



# COMMUNIQUE

Fall, 2016

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## Communication to Welcome Advertising, Public Relations and Popular Culture

Potter College of Arts and Letters is “lifting the ceiling” by combining the strengths of Communication, Advertising, Public Relations, and Popular Culture through the collaboration of a diverse and talented faculty, under the leadership of Communication head Dr. Helen Sterk. Effective July 1, 2017, Communication welcomes the programs and faculty of the Advertising, Public Relations and Popular Culture majors.

All four areas, Communication, Advertising, Public Relations and Popular Culture, will become stronger by the merger. Bringing them together increases access to additional faculty and technological resources. Both 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills and a solid knowledge base are necessary for student success in a quickly changing world.

Communication will provide a home to an extremely strong faculty in all areas of Communication study, which now will include Public Relations, Advertising and Popular Culture. We hold expertise in analyzing messages and audiences; in writing and producing professional messages on topics such as school crises, branding, image repair, and social

media; and in developing organizational and intercultural communication strategies.

The programs and faculty of the Advertising, Public Relations, and Popular Culture majors move their administrative home to Communication. Students cur-

major. And until appropriate space for offices and program facilities can be identified, the Advertising and Public Relations faculty members will remain in WKU’s Mass Media and Technology Hall as well.

The same holds true for Communication Stud-



rently enrolled in the Advertising and Public Relations programs will continue to have access to the computer labs and facilities in MMTH as they do now, and major requirements for current students will not change. A new set of curricula is being developed by a team from three areas. Popular Culture will remain a strong interdisciplinary

and Corporate and Organizational Communication majors and graduate students. Major requirements will not change from a student’s initial calendar year. Faculty and facilities in the FAC will remain accessible to all students in both majors and the graduate program.

~ Dr. Lawrence Snyder, Dean PCAL  
& Dr. Helen Sterk, Dept. Head



## Bob Layne, Executive in Residence Visits The Hill

Last October, Mr. Layne returned to the Hill as the Department of Communication's Executive in Residence. During his visit, he spoke to several Communication classes, as well as held a campus-wide discussion open for anyone to attend. He explained to students just how valuable a degree in Communication can be, and exactly how to market themselves in a way that highlights this strength as a versatile yet transferable skill. He summed up his discussion with the word "options." This term describes exactly what a degree in communication provides.

Bob Layne, an alumnus of WKU, graduated in the first class of students awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Corporate and Organizational Communication. He then went on to study law, and is licensed to practice in Tennessee and Washington D.C. Soon after, he found his way to Dollar General



Mr. Bob Layne

Corporation where he spent more than 10 years as an executive officer manag-

ing many functions. Fast forward to 2016, Mr. Layne, the current President and CEO of the Visibility Company, spends his time traveling and aiding companies all over the globe with their marketing, communication, and technology development needs. Here is a link to his speech: [https://www.wku.edu/communication/documents/how\\_a\\_communication\\_degree\\_makes\\_you\\_more\\_attractive\\_to\\_employers.pdf](https://www.wku.edu/communication/documents/how_a_communication_degree_makes_you_more_attractive_to_employers.pdf)

When asked what advice he would give to young seniors, Mr. Layne advised them to be confident. Confidence is an attractive trait, and with it, students have the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed and conquer.

~ Brittany Holley, Student

## Message from Helen Sterk, Department Head



Dr. Helen Sterk

Mark July 1, 2017 on your calendars! On that day, the Advertising, Public Relations majors and Popular Culture majors will merge with Communication.

Dean Larry Snyder announced the merger in November. At simultaneous meetings, Dean Snyder with Advertising and Public Relations faculty members, and Associate Dean McMichael, with Communication faculty members, proposed the new union. Dean Snyder recognized the affinities these areas share with one another and made the decision to unite them under Communication. Since November, the decision was made to add Popular Culture to the mix, as well.

All the majors promote learning how speakers, messages and audiences combine to make meaning. Communication provides the foundation for understanding and criti-

cally thinking about the sources of meaning and Popular Culture highlights criticism of mediated texts. Public Relations and Advertising bring hands-on development of messages tailored to specific audiences. A curriculum committee, led by Dr. Angie Jerome and made up of a blend of faculty members from all three areas, will create a flexible, dynamic structure of majors and certificates that will allow students to learn across programs.

A key part of the new set of programs will be the study and creation of digital communication messages and campaigns. Look for the hiring of a new professor soon!

