Charmaine Wilson** (Faculty at University of Utah and University of South Carolina-Aiken, respectively), is an investigation of communication and organizational identity in planned organizational exit. Her second project is a collaboration with three

other scholars on the communication privacy implications of physicians who use patient-targeted Googling. She most recently published a co-authored chapter in the *Handbook of Organizational Communication* on communication skills in organizations. She is looking forward to visiting Sara on her faculty exchange to County Cork, Ireland!

Sara Hayden. Sara continues to be busy in the classroom, teaching courses in rhetorical theory and criticism, first and second wave U.S. feminisms, and gender and communication. The latter allows her to remain an active member of UM's Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program, which she greatly enjoys.

Sara is also maintaining an active research program. She has recently completed two projects that extend her work into the rhetoric of motherhood: "The Rhetorical Contexts of Maternity: Michelle Obama, Mom-in-Chief" is in press with *Women's Studies in Communication* and she and Heather Hundley (California State University, San Bernardino) co-edited *Mediated Moms: Contemporary Challenges to the Motherhood Myth* (Peter Lang, 2016). Sara was fortunate to be granted a sabbatical for spring 2016; during that time she worked on a project investigating how second wave feminist writing about motherhood laid the groundwork for contemporary debates over intensive mothering and "choice feminisms." She is also preparing for a fall 2016 faculty exchange to University College Cork, Ireland, where she will collaborate with colleagues on research and guest lecture in a number of classes. She is excited to bring what she learns in Ireland to students at UM.

Joel Iverson. Joel is currently the Director of Graduate Studies.

He is currently analyzing risk and crisis communication in Operational Earthquake Forecasting and at the University of Montana. He continues to research within the nonprofit organizations in the Bakken region of Eastern Montana and Western North Dakota. He studies the ways we use communication to enact organizations, knowledge, and communities of practice. Most of his research explores nonprofit and health organizations. He most recently coauthored a chapter in the *Handbook of Organizational Communication* on structuration theory. His work appears in a variety of book chapters and his articles appear in such journals as *Management Communication Quarterly*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, and *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*.

Greg Larson. Greg continues to teach and conduct research in the area of organizational communication. After a long hiatus, he recently began teaching the large lecture introduction to organizational communication course and has enjoyed the challenge of introducing undergrads to the study of organizations from a critical perspective. He is also teaching an experiential philanthropy course where students have the opportunity to give away \$10,000 in the local community through a grant from the Learning By Giving Foundation. Greg says the experience is "a wonderful way for students to connect with the Missoula Community and a nice source of funding for local nonprofit organizations." Last fall, students focused on two need areas: mental health and the environment, and students awarded grants to Missoula Youth Homes, Garden City Harvest and Native Generational Change.

As for research, Greg is finishing a book with former UM graduate

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student, **Dr. Rebecca Gill** that examines organizations and identity from a discursive perspective. Greg will transition to the department chair role starting in the fall semester.

Phyllis Ngai. Phyllis continues to teach and research intercultural and international communication. In the summer of 2015, she co-directed a summer institute, funded by a \$191,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Teachers from around the country explored *Indigenous Literary Perspectives in Global Conversation*. Her latest publication entitled "Intercultural Communication Training for English Language Teachers: A Case Study of an Immersion Program for South Korean Teachers" appeared in the 2015 issue 4 of the *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*. In June 2016, Phyllis will present a paper on *Online Social Networking Among Japanese Millennials* at the pre-conference of the International Communication Association in Japan.

