

## Inside this issue:

Alumni Hall of Fame	1
New PhD Program Update	1
Faculty News	2
UAlbany Events—Share the Beat of Life!	2
Graduate Student Research	3
Alumni Corner	4
How You Can Help	4

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

### Current Faculty

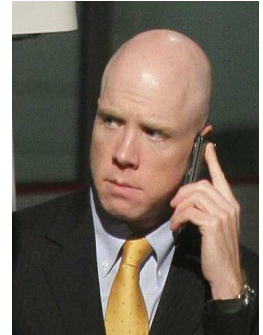
Annis Golden  
Senem Güney  
Timothy Halkowski  
Teresa Harrison  
Kelli Lammie  
Anita Pomerantz  
Nancy L. Roberts  
Mihye Seo  
Jennifer Stromer-Galley  
Tim Stephen  
Michael Barberich  
William Husson  
Alan T. Belasen  
Barry Eisenberg  
Staff  
Debbie Bourassa  
Paige Koehler Bowles

### FUN FACT:

There are currently 600 Communication majors at UAlbany!

## Alumni Hall of Fame

The Department of Communication was pleased to have **Mr. John P. Gallagher**, First Deputy Press Secretary and Spokesman for the Mayor of the City of New York, Michael R. Bloomberg, as this year's commencement speaker. Mr. Gallagher earned his **MA in Communication** from the University at Albany in 2004. He started his career working in the State Assembly as a public affairs assistant, quickly becoming press secretary and then campaign manager for Senator Patricia McGee. He was made press secretary to the Vice President Pro Tempore where he spent over four years, simultaneously serving as press secretary for several state senate campaigns across the state and earning his MA.



Upon moving to New York City, Mr. Gallagher was jointly appointed by Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the agency created after September 11 to plan and execute redevelopment, and the agency given oversight of the billions in federal funding sent to New York after the attacks.

After serving a brief stint as a political consultant and communications director for Jeanine Pirro's Attorney General campaign, Mr. Gallagher accepted his current position with Mayor Bloomberg, a post he has held for almost two years. In that time he has traveled to twenty states and several foreign countries with the Mayor, and has overseen responses to some of the biggest stories in New York City.

Mr. Gallagher says his time at UAlbany helped prepare him for a competitive job market. "Throughout my career I've worked with people who came out of some of the most prestigious schools in the country, and I've always felt that I had the tools I needed to compete. UAlbany didn't just provide an education; it provided me a level of self-confidence and self-assurance that I've needed to get ahead. I'd hire a UAlbany graduate in a minute, because I know that the person from UAlbany is going to be motivated, aggressive when needed, and isn't going to need their hand held to get things done." Congratulations to John Gallagher for being the first inductee into our Hall of Fame!

## New PhD Program Update

The new PhD program continues to move forward! Since the last update, the program has been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee, the University Senate, and is currently at SUNY Central awaiting final approval.

The new proposal underwent an external review last summer, which received overwhelmingly positive responses from some of the leading experts in the field of communication. The external review featured Dr. Gerry Philipsen, Profes-



sor of Communication at the University of Washington, Dr. Donald J. Cegala, Professor of Communication and Family Medicine at The Ohio State University, and Dr. Robert T. Craig, Professor of Communication at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Philipsen's areas of expertise include ethnography of communication, small group discussion and decision making, and orality. Dr. Cegala specializes in the areas of persuasion at the undergraduate level, health communication at the graduate level, and also teaches courses in discourse and interaction analysis and interpersonal communication in health contexts. Dr. Craig specializes in communication theory and philosophy, discourse analysis, and argumentation.

## Faculty News

In September, **Professor Jennifer Stromer-Galley**, Co-Principle Investigator with Peter Muhlberger and Nick Webb, received a National Science Foundation grant through the Human Centered Computing division. The focus of the grant is on how to improve the public comment process for government agencies using natural language computer processing technology and political deliberations. In the fall, the group set up software to host online deliberations and integrated a sophisticated question and answering tool for users to quickly search and find information on a proposed government regulation.

In February and March, they conducted phase 1 of the research, which involved recruiting undergraduates to participate in deliberations on the topic of network neutrality. They provided valuable input on problems with the software's message board system and weaknesses with the question and answering tool. The researchers are now re-designing and will begin phase 2 this summer. This will include recruiting more undergraduates in the early part of the summer. For the later part, they hope to recruit people around the United States who have an interest in the topic of network neutrality.

**Dr. Alan Belasen, Lecturer**, published his book: *The Theory and Practice of Corporate Communication: A Competing Values Perspective* (2008, SAGE Publications).

Using case studies and practical applications (from such companies and organizations as Starbucks, NASA, the American Red Cross, Johnson & Johnson, FedEx, Oracle, GM, Microsoft, IBM, Verizon, and Target, among others), the book promotes the teaching of corporate communication from a strategic viewpoint. The organizing schema introduced in this book is the Competing Values Framework for Corporate Communication (CVFCC). The framework brings the whole (corporate communication) and parts (marketing communication, financial communication, organizational communication, management communication) into a more sophisticated theoretical treatment of corporate communication that goes beyond merely discussing "best practices".