- Cont'd on page 3

## Message from Helen Sterk... *cont'd*

The planned timeline for merging runs over the next year and a half. By the end of the spring semester, a new set of curricula for Communication, Advertising, and Public Relations programs will be proposed and voted on. Popular Culture will remain structured as it is. During the 2017-18 academic year, those proposals

will make their way through the WKU curriculum approval committees. In 2018-19, the new curricula will be available for students.

Current students in Communication, Advertising and Public Relations may choose to complete their programs under the catalog year in which they began or to switch to the new

curricula. No matter when you start, as a student, you choose how you will finish.

Stay tuned for further news on the merger as it becomes public. Meanwhile, this is a cause for celebration!

*Dr. Helen Sterk, Dept. Head*

# Professional Organizations

## Conferences Bring Students, Faculty Together in Partnership

This year, there were many opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in the department to present their research. Working together on research and presentations, students and faculty are able to stretch their horizons and learn new things from each other. Professor Holly Payne, Ph.D., described the working process as beneficial for both parties. She added that working with students allowed her to “learn new things within the field and keep [her] up to date.” Assistant Professor Jieyoung Kong, Ph.D., agreed. Dr. Kong explained that working with students encouraged her to work outside of her preferred methodology and learn new areas as well. Both Drs. Payne and Kong said that they enjoy working with students on research projects and hope to see those opportunities grow, especially among undergraduate students.

Faculty from the Department of Communication routinely participate in annual conferences. Conferences such as the National Communication Association and Kentucky Communication Association are great ways to receive recognition for the work done



**Honors Undergraduate student Taylor Hilliard presents at the Kentucky Communication Association Conference, September 2016**

within the department, but they also offer valuable opportunities for Communication students.

Currently, undergraduates have three available ways to participate in conferences. Students who write a quality research paper in class, honors students, and those who receive Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement (FUSE) grants can conduct research and submit their pa-

pers for presentation at state, regional, and national conferences. Graduate students also have many opportunities to research, write, and present their work. We look forward to seeing our faculty and students continuing to work together, to be on the cutting edge of the field!

*~ Cody Pruitt, Student*



## 2017 CSCA Conference will *Create* a Lasting Impact on Participants



**Dr. Blair Thompson,  
First Vice-President of CSCA**

Blair Thompson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Communication, serves as First Vice President of CSCA and has the responsibility of organizing and overseeing the 2017 Annual Conference. He served as program planner for two interests groups (education and basic course education for communication) before running for his current position. Dr. Thompson says he became involved in CSCA in graduate school along with many of his friends several years ago. Every year he looks forward to seeing those friends and sharing ideas with them at the conference.

The Central States Communication Association (CSCA) is a professional academic organization comprised of primary and secondary school teachers, students, college and university professors, and Communication professionals. The 2017 CSCA conference will take place March 16-18 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The conference consists of a series of presentations, including an awards ceremony and celebration of careers. Awards presented at the conference include undergraduate awards, graduate awards, interest group awards, and many

more. When asked about the details of the conference, Dr. Thompson said, “The theme for this year’s conference is Create. This focuses on everything that is created through communication.”

Cathryn Ellis, an undergraduate assistant to Dr. Thompson, is spending her second year assisting in the planning process, but will attend the conference for the first time in 2017. “It will be really exciting to go and just watch the flow of the events, which sounds a little crazy, but because we will be putting in a lot of hours specifically planning and scheduling

every aspect of the conference, it will be incredibly rewarding to see the hard work we have done on paper being lived out successfully,” said Ellis.

Madison Loyd-Webster, graduate assistant, has been assigned fulltime to Dr. Thompson this year to support his work.

For more information about CSCA or the upcoming conference, contact Dr. Blair Thompson at [blair.thompson@wku.edu](mailto:blair.thompson@wku.edu) or [http://www.csc-net.org/aws/CSCA/pt/sp/home\\_page](http://www.csc-net.org/aws/CSCA/pt/sp/home_page).

~ Emily Mynatt , Student



2017 CSCA Program Cover created by  
Communication's Office Associate Laura Wagener

## Gavin Kirkwood: Communication Graduate Student Gets Involved in Professional Conferences

Gavin Kirkwood, a graduate student in the Department of Communication, has attended multiple Communication conferences, including the Kentucky Communication Association (KCA) conference, the Organizational for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG) conference, and most recently, the National Communication Association (NCA) convention. Of all these, Mr. Kirkwood said that NCA was the best, describing it as the “land of opportunity” and even comparing it to the Walt Disney World of Communication conferences.