Steve Schwarze. As noted elsewhere in the newsletter, Steve describes his most recent research project that has yielded a forthcoming book titled *Under Pressure: Coal Industry Rhetoric and Neoliberalism*. Steve continues to teach undergraduate and graduate courses focused primarily on environmental rhetoric, and his course on Consumption is a popular offering among majors as well as students in the Climate Change Studies minor and other programs. Steve is handing off the Chair responsibilities to Greg Larson this fall after six years in that position. Many of his efforts were focused on enhancing the day-to-day experience of students and faculty. He worked to improve the department's budget situation to support faculty and student travel to scholarly conferences and other department

activities. He led the Department through the university's program review process, restructured TA assignments to improve the graduate student experience, and revamped the undergraduate advising program. In addition, he promoted co-curricular initiatives, including hiring a faculty director for the UM Debate Program and encouraging revival of the Lambda Pi Eta honor society. In March, Steve was diagnosed with advanced colon cancer, but he has continued to teach and serve as Chair even while undergoing treatments!

Alan Sillars. Alan just completed his 30th year in the department. This year he received the Mark L. Knapp Award from the National Communication for career contributions to scholarship on interpersonal communication. Lately, he's been teaching courses on conflict and research methods. Alan spent Spring, 2016 on exchange in New Zealand, where he worked with a colleague at Massey Business School on a study of offensive emails people receive at work. Next Fall, he will be a visiting professor at Penn State University. Sillars continues to research and write about interpersonal and family communication, including a current project on parent-adolescent conflicts. When away from work, Sillars enjoys skiing, floating, hiking, mountain biking and spending time with family, including three grandchildren who live close by.

Christina Yoshimura. Christina focuses most of her research attention on the ways that family member communication is constrained, enabled, and otherwise impacted by systems outside of the family. Her research on work/family conflict and communication was accepted this year for presentation at the International Communication

Association Conference in Fukuoka, Japan and will be presented by her co-author, Dr. Brian Heisterkamp. Dr. Yoshimura continues to teach interpersonal communication courses at all levels of the curriculum at UM, and has enjoyed bringing information from new research in interpersonal neurobiology back from conferences to share with undergraduate and graduate students alike. Dr. Yoshimura completed a second master's degree in clinical mental health counseling last May and currently enjoys offering occasional parenting classes to the Missoula community through a local non-profit organization, Families First. These many opportunities to blend academic and pragmatic approaches to family communication make the life of a professor a rich one!

Steve Yoshimura. Steve recently finished serving as the chairperson of the National Communication Association's Interpersonal Communication Division, and is now writing a book based on his long-term research program titled, "Communicating Revenge in Interpersonal Relationships." The book will be co-authored with Professor Susan Boon, a professor of social psychology at the University of Calgary and published in early 2018. In 2015, he won the College of Humanities and Sciences "Teaching Across the Curriculum award," given to professors for excellence in teaching at all course levels. In February of 2016, a group of his Communication Research Methods (COMX 460) students won the top undergraduate research paper award at the Western States Communication Association's Undergraduate Research Conference. He is still teaching the courses he loves, including Nonverbal Communication (COMX 202), Communication and Health (COMX 485), and Communication Research Methods (COMX 460).



LOMBARDI NAMED NEWMAN CIVIC FELLOW

Mackenzie Lombardi was recently named a Newman Civic Fellow. She is one of 10 students across Montana to earn the honor.

Newman Civic Fellows are young leaders nominated by college and university presidents who are part of Campus Compact, a national coalition of more than 1,100 institutions committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility.

A Missoula native, Lombardi has set her sights on changing the nature of American political rhetoric. Using her communication skills, she has served as a student government campaign manager, interned with the Office of Montana Gov. Steve Bullock and served as an advocate with UM's Student Advocacy Resource Center.

Students Win Top Regional Research Award

Four COMM undergraduate students recently won the top paper award at the Western States Communication Association's annual Undergraduate Scholar's Research Conference.

Tyler Morgan, Mackensie Salitstky, Katjana Stutzer and J.R. (John R.) Thomas received the award for their study titled "When More Information Does Not Help: The Connection Between Facebook Monitoring Behavior, Relationship Uncertainty and Relationship Quality." The study was conducted as part of Professor Steve Yoshimura's Fall 2015 course in Communication Research Methods.