An extensive Instructor's Manual CD-ROM, which was developed and written by Professor Belasen, with learning units, case applications, analyses, links to internet resources, and PowerPoint slides for each of the book's 15 chapters is also available.

## Share the Beat of Life!



Communication Campaign Practicum students spread the word about organ and tissue donation at A Capella Fest, hosted by the UAlbany student organization Middle Earth.

Through a partnership with the Center for Organ and Tissue Donation, this spring the Department of Communication offered **COM 465: Communication Campaign Practicum**. This special course is designed to give communication undergraduates a "real world" experience developing and implementing an effective public relations campaign. Students are taught to think strategically about public relations as it relates to this campaign and others, and then work in teams to conceptualize, design, and execute the campaign.

The course was taught by Lissa D'Aquanni, lecturer and principal of Out on a Limb Consulting. It focuses on educating the students' peers about the life saving benefits of organ and tissue donation and encouraging them to sign the registry. The Center for Donation and Transplant serves as the client and provides volunteer speakers to help educate the students and their peers.

The class goal was to add 700 University at Albany students to the New York State "Donate Life" Registry and to educate 2,000 of their peers. By the end of the campaign, 835 new donors were added to the registry and over 5,000 students were educated on organ and tissue donation!

The students designed a slate of special events, which included coupling their efforts with the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life Kickoff, A Cappella Fest held by Middle Earth, and the Circle K Basketball Tournament. They also organized a PS2 Guitar Hero Tournament, and the Share the Beat of Life concert. Fantastic prizes including t-shirts, restaurant gift certificates, OTD bracelets, and movie passes were given away during these events. Everyone who registered to become a new donor was also entered in a raffle to win a brand new Nintendo Wii!

## Graduate Student Research

### Novices Developing Familiarity with Desktop Videoconferencing

Doctoral Student **E. Sean Rintel** is investigating how novices develop familiarity with desktop videoconferencing. He recruited twelve pairs of people in long-distance relationships-- mostly couples, some family, some friends-- to use desktop videoconferencing to talk to one another from their own homes for two months. Each pair could talk whenever they wanted about whatever they wanted during the trial period, and those conferences were recorded. Each pair was also interviewed before, during and after their trial. The goal is to determine what challenges the pairs face in coming to grips with the technology as they simultaneously try to maintain their relationships. One of the early findings is that getting underway, which involves moving from logging on to the first substantive topic, was often complicated by attempts to ensure that each party could be seen and heard at an acceptable level of quality. Pairs had to learn how to describe the problems they were having seeing and hearing one another, and how to solve those problems. This project was made possible in part by the donation of Session videoconferencing software and hosting services by Wave3 Inc.



### Faceless Words: The Effect of Message Disembodiment on Deliberator Elaboration and Individuation

Master's Student **Michael Mussman's** research experiment explores whether deliberator anonymity affects the amount of topically-relevant elaboration, which is often said to be a sign of rationality, found in the messages of a computer-mediated deliberation. The experiment compares the messages created by a group of deliberators identified by their names and photos with the messages from a group of anonymous deliberators. He hypothesizes that messages created by anonymous deliberators will contain fewer instances of "individuation," or language which relates the deliberation's topic in terms of the deliberator's persona or the personas of other people. He further hypothesizes that messages with less individuation will have more state-

ments of elaboration which expand upon the topic. After a lengthy review by the Institutional Review Board, Mike is currently recruiting participants for the study from the undergraduate classes of Professors Halkowski, Seo, and Martin. Data analysis is underway and anticipated to be completed soon. Mike will be graduating in August and beginning doctoral work in the fall at the University of Maryland-- Baltimore County, studying public policy.



### The Spouses of Presidential Candidates: The Media's Coverage of the Unofficial Running Mates

**Lauren Bryant**, Master's Student in Communication, analyzed 175 newspaper articles to determine how the spouses of the Democratic presidential candidates were portrayed in the news media during the 2008 primary season, and if the news media relied upon traditional gender role expectations in their coverage. This study

suggests that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* did not engage in gender bias in their coverage of Elizabeth Edwards, Michelle Obama, and Bill Clinton. The analysis indicates that instead of depicting the spouses in traditional gender roles and relying upon traditional gender role expectations which is consistent with previous literature on first ladies and political spouses, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* relied upon the expectations of spouses of presidential candidates in their depiction of these individuals.

Doctoral Student **Marina Marcou-O'Malley's** research concentrates on presidential campaign discourse. She is currently working on campaign discourse "missteps" which pose problems for maintaining control of the message for which campaigns strive. Her research is at a very early stage, which allows her to monitor the current presidential race and collect examples of situations where campaigns have lost control of the discourse. A "misstep" is defined as an instance during the campaign when the candidate or a surrogate has said something the mass media treats as a problematic statement and devotes lots of attention to its scrutiny.

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
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- 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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