Mr. Kirkwood is a strong believer in mentorship. In fact, his advice to undergraduate students is to create a vision and then find someone in the faculty or someone you look up to who can help you achieve that vision. His mentor, Dr. Holly Payne, helped him get involved with conferences, starting with KCA.

Mr. Kirkwood presented a qualitative study on an anarchist LGBTQ commune at both KCA and OSCLG. He conducted his research using several data collection methods, including interviews, field



Gavin Kirkwood speaking during panel discussion

observation, and artifact analysis. Throughout his research, he looked at the benefits and challenges of not only living in a commune, but in an anarchist one, which has no real leadership and requires a consensus when the community votes. When asked why he enjoyed researching this topic, Mr. Kirkwood said, “There is a new frontier in communication theory research; it’s thrilling to find a research gap.”

Mr. Kirkwood enjoys going to these conferences because they are a gateway to communicate with experts, as well as offering the exciting

possibility of finding someone who is researching a similar topic. In addition to expanding professional skills, these conferences offer a plethora of networking opportunities.

If you want to learn more about Mr. Kirkwood and his qualitative research, you can view his 2016 OSCLG submission on his website at [www.gavinkirkwood.com](http://www.gavinkirkwood.com).

~ Evan Dosch, Student

*Communication is key to a better self,  
better life, and better future.*



## Kentucky Communication Association (KCA) Leadership



**KCA Journal Editor, Dr. Holly Payne and  
KCA President, Kathy Previs**

The Western Kentucky University Department of Communication professors are rocking the house with the Kentucky Communication Association (KCA). Gary Hughes, Ph.D., Helen Sterk, Ph.D., and Holly Payne, Ph.D. all serve on the Executive Council for the 2016-2017 year.

Department Head, Dr. Helen Sterk believes that KCA is a great place for teachers to learn new ideas in teaching and is a great way for faculty to take leadership. As Dr. Sterk stated, "It is a solid place of support for our discipline. This association keeps faculty involved in new ideas that are coming from research and teaching."

Dr. Payne believes that getting involved with KCA offers many benefits, such as pursuing a leadership position and receiving great experience that can be a springboard for other professional organizations. She has served KCA for many years and seen the ups-and-downs of the organization. She has tried to

look at how she can leave the association more structured and a better place for the next set of leaders who come in, as well as, how she can create an organization that is built to last where information is free flowing and where people can get what they

need. Her many years of hard work was recently recognized with the KCA Service Award.

Dr. Sterk said, "Dr. Holly Payne has been an inspiration to me and has been the back bone of the organization." Dr. Payne has been involved with KCA since graduate school, and every year she served a different role. Currently, she is the Editor of the *Kentucky Journal of Communication* and appreciates that she is able to promote scholars in the state and publish Kentucky authors.

Dr. Sterk became the KCA Executive Director this year. Her responsibilities include determining conference locations, overseeing contracts, retaining association records, and working with the newly elected KCA Treasurer, Dr. Hughes.

For more information about KCA, contact Dr. Helen Sterk at [helen.sterk@wku.edu](mailto:helen.sterk@wku.edu) or visit [www.kycommunication.com](http://www.kycommunication.com).

*~Sharika Hollingsworth, Student*



**Left to right- (Back) Dr. Helen Sterk, Dr. Angela Jerome,  
Mr. Gavin Kirkwood, Ms. Linda Yin, Dr. Gary Hughes  
(Front) Dr. Larry Snyder, Ms. Mizuho Tatebayashi,  
Ms. Gayle Allison, Dr. Holly Payne, and Ms. Taylor Hilliard**

# JUMP Program

## JUMP Right In!



**Dr. Angela Jerome,  
Graduate Advisor**

The JUMP program provides many benefits and advantages to the students who are accepted. These students are able to receive both their Bachelor and Master degrees in a total of five years, rather than having to go the average six. Also, this program allows undergraduate stu-

dents into graduate classes, which exposes them to smaller classes that are much more advanced. Having this type of experience allows the students to learn more in-depth knowledge from those who have already completed a degree in the field they are studying.

The Department of Communication continues another successful year of the Joint Undergraduate and Graduate Program (JUMP). The JUMP program consists of highly motivated and intelligent students who strive to complete a graduate and undergraduate degree simultaneously.

