

Inside this issue:

New PhD Program in Works	1
Dr. Robert Sanders Retires	1
New Faculty Members Join Communication Department	2
Graduation Ceremony—May 19, 2007	2
Faculty Grants and Research	3
Alumni Corner	4
How You Can Help	4

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<http://www.albany.edu/communication/alumni/>

Current Faculty  
Annis Golden  
Senem Güney  
Timothy Halkowski  
Teresa Harrison  
Kelli Lammie  
Anita Pomerantz  
Nancy L. Roberts  
Mihye Seo  
Jennifer Stromer-Galley  
Tim Stephen  
Michael Barberich  
William Husson  
Alan T. Belasen  
Barry Eisenberg  
Staff  
Debbie Bourassa  
Paige Koehler Bowles

## New PhD Program in Works

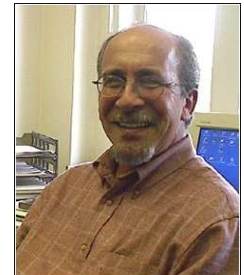
The Department is pleased to announce substantial progress in the development of a proposed new program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in communication. The new program is designed to prepare students to teach in college and university contexts and for careers in communication research. In late June 2007, an external review team, comprised of noted scholars from the discipline, came to campus to



view the program, which will emphasize communication theory, research methods, and the application of knowledge in the field to identify, analyze and propose solutions for communication problems. Projected to begin in fall 2008, the program requires at least three academic years of full-time study and research, or the equivalent over a longer period, beyond the baccalaureate. We expect to make further announcements about the progress of this program in future editions of this newsletter. For more information on the new program in the meantime, please contact Prof. Anita Pomerantz, Director of Graduate Studies at [apom@albany.edu](mailto:apom@albany.edu) or Prof. Teresa Harrison at [harrison@albany.edu](mailto:harrison@albany.edu).

## Dr. Robert Sanders Retires

**Dr. Robert Sanders**, Professor of Communication at UAlbany, has retired after thirty-four years with the Department. Professor Sanders led the Department as an internationally known scholar, mentor, and instructor, in addition to serving twelve years as Chair of the Department. He has been an innovative researcher in the discipline of communication, with a special concentration on social influence.



Professor Sanders has made a significant impact on many of his colleagues. Anita Pomerantz, Professor in the Department of Communication, reported "Bob Sanders has been an extremely important colleague

and friend to me. He freely shared many insights about teaching, scholarship, and the nature of the discipline. He has been a superb colleague from the day he recruited me in 1999 through the present, and I expect to continue collaborative scholarship with him after his retirement. I am grateful for the many contributions he has made to the life of the Department."

Senem Güney, Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, adds that Prof. Sanders' attentiveness to the intellectual growth and professional development of junior faculty members has been exceptional. Dr. Güney said, "The engaged mentorship that Prof. Sanders has generously given to his younger colleagues like myself goes beyond what some people receive in their graduate school training."

In addition to his overall interest in social influence, his other research areas include studies of the development of strategic communication in children, the influence of context on the interpretation of discourse, and strategies used to avoid overt conflict. Professor Sanders edited the journal, *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, from 1988-1998, and was Chair of the Language and Social Interaction Divisions of both the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association. In 2005, he co-edited the *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction*.

## New Faculty Members Join Communication Department

### Kelli Lammie, Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania

Kelli Lammie is an Assistant Professor who received her PhD from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, her interest in political communication has deep roots.

Her principle area of focus, as well as recent research, has been at the intersection of popular culture and political communication. She is extremely interested in the role popular culture plays in helping citizens make sense of today's political climate. Prof. Lammie's dissertation, entitled "The (Not-So) 'Powerless Elite:' Celebrity Endorsements of Political Candidates" advanced a framework to explain the influence of celebrities in electoral campaigns.

Her other research interests include persuasion theory, the use of entertainment programming and comedy in shaping political attitudes, and the influence of a variety of media on political knowledge, interest, and participation.

In Fall 2007, Dr. Lammie will be teaching COM 378: American Mass Media and Politics and COM 520: Theories and Research in Political Communication.

### Mihye Seo, Ohio State University

Mihye Seo is an Assistant Professor who received her PhD from the School of Communication at The Ohio State University. Originally from Korea, Prof. Seo initially started studying communication to pursue a career in journalism. Along the way she became fascinated by studying how the effects of media intertwine with everyday life, and decided to change her focus purely to communication.

Her research focuses on the interface of mass media effects and emerging technologies, and attempts to understand the effects of mass media in the realm of politics. She is particularly interested in the differential influence of various mass media (including the Internet) on producing informed and participatory citizens. She is also interested in the role of mass media in shaping social reality and its consequences in the process of political decision-making. Prof. Seo is currently working on a study with the Mind Lab called Media Causation, which examines how individuals attribute social issues to the mass media.

Prof. Seo's fall courses will include COM 503: Message Design and Social Influence, and COM 625: Mass Media Effects in Political Communication.

## Department of Communication Graduation Ceremony—May 19, 2007



Participating in this year's ceremony, from left to right, are Professor and Chair Teri Harrison, guest speakers Susan Arbetter and Ben Kallos, and Professor Emeritus Alan Chartock.