They distributed an online survey to examine the extent to which people's self-reported relationship satisfaction and confidence correlate with the use of Facebook to monitor their romantic partner's social network interactions.

Tyler Morgan is from Missoula; Mackensie Salitstky is from Wayland, Massachusetts; Katjana Stutzer is from Anchorage, Alaska; and J.R. Thomas is from Glen Ellyn, Illinois.



Students taking in the Jewish Museum in Warsaw

24 STUDENTS TRAVEL TO CENTRAL EUROPE

Once again, Professors Sara Hayden and Betsy Bach offered a course on Nazi and Soviet Persuasion and Propaganda during Fall semester 2015, which was followed by a 17-day Wintersession 2016 excursion to Central Europe. Steve Yoshimura joined them for the adventure. They visited historical sites, concentration camps, places of Nazi and Stasi resistance, museums, churches, and synagogues in Munich, Berlin, Warsaw, Krakow, and Prague. They also had fun drinking beer at the Hofbrau Haus in Munich, sampling the different sausages produced in each region, and tasting perogi, pig's knuckles, and vodka throughout Poland, as well as taking a cruise down the Vistula River to view Prague at night.

OUTSTANDING SENIOR

Katjana Stutzer

was recognized as the department's class of 2016 outstanding senior in the Rhetoric and Public Discourse option.



As a transfer student from Alaska, Katjana was thrilled to have completed her degree in a place she says is almost as beautiful as home and with an obviously standout communication program. She says she was surprised to learn that many communication majors come to the discipline after declaring a different major first. In contrast, Katjana knew early in her academic career that she wanted to pursue communication studies in order to do non-profit work and go to law school, so she sought out an exemplary program close to the Pacific Northwest.

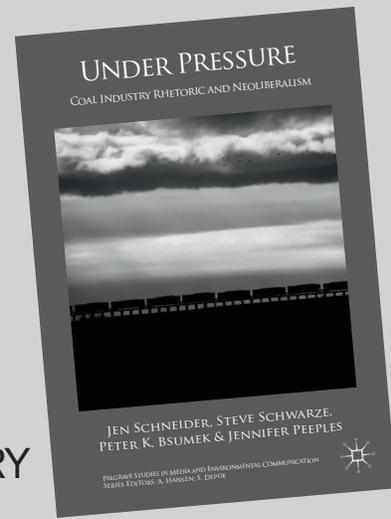
She says that part of what made communication studies at UM such a good fit for her was the ability to combine classroom and real-life experiences. In her junior year, Katjana completed an internship with the campus activism group MontPIRG. According to Katjana, doing the internship through the communication department added a level of practicality to the discipline that was very valuable. She adds, "I had to put my communication skills to work talking to the public every day. Not only that, but the communication internship forces you to apply what you learn in your classes and take a look at how the organization itself uses communication and what they are doing right and how they could do better."

Katjana also enrolled in the Nazi and Soviet Propaganda course. She says it was the combination of rigorous classroom study and the ability to put those lessons into context that made it such a meaningful experience. Katjana was also on the UM Debate team and competed with the team throughout the Pacific Northwest, putting her argumentation and speaking skills into action.

Katjana plans to pursue an M.A. in communication studies after taking a year to work at a non-profit in Anchorage. She jokingly says, "The problem with having professors who are amazing at what they do is they convince you to get a masters in COMM before you go to law school." Katjana says she is confident that a solid foundation in communication studies will prepare her for anything else she wants to do in the future.

Our two other outstanding seniors are **Tyler Morgan** and **Jacob Reed**. Congratulations to you all!

SCHWARZE CO-AUTHORS BOOK ON COAL INDUSTRY RHETORIC



One of the biggest recent stories in the Western US has been the unprecedented downturn in the coal industry. Faced with a "war on coal," the always-looming "threat of regulation," and imminent "economic collapse," how does the coal industry respond? Professor Steve Schwarze and his co-authors seek to answer this question in their forthcoming book, *Under Pressure: Coal Industry Rhetoric and Neoliberalism* (Palgrave MacMillan). Their book examines five rhetorical strategies used by the industry to pursue its interests in relation to shifting energy markets, regulatory policies, and climate activism.