These students must be accepted into the program and to do so, they must first pass the requirements that the department and JUMP program have set. These requirements include maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.50, the recommendation of a faculty member or advisor, completion of at least 60 hours, and submission of an academic writing sample.

Associate Professor Angela Jerome,

Ph.D., Graduate Program Coordinator for the Department of Communication, also serves as JUMP's advisor and recruiter. Dr. Jerome explains, "JUMP program candidates are chosen carefully through students I may have had or referrals from other professors. As a recruiter, I look for students who are strong writers, committed to doing research, and who enjoy participating in class discussion." Other than referrals, the JUMP program is also promoted to students through Western Kentucky University's website. On the website, students are able to access the requirements for admission, the application process, benefits of the program, and more.

For more information about the JUMP program, contact Dr. Jerome at [angela.jerome@wku.edu](mailto:angela.jerome@wku.edu), or visit the website at [www.wku.edu/communication/jump\\_program/jump\\_program.php](http://www.wku.edu/communication/jump_program/jump_program.php).

*~Kenzie Garrett, Student*

## Undergraduate Students Taking Advantage of the JUMP Program

The Department of Communication currently has three students in the Joint Undergraduate and Graduate Program (JUMP); two earning an M.A. in Organizational Communication and one in Religious Studies, with one more joining them this spring. The JUMP program enables students to earn a Bachelor's and a Master's degree simultaneously.



**Kristen Evans**

Kristen Evans from Paducah, Kentucky will complete her undergraduate degree in Corporate and Organizational Communication in spring of 2018 and graduate with her Master's degree in Organizational Communication in spring of 2019.

Ms. Evans is an active member of Alpha Delta Pi, a member of Young Americans for Freedom club, and will be studying abroad at Harlaxton College in England in spring of 2017. Ms. Evans states, "I am undecided at this point about my future career path, but as the years come with new experiences, I plan to follow God's direction for my life and end up in the career best suited for me."

Cathryn Ellis will be completing her JUMP program in 2018. This

*- Cont'd on page 8*



## Taking Advantage of the JUMP Program ... *cont'd*



**Cathryn Ellis**

year, she is taking a mix of undergraduate and graduate courses, including Dr. Sterk's seminar in Human Communication: Gender & Communication and is supporting Dr. Thompson's work as CSCA conference planner.

Rachel Cato from Woodburn, Kentucky is currently enrolled in the JUMP program to complete her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies and Religious Studies and a Master of Arts in Religious Studies in May 2018. She is involved in a variety of activities at Western Kentucky University such as:

- ◆ Communication Ambassadors
- ◆ Lambda Pi Eta, a Communication Honors Society (Vice President)
- ◆ Theta Alpha Kappa Honors Society for Theology and Religion (Vice President)
- ◆ Potter College of Arts and Letters (PCAL) Magazine Advisory Board
- ◆ PCAL Student Complaint Committee
- ◆ interCULTURAL Club
- ◆ Communication Success Center (tutor)
- ◆ student worker in the Department of Communication office

and Advanced Organizational Communication). Currently, she is enrolled in COMM 520 (Communication in the Nonprofit Sector) and COMM 566 (Corporate and Organizational Advocacy), and she is enjoying both of them. Emily decided to enter the JUMP program because she finished the required classes for her major in the fall semester of her junior year, but did not have 120 hours to graduate. This way, Emily can work towards a master's degree while still fulfilling the requirements of her undergraduate degree. Last semester Emily interned for the WKU HR department, and continues as their student worker this semester. Upon graduation, Emily wants to pursue a career in Human Resources.

For more information about the JUMP program, contact Dr. Angela Jerome, the Communication Graduate Director, at [angela.jerome@wku.edu](mailto:angela.jerome@wku.edu), or see the departmental JUMP webpage at [www.wku.edu/communication/jump\\_program/jump\\_program.php](http://www.wku.edu/communication/jump_program/jump_program.php).

*~Nicholas Meadows, Student*



**Rachel Cato**

Ms. Cato states, "My career path is to become a professor of Religious Studies." Ms. Cato believes that pursuing her education is the most important thing in preparing for her career and is confident that the JUMP program is perfect to help her reach her goal.

Cato and Evans both love that the Department of Communication has this opportunity because it is allowing them to complete their Master's degree faster, while saving money.

