Department Welcomes New Head

Dr. Helen M. Sterk, Ph.D.

The faculty of the Department of Communication is pleased to welcome Dr. Helen M. Sterk as Department Head.

Dr. Sterk comes to the Hill from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan where she served the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences as the William Spoelhof Teacher—Scholar Chair, Director, Gender Studies minor for Calvin college, and Professor, Communication Arts and Sciences from 1999 to date.

Dr. Sterk’s research and instructional expertise have focused on gender and applied communication in contemporary

Alumni Focus—Dan Cline

Dan Cline Leads Successful Congressional Campaign

Switching from a career in professional football to politics might seem like a bit of a jump, but Dan Cline (Corp. & Organizational Communication, 2008) tackled his way into a high-profile position as Campaign Manager for U.S. Congressman Michael R. Turner (R-Ohio). Turner was reelected by the 3rd Congressional District in November to his fifth term of office earning 69% of the vote.

After a brief stint with the Cincinnati Bengals and a season with the Milwaukee Iron arena football team in 2009, Dan went back home to Centerville, Ohio where he attended a luncheon hosting Congressman Turner. With little hesitation, Dan handed him his resume and told the Congressman he wanted to work on his staff. Several conversations and multiple interviews later, Dan landed a job as Campaign Manager.

When asked to describe a typical day or workweek, Dan simply states, “Every day and every
Caillouet “Sails Away” into Retirement

Will the “real” Larry please stand up?

Dr. Larry Caillouet, a 35-year veteran professor in the Department of Communication was declared – for one day only – the “Real Larry” by Dr. Dale Wicklander. This brought laughter from the “other” Larrys in the department, Interim Department Head Dr. Larry Snyder and former Department Head Dr. Larry Winn. This unique declaration came about on December 1, 2010, as the department gave tribute to Caillouet during a reception held at the Faculty House on campus. Colleagues, former students, family and friends were all on hand to help Caillouet “sail away” into the sunset of the next phase of his career and life.

Dubbed “a kamikaze with standards” by Dr. Larry Winn for his ability to take a project and make sure it’s done to the highest quality possible, Caillouet’s many years of service to the department and university were hailed:

- Director of WKU Forensics from 1975-82
- Co-founded the Christian Faculty & Staff Fellowship in 1984
- Faculty Adviser to both the Campus Crusade for Christ and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association
- Director of the Office of International Programs from 2000-2003
- Coordinator of the Visiting Scholars Program since 2003

Former Provost Dr. Barbara Burch said that Caillouet was WKU’s “International Reach” before it became the standard. She lauded his tenacious, work horse attitude in getting the 12 Visiting Scholars residences renovated, decorated, and furnished. She announced the planting of a tree in his honor in the International Scholars Village to commemorate his dedication to making WKU a premier location for visiting scholars.

Caillouet remarked that he was grateful to have the opportunity spend an entire career at WKU and live in the Bowling Green area. He said he thought he’d stay here only a few years until a position at a “better” university came about. After those first few years on campus, however, he realized that WKU was the “better” place to be and never sought a position elsewhere. WKU is a definitely a better place to be in many ways because of Dr. Larry Caillouet.

- Stacey Gish, Instructor
Students Enjoy Major Discovery

The Major Discovery: Department of Communication event held on March 30th was a huge success! This event was geared toward Exploratory students who were interested in majoring or minoring within the Department of Communication. The event was held at the Faculty House and consisted of a rotating meet and greet set up. After Dr. Larry Synder gave his opening remarks the students moved between the tables with topics such as Advising, Student Organizations, Careers, Service Learning, and Real Talk! The Real Talk table gave the students a chance to talk to students in the major and find out what it is really like.

We had 29 students attend the event along with several faculty and staff, including Dr. Larry Snyder, Bruce Crawley, Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith, Dr. Angie Jerome, Dr. Carl Kell, Laura Wagoner, Gayle Allison, Jennifer Markin, Gary Hughes, Cyndia Tarrence, Dr. Ellen Bonaguro, Kevin Thomas, and myself, Londa Holder. The students were all quite engaged, many noted that they had a great time and some even indicated that they would be changing their majors/minors. After the information sessions the students were given pizza, t-shirts, and a smattering of other prizes. Lots of fun was had by all!

~ Londa Holder, AARC

Dr. Angela Jerome
Student Organization table

Lesley Greenwell, Elizabeth Beach, and Jessica Bowen at "Real Talk" table

Dr. Carl Kell — Internship table

Bruce Crawley — Advising table

Londa Holder & Jennifer Markin

Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith — Service Learning table
Charlotte Elder, M.A.
designated
Director of Recruitment
&
Chair of Student Relations Committee

Charlotte Elder is the faculty advisor for the Communication Ambassadors. Recently, she was designated to be the Director of Recruitment, as well as, the Chair of Student Relations Committee. She has an excellent rapport with students, and will do an excellent job in her new role of Director of Recruitment.

Gayle Allison, M.A.
Designated
Director of the Student Success Center beginning Fall, 2011

In a real sense, Dr. Sterk is coming home. She received her M.A. in speech and Theatre here at WKU in 1979.