The Department of Communication's spring recognition ceremony was held on Saturday, May 19th, in the SEFCU Arena. Despite wet and unseasonably cool weather, the event saw a great turnout! The Department awarded diplomas to 210 undergraduates this spring, with 14 graduate students receiving Master's degrees.

This year's ceremony featured guest speaker Ms. Susan Arbetter. Susan has had a long and illustrious career in the field of communication, and currently works as a host and producer at WMHT Public Television. Mr. Benjamin Kallos, Esq. (BA '02) also spoke at this year's ceremony and was our first ever alumni speaker. Ben went on to receive his JD from UBuffalo and now practices law with Abrams, Fensterman, Fensterman, Eisman, Greenberg, Formato & Einiger, LLP in Lake Success, NY.

Special recognition also went to Denise Kerwath, who was the winner of the department's annual Richard W. Wilkie Award for the Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Communication. The award is given annually at the end of the spring semester to a graduating communication student who has achieved academic excellence, especially in argumentation and public discourse. Congratulations to Denise and all of our graduates this year! And special thanks to Susan and Ben!

## Current Faculty Grants and Research

### Deliberative E-Rulemaking

#### Jennifer Stromer-

**Galley** recently received a \$400,000 three-year grant from the National Science Foundation for her grant entitled "Collaborative Research: Deliberative E-Rulemaking Decision Facilitation Project (DeER)".

The grant provides funding for an experiment to test a new electronic system of

deliberation with the potential to improve the quality of input to government agencies about rule changes. The rulemaking comment process, which engages the public in discussion of proposed regulatory rules, faces a number of problems, including poorly informed and distrustful participants, lack of dialog among participants, and problems of scale such as the large number of comments generated. Research-

ers believe that most rule-making comments are low in quality or redundant—a product of form letters used by public interest groups.

The DeER project will address existing problems by immersing citizens in small discussion groups, assisted by discussion facilitation software. The software will use cutting-edge language processing technologies to help answer questions, summarize discussion, and pro-

vide feedback and suggestions on the discussion.

Discussion itself will be organized into groups to help the best ideas spread among participants and rise to the top. The value of the technology and of the deliberation methods will be thoroughly tested using experimental methods and data collected via surveys, focus groups, and by the software.

### Technology Innovation

The IBM Center for the Business of Government, Washington, D.C. has awarded a research stipend of \$20,000 to **Senem**

**Güney** to start a longitudinal study of IBM@Albany NanoTech, a first-of-its-kind collaborative enterprise housing multiple R&D consortia among international partners. This study investigates the development of

novel organizational forms and communication practices used by IBM@ANT and its academic and industrial partners as they engage in inter-organizational collaboration for high-technology innovation at Albany NanoTech. Complex collaborative enterprises such as Albany NanoTech are increasingly becoming the norm for innovative product development in the high-technology indus-

try, as organizations face the need to make investments that go beyond their individual capabilities in order to stay ahead of changing competitive threats. Prof. Güney is beginning an organizational ethnography of a key partner in Albany NanoTech. One of the objectives of this study is to demonstrate the significance of the disciplinary perspective of Communication

Studies in providing insights into social-organizational phenomena that are crucial in the maintenance and success of these collaborative enterprises. The collection of ethnographic data for this study started in May 2007 and will continue through the next academic year.

### Increasing Rates of Organ Donation

A consortium consisting of **Anita Pomerantz** and **Teresa Harrison** at the University at Albany, **Carla Williams** of New York Alliance for Donation, and **Tom Feeley** at the State University of New York at Buffalo have recently finished a research study aimed at understanding the factors that are related to students' intentions to donate organs and their experiences in notifying

their families of their donation wishes. The research team studied the effects of public relations courses at UAlbany and UBuffalo in which undergraduate students learned to design, implement, and evaluate a public awareness campaign focusing on organ and tissue donation. The team used a multi-method approach, including surveys, interviews, and qualitative analyses of tapes of family discussions. The research was

funded by a three year grant from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which enabled the universities to hire public relations professionals to teach the courses and which also funded courses of study for the graduate students involved.

Anita Pomerantz and Paul Denvir, her research assistant and doctoral student, conducted two qualitative studies as part of the larger project. One study, drawing

on interviews of the practicum students, determined the impact of taking the practicum on the students' perspectives and conduct. The other study, an analysis of the dynamics of family discussions, explored the discursive practices that family members use when they expect their views will be unfavorably received and that advocates used to overcome resistance to donation.

**NEW!! ALUMNI CORNER**

Many opportunities exist for alumni to help students. The programs below provide students the opportunity to gain valuable experience. For more information, please visit our website or contact Paige Koehler Bowles at [pkbowles@albany.edu](mailto:pkbowles@albany.edu).

- Alumni In the Classroom
- Externship Program
- Career Panelists
- Speakers Bureau
- Mentoring Program
- Giving Back

**Tell Us How You're Doing!**

Each semester we will feature a department alum in our Hall of Fame who has gone on to do great things in the field of communication. Would you be a good candidate? Please visit our website at: [www.albany.edu/communication/alumni](http://www.albany.edu/communication/alumni) and submit your information to [pkbowles@albany.edu](mailto:pkbowles@albany.edu) now!



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*A copy of The University at Albany Foundation's annual report is available by contacting the Foundation, at the above address or at [www.albany.edu/foundation](http://www.albany.edu/foundation).*

Gifts are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. **Thank you!**

**DMNLCASC07**