Emily Mynatt is from Nashville, Tennessee. Her undergraduate major is Corporate and Organizational Communication, and her graduate program of study is Organizational Communication. Her favorite undergraduate classes were COMM 362 and COMM 462 (Organizational Communication



**Emily Mynatt**



# International Connections

## Students Set Apart Through Study Abroad

The Department of Communication is excited to announce more opportunities than ever before for Study Abroad credit during the winter and summer terms. Helen Sterk, Ph.D., Department Head, says, “This is an explosion of opportunity. Generally only a few options are offered, but this year there are many courses to choose from, with two offered by WKU faculty.”

### Winter 2017:

- ◆ Beyond the Selfie: Exploring London to Communicate Inward & Outward Journeys Via Multimedia Storytelling – London, earn credit for COMM 410, Study Abroad in Communication
- ◆ Exploring Visual Culture: British Popular Cultures and Counter-cultures – London, earn credit for COMM 410, Study Abroad in Communication
- ◆ KIIS: Maya Mexico Winter, Earn credit for COMM 400, Special Topics: Maya Mexico, Past & Present

### Summer 2017:

- ◆ Amazing Argentina: Exploring Communication & Culture, earn credit for COMM 263, Fundamentals of Communication & Culture (honors credit available)
- ◆ Grand Granada, Spain: Engaging in Communication and Culture, earn credit for COMM 145, Fundamentals of Public Speaking and Communication
- ◆ Cultural Comparisons of British and American Sport – London, earn credit for COMM 410, Study Abroad in Communication
- ◆ CCSA: Intercultural Communication, London, earn credit for COMM 463, Intercultural Com-

FACULTY-LED  
STUDY ABROAD

▶ Argentina

SUMMER 2017: May 28 - June 16

**Amazing Argentina: Exploring Communication & Culture**  
COMM 263 | Led by Rita Meredith

Develop intercultural communication skills and study culture in the most fascinating city in South America...Buenos Aires. Explore Latin culture in Mendoza and the amazing Andes Mountains. WKU Colonnade credit in only 3 weeks.

WKU.EDU/GO/ARGENTINA



WKU

FACULTY-LED  
STUDY ABROAD

▶ Spain

SUMMER 2017: June 30 - July 23

**Grand Granada, Spain: Engaging in Communication and Culture**  
COMM 145 | Led by Rita Meredith

Develop public speaking and intercultural communication skills, experience study abroad with a Spanish focus, and learn about culture in one of the most ancient and diverse cities in Spain...Granada! WKU Colonnade credit in only 3 weeks.

WKU.EDU/GO/SPAIN

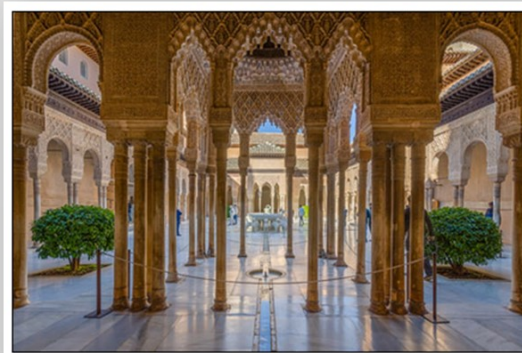


WKU

- ◆ munication
- ◆ KIIS: Barcelona, earn credit for COMM 400, Topics: Digital Storytelling, or COMM 463,

- ◆ Intercultural Communication
- ◆ KIIS: Spain, earn credit for COMM 263, Fundamentals of Communication & Culture

Dr. Sterk encourages students, “We have a number of faculty members who are leading international study, so get your self out of America. We have faculty members ready, and we are ready for students to do the same!” For more information go to <http://www.wku.edu/>



~ Jessica Powell, Student

## Exciting Study Abroad Opportunities for Summer

Studying abroad can be one of the highlights of a student's career at WKU. For the last three years, Rita Meredith (part-time instructor in the department) has lead Study Abroad programs to Argentina. According to Ms. Meredith, "Traveling abroad changes you, expands horizons, makes you appreciate other cultures, and helps you adapt in an increasingly global world." This year Ms. Meredith, along with the Department of Communication, is excited to expand the Study Abroad opportunities with two unique programs. During the summer of 2017, she will be leading Study Abroad programs in Argentina and Spain.

Students participating in the Argentina trip will have the opportunity to develop intercultural communication skills and learn about the culture of one of the most fascinating cities in South America, while earning credit for COMM 263, Fundamentals of Communication & Culture.