Professor Schwarze wrote the book with three colleagues from other universities. With shared interests in environmental rhetoric, they first started working on a project about the public discourse surrounding mountaintop removal—a form of coal-mining that garnered significant public attention as it literally exploded the tops of mountains in Appalachia to expose coal seams. Over time, the group decided to focus their attention on industry rhetoric rather than advocacy by environmental groups; as he describes it, "We felt that this was an underexplored area among environmental communication scholars. We also saw that the coal industry's campaigns were rhetorically complex; not simply climate change denial, but a whole range of strategies that appealed to deeper cultural beliefs and assumptions about the economy." The book looks at topics such as the use of "front groups" that circulate pro-industry messages; the rhetoric of "clean coal;" industry responses to the fossil fuel divestment movement; and campaigns that position coal as a solution to energy poverty. In the end, they maintain that the industry's complex, and at times contradictory, appeals to neoliberal principles—such as market rationality and corporate social responsibility—forecloses meaningful democratic engagement with the environmental consequences of our reliance on coal.



George Santayana wrote, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." By having the courage to face this difficult subject matter and the places of such horrific darkness that resulted from the Nazi and Soviet regimes, the responsibility to prevent the repetition of such events is undertaken. This course also offered the opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful cities and cultural artifacts in the world, such as The Old Town Square of Prague and Mozart's childhood home in Salzburg. The contrast of such experiences is at once overwhelming and empowering. It is vital that the power of communication is understood in order to preserve such beauty, societal integrity, and above all, innocent lives.

The professors in Communication Studies at the University of Montana strive to bring greater meaning and context to the education of their students. By offering such opportunities beyond the classroom, students are encouraged to engage their world and realize the true power of their acquired knowledge.

Submitted by **Aubrielle Holly, M.A.**

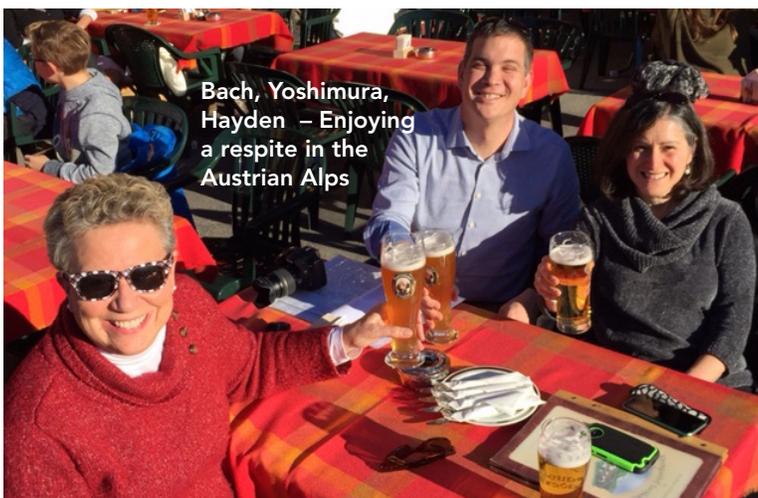
I was one of the 24 students who was offered the opportunity for a seventeen-day study abroad tour led by Betsy and Sara. The difficulty of the course content and challenging ideas for discussion were certainly expected. What was not foreseen was the transformative power of engaging this period of history and its accompanying rhetoric. Students and faculty who took advantage of this opportunity will remember this course and study tour for the rest of their lives.