Those traveling to Spain will be able to develop public speaking and intercultural communication skills while experiencing study abroad with a Spanish focus, and learn about culture in Granada, one of the most ancient and diverse cities in Spain. They may earn credit for



**Students in Argentina, summer, 2015  
Allison Hoey, Zena Gavin, Juan Pinilla,  
Rita Meredith, Larosa Shelton**

COMM 145, Fundamentals of Public Speaking and Communication, or COMM 263, Fundamentals of Communication & Culture.

Both courses will fulfill Colonnade (general education) credit and offer a variety of cultural activities and excursions. Courses for both programs will be taught in English

and students will have the opportunity to stay with families from the region.

Ms. Meredith encourages all who are interested to contact her with any questions at [rita.meredith@wku.edu](mailto:rita.meredith@wku.edu).

*~Jessica Powell, Student*

## Dr. Sterk Visits South Korea



**Dr. Sterk in South Korea with students from Seoul University**

The Department of Communication takes pride in strongly contributing to WKU's international reach. In May 2016, Department Head, Helen Sterk, Ph.D., took the opportunity to travel to South Korea to scout out Study Abroad sites, as well as to conduct research interviews as part of the International Year of South Korea. Dr. Sterk is currently working on a research project about how ambition, professionalism, and family are all integrated into women's lives. She interviewed a number of women professors from universities in Seoul to add to her research. From her interviews, she gathered that Korean women face even more extreme problems than

*- Cont'd on page 11*



## Dr. Sterk Visits South Korea ... *cont'd*

women from the United States. Dr. Sterk also visited South Korea looking for a potential partner for exchange programs.

WKU's Office of International Programs is busy developing Study Abroad programs to further engage students. One of WKU's partner universities, Hanyang University in Seoul, has a one-month summer program where students are taught in English from professors across the

globe. There are a wide variety of Communication classes that are offered, including International Advertising, Communication and Documentary Research, and Production in South Korea. "Communication has a different meaning in South Korea than it does here," Dr. Sterk stated. "When they study communication, it is broadcasting and mass media." Dr. Sterk believes this would be a great opportunity for

Communication students to broaden their horizons. Some of the Communication professors are looking into teaching at this partner university in the coming summers. For more information, contact Dr. Sterk at [helen.sterk@wku.edu](mailto:helen.sterk@wku.edu) or see [www.hanyangsummer.com/seoul/hiss](http://www.hanyangsummer.com/seoul/hiss).

~Emily Oney, Student

## Professor Allison Visits China

The experience that longtime Communication instructor Gayle Allison, M.A. enjoyed most was when she travelled to China and explored a new place. A cultural exchange from the church that she attends gave Ms. Allison the opportunity to travel with 15 other church partners to teach Chinese students about American culture, including dance, music, and interviewing.

Language was one difference that Ms. Allison faced during her visit. According to Ms. Allison, whenever you visit other countries, you notice many differences. For example, Ms. Allison noticed that going to a park and having a picnic made college students happy. She believes it takes more than simple activities to make American college students happy. Furthermore, she noticed that most Chinese have respect for other religions, which is an important part of the Chinese culture. Also, she mentioned the food in China tastes better than the Chinese food in the United States, and people in China were very friendly to talk to.

Everyone wonders how they will be treated if they leave the country, but Ms. Allison found that they knew many things about American culture and they could tell she is from the South by her accent. She recommends that students should visit other countries such as China to learn and



Gayle Allison while visting China

enjoy new experiences. It is a great opportunity to travel and explore new things in your life, to learn more about others, and to let them learn about your culture as well.

~ Hussain Alsaleb , Student



## Communication Says 'Farewell' to Linda Yin

Chinese intercultural communication scholar, Linda Yin (Yin Zharong) bid farewell to Communication Nation on January 3, 2017.

Ms. Yin visited the WKU Department of Communication, which hosted her sabbatical year in 2017. While associated with the department, Ms. Yin attended Dr. Sterk's COMM 200 and Dr. Kong's 263 classes. In each, she contributed stories and examples of how communication works and is taught in China.

Ms. Yin also helped Dr. Sterk with her research project on Asian women professors' balancing of work and home life by connecting her with a number of other Chinese scholars visiting at WKU.



**Drs. Helen Sterk and Linda Yin (Yin Zharong)**

The annual bonfire at Prof. Elder's house was a highlight of the year for

Ms. Yin. Her son, Sunny, joined her for a follow-up visit to Prof. Elder's house, where Ms. Yin reveled in learning how to drive the lawn mowing tractor.

Through initiatives such as these, the Department of Communication builds relationships around the world. Ms. Yin enthusiastically invites both students and faculty members to visit her in Shanghai. If you'd like to know more, please contact Dr. Sterk at [hel-en.sterk@wku.edu](mailto:hel-en.sterk@wku.edu) and she'll connect you.

~ Helen Sterk, Dept. Head





# Student Organizations

## Lambda Pi Eta (LPH) Fall Update

The fall semester of 2016 proved exciting for the WKU Rho Nu chapter of Lambda Pi Eta (LPH), the National Communication Association's official honor society. Officers for the 2016-2017 academic year were elected: Taylor Hillard (President), Rachel Cato (Vice-President), Emily Anne Pride (Scholarship Officer), Hayley Armstrong (Secretary), and Courtney Tucker (Treasurer).

The officers work within the organization towards six goals, which includes promoting and encouraging professional development among communication majors and stimulating interest in the field of communication. Also, the cabinet of LPH officers enjoyed the privilege of working with other outstanding students in the Department of Communication.

Toward the beginning of the fall semester, LPH officers provided opportunities for students to make "get well" cards for Mr. Bruce Crawley, the department advisor, as he recovered from surgery. Members provided art supplies for students to design a card for Mr. Crawley, and afterwards, mailed the "get well" wishes to his home address.

In November, the chapter Vice-President, Rachel Cato, and the chapter Scholarship Officer, Emily Anne Pride, were able to attend the National Communication Association (NCA) annual conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Department of Communication was generous enough to sponsor two of our officers to ac-



**Back Row: Will Brandon, Lauren Risinger, Emily Anne Pride, Alison Wagoner, Sarah Harrington, Jon Sahlman, Jieyoung Kong**  
**Front Row: Courtney Tucker, Torrey Cazeault, Taylor Hillard, Nicole DiMatties, Rachel Cato, Erin Wilkerson**

company Dr. Jieyoung Kong (LPH Advisor) and Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith (Associate Professor).

LPH welcomed nine new members that joined the organization during the semester. Also, officers (Rachel Cato and Emily Anne Pride) discussed their experience at NCA and possible community service activities for the chapter. Active members not only work together towards success and learning, but are also required to perform community service. LPH's goal is to have a community service event that includes all members, which would further extend the impact they have on Western Kentucky University's surrounding area.

In early spring, recruitment letters for new members will be delivered.

Students who are eligible for membership will be invited to become members of LPH and to attend an induction ceremony to be conducted in late March, where new members from the previous semester will also be inducted.

To be eligible to join this organization, one must complete 60 credit hours (at least 12 credit hours in Communication), have a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 (GPA of 3.25 in Communication courses), and rank within the highest 35% of one's class. The Rho Nu chapter of LPH currently has twenty-one members, and the chapter is excited to welcome many more!

~ Taylor Hillard, LPH President  
 & Rachel Cato, LPH Vice President



## Communication Organization for Graduate Students (COGS)

The mission of COGS is to support our graduate students as they navigate through the program and look towards opportunities after graduation. During the fall semester our students in COGS have had some great successes in cultivating academic and professional development!

In September, COGS members Scott Branton, Mizuho Tatebayashi, and Gavin Kirkwood presented pieces from our COMM 552: Democracy, Power and Voice class at the Kentucky Communication Association

conference right here in Bowling Green! In November, Scott Branton and Gavin Kirkwood also presented at the National Communication Association in Philadelphia. It is clear that our students are creating some outstanding research pieces in class and it is so great when we can go out and represent WKU's Communication Department at larger events in our discipline.

Another highlight of COGS was our Ph.D. information night this past October. This was a great

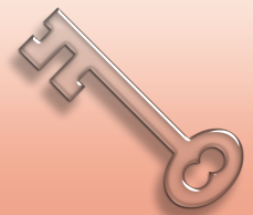
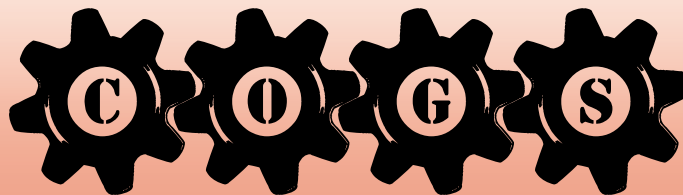
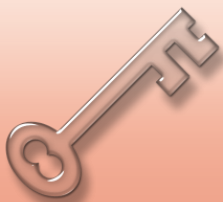
time to hear past experiences from Dr. Kong, Dr. Brown, Dr. Payne, and Dr. Jerome about their time in Ph.D. programs. Having an informal Q & A helped our students get the information they needed as they prepare for their own professional development in higher education or possibly outside academia.