Study-Abroad Course Slated for Fall 17/Wintersession 18

In Fall and Winter session of 2017-2018, **Steve Yoshimura** and **Betsy Bach** will lead a study-abroad course to central Europe (Munich, Salzburg, Berlin, Warsaw, Krakow, and Prague). The course, titled, "Communicating Human Strengths and Virtues," will be about the social conditions under which people thrive and flourish both during and after extremely challenging political, organizational, and interpersonal situations.

Using Nazi and Soviet political and social environments during and after WWII, students will examine the social settings that enable and promote the experience and expression of human strengths such as courage, kindness, justice, forgiveness, gratitude, and hope through oppressive and even tragic situations. We will visit transcendent places once occupied by the NSDAP (Nazi) leadership, documentation centers communicating the justice following travesties of the Holocaust, internationally renowned (and some lesser-known) museums symbolizing humanity and the wisdom and knowledge developed from social tragedies, and we'll discuss how the beautiful cities and places we visit can act as communally expressed symbols of hope and resilience through social challenges. The course will apply the lessons to ongoing and impending social challenges that are relevant to modern, globalized life.

The class will convene in a two-credit course during the fall of 2017 and a three-credit travel-abroad course during the winter session of 2017-2018. Please contact Prof. Steve Yoshimura at stephen.yoshimura@umontana.edu or Prof. Betsy Bach at betsy.bach@umontana.edu for more details. ALUMNI ARE MOST WELCOME TO JOIN US!



Prague at night from the Vistula River

UM DEBATE GOING STRONG

During the 2015-16 season, the team added members. We are delighted with these new students and enjoy working with them.

The team had a pre-season trip with **Matthew Powell** and **Katjana Stutzer** attending the Bellingham Debate Co-Op at Western Washington University with graduate coach **Tracy Valgento**. Our season began in late September when we traveled to Portland, OR for the Northwest Warm-up tournament. Matthew Powell and Katjana Stutzer debated together at the Warm-up, and again the next month at the Lewis & Clark tournament in Portland. We had a longer break than expected due to schedule conflicts, but continued to work on recruiting and preparing for subsequent tournaments. The season ended this year with our participation at the

Northwest JV Parliamentary Championships. Katjana and **Sophie Moon**, who joined the team in January of 2016, attended the tournament and semifinals and third and sixth speakers respectively.

The UM Debate team continued its fundraising and recruitment activities by hosting the first high school speech and debate tournament since the late 1970's. The November high school tournament, named after former director Ralph Y. McGinnis, drew over 300 students from Montana and Idaho schools. The Team was instrumental in the success of the tournament, as were the alumni, faculty, staff, UM students and community members who helped with the tournament. The team members and the coaching staff traveled around the state judging at local tournaments, doing work with local high schools, and working with local students in an effort to build better relations with the high schools and further develop the debate in the state. Some of these students have said they will join us in the fall so we anticipate additional growth in the coming year.

Check out our department website at
<http://hs.UMT.edu/comm/>

Our FB page is **Department of Communication Studies**



Your Contribution

Our success is notable in light of limited state funding of higher education. Students are experiencing an ever-increasing financial burden to pay for tuition and vital co-curricular activities such as conference participation and debate travel. In turn, we have appreciated the financial support of alumni and friends, whose donations to the department help fund scholarships, student travel, and other enrichment opportunities such as guest speakers and field trips. **Thank you for your support!**

If you would like to support Communication Studies, please send a check or money order to the University of Montana Foundation, PO Box 7159, Missoula MT 59807-7159, with a note in the Memo line designating either "Comm Studies 358" or "Debate 52J." Contributions are also accepted online at <http://cas.umt.edu/comm/Make%20a%20Gift.php>.

For more information about making a gift (with no obligation to do so), please contact **Steve Schwarze** in COMM at steve.schwarze@mso.umt.edu, or (406) 243-4901, or contact **Marci Bozeman** at the UM Foundation at marci.bozeman@mso.umt.edu or (406) 243-2646 or or **Bitty Balducci** at bitty.balducci@mso.umt.edu or (406) 243-2568



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