We wish all our graduate students the best during the upcoming spring semester. Keep up the great work!

*~Gavin Kirkwood, COGS President*



Graduate Students during departmental Christmas Luncheon:  
Marshall Covert, Cathryn Ellis (JUMP Student), Gavin Kirkwood, and Haley Miller

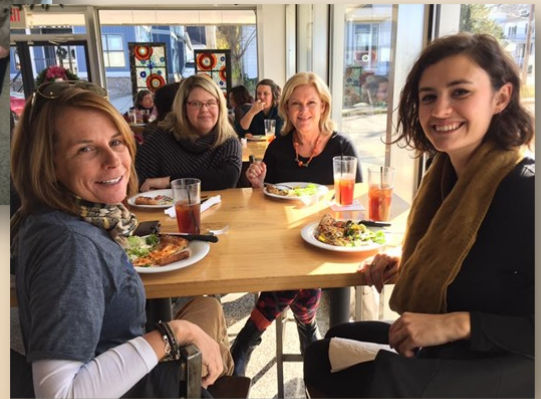




# Events



Departmental  
Holiday Luncheon  
December 7, 2016



November 2, 2016

# Bonfire



# Alumni Updates

**Christina Abney—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2014**—Christina recently began working as the Community Marketing Specialist at Atria Senior Living in Louisville, Kentucky.

**Michaela Ash—M.A. Organizational Communication, 2016**—Michaela is currently working as a Sales Contract Administrator at Comdata in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

**Sarah Steen Bessinger—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2011**—Sarah earned her Juris Doctorate in 2015 from Salmon P. Chase College of Law, and is currently the Assistant County Attorney for Warren County in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

**Ryan DeMuth—B.A. Communication Studies, 2014**—Ryan has recently been promoted to Account Manager of Comm/Data Sales at Graybar in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Mackenzie Lee Farris—B.A. Communication Studies, 2016**—Mackenzie began working as a Marketing Assistant at Bluegrass Cellular, and was quickly promoted to her current position as Digital Marketing

& E-commerce Coordinator.

**Porsha Johnson—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2014**—Porsha is a Human Resources Manager at Lowe's Companies, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia.

**Brittanee Loftis—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2014**—Brittanee is an Assistant Director of Events at Holiday Inn University Plaza/Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

**Chelsea Martin—B.A. Communication Studies, 2014**—Chelsea received an M.A. in Communication Studies from the University of Alabama in 2016. She is currently working as an academic advisor for WKU at the Owensboro campus.

**Kasey Mathes—M.A. Organizational Communication, 2010**—Kasey is an Associate Manager of Public Relations at KFC in Louisville, Kentucky.

**Joanna 'Peej' Packer—B.A. Communication Studies, 2015**—Peej is a Sales Representative at JB Distributors in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

**Felix Perrone—M.A. Organizational Communication, 2015**—Felix was promoted to Information Systems Process Manager at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

**Skylar Phaup—B.A. Communication Studies, 2014**—Skylar is the Director of Sales & Marketing at Studio Calico in Nashville, Tennessee.

**Sara Pitts—M.A. Organizational Communication, 2010**—Sara was accepted into the doctoral program at West Virginia University.

**Clay Settles—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2016**—Clay is currently working as SMB Growth Strategist for Gartner in Fort Myers, Florida.

**Alex Smith—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2013**—Alex is employed as a Sales Engineer at Keyence Corporation in Nashville, Tennessee.

**Katie Spears—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication, 2013**—Katie is working as an Account Manager for Affiliate Merchandise Group in Nashville, Tennessee.

Let us know what you are doing.

We would love to hear from you, too!

Send news to Laura Wagoner at [laura.wagoner@wku.edu](mailto:laura.wagoner@wku.edu)



# Fall 2016

## Student Workers



Allie Young, Nicole DiMatties, Rachel Cato, Aspen Hennessey, and Jordan Frodge  
Meredith Coomes (not shown)



# Thank you!

Western Kentucky  
University  
Department of  
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Fax: 270-745-3295

We're on the Web!  
[www.wku.edu/communication](http://www.wku.edu/communication)



For information on giving to the  
Department of Communication contact:

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<http://alumni.wku.edu/communication-giving>



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