Department Welcomes New Head (cont’d from page 1)

In the coming days, come by the Department offices to meet our new Department Head—Dr. Helen M. Sterk.

- Carl L. Kell, Professor
Dr. Bonaguro Receives Award

Congratulations to Dr. Ellen Bonaguro for receiving the Kentucky Academic Advising Association (KACADA) Lifetime Achievement Award. The award was presented at the Annual Meeting of KACADA on April 6, 2011 for her dedication to the organization and to academic advising. Dr. Bonaguro is one of the founding members of the organization and served as the first President. She and her staff in the WKU Academic Advising and Retention Center have been involved in the planning and implementation of the past three conferences. Ellen will be rejoining the Department of Communication full-time in fall 2011, and will be teaching in her area of Health Communication. Check out her new courses COMM 440 (online course in Health Communication) and her graduate class, COMM 570 in Health Communication. For further information please feel free to call her directly at 270-745-6354.

Alumni Focus—Dan Cline (cont’d from page 1)

week presents new challenges, so you must learn to adapt to achieve your goals.” Dan’s primary role involves getting the Congressman out and about the district, interacting with constituents, and running a sound, campaign. Their success hinges on establishing fluid lines of communication.

Dan credits his success to his time at WKU and the Department of Communication. As an undeclared major, Dan enrolled in a variety of courses and toured different departments before deciding on Corporate and Organizational Communication. “It was the best decision I made at WKU and I haven’t looked back since.” A strong curriculum dedicated faculty were central to developing his communication skills and pushing him toward a career path in politics. “Dr. Lewis’ Political Speech Writing course and Dr. Kell’s Communication Capstone course were my most.”

He advises students majoring in Communication to secure internships or part-time positions that will provide work experience translatable to the job market. He also emphasizes the value of networking. “To obtain the occupation or profession you desire, it is vital that you step out of your comfort zone, reach out, and network.”

Now that the Congressman was re-elected for his fifth consecutive term, Dan remains as part of his congressional office staff. He plans to use his valuable experience to someday run for public office.

~Dr. Holly Payne, Associate Professor
The International Association of Business Communicators is a global organization comprised of over 15,000 professional business communicators in 80 different countries! Here at WKU, we have about 25 student members along with a reputation for being one of the most active student branches of IABC in the region. This year has been full of many changes for WKU’s IABC with the election of all new officers and even a new faculty advisor, Dr. Angela Jerome. So at the start of the fall semester, all these fresh new faces began to plan out what was in store for IABC.

In October, members attended the Gold Pen Awards hosted by IABC Nashville and emceed by Rhori Johnston, anchor for News Channel 5. The event was a great opportunity for our members to network with the professionals in Nashville and surrounding areas. WKU was recognized at the event as being one of the most proactive groups in the area and just so happened to be the only student organization in attendance.

At that very ceremony, members of WKU’s IABC had the good fortune of meeting Dr. Frank Parcells. Dr. Parcells coordinates the Austin Peay State University Department of Communication graduate program and is the Executive Vice President of IABC Nashville. Upon meeting him, the WKU chapter asked him to come to WKU and speak to our students about the world of communication and the role that social networking plays in it. He enthusiastically agreed. Later that month, students were packed in a classroom to hear Dr. Parcells’ presentation, “Social Media & Networking: A Burning Communication Need?” There, Dr. Parcells shed some light on the recent trend of the use of social media and networking in the professional world as well as giving a warning to students about the dangers of putting certain information on these social networking sites.

These events are just the tip of the iceberg for what WKU’s IABC has planned. This semester members will be attending more of the luncheons hosted by the Nashville chapter as well as travelling to other cities in cooperation with their IABC branches. These are excellent opportunities for student members to connect with other business professionals from all around the country and pick up some of the tricks of the trade. This spring is shaping up to be a busy one for IABC and its members here at WKU!

- Casey Sloan, IABC President
On Thursday, October 21st, Lambda Pi Eta members participated in organizing the Department of Communication’s meet and greet for students in basic level communication courses. Members of LPH worked closely with IABC to create posters and information representative of courses that are offered in our communication degree programs. Students then visited each station, answered a question about the course, and were given access to speak directly with their potential professors. Student participation exceeded all expectation. LPH was able to provide course insight to over 240 students.

In preparation for the National Communication Conference in San Francisco, the chapter hosted a hot chocolate bake sale the first week of November to raise funds for the officers attending the conference. The hot chocolate and homemade baked goods were popular items during our first cold week of the semester. A total of $136.33 was raised for the conference.

Perhaps, most importantly, officers attended the annual LPH Business Meeting which was held in conjunction with the NCA convention where they had the opportunity to hear about what some of the 496 active LPH chapters around the country are doing to serve their Communication Department, their campus, and their community as well as to learn about important opportunities that LPH members are eligible to take advantage of through the organization such as scholarships and annual research paper contests. Overall, this was a very valuable and exciting opportunity for all of the LPH officers.

- Molly Merrick & Jordan Reid, LPH Officers

Kasey Mathes & Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith

COMMUNICATION ORGANIZATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS (COGS)

The Communication Organization for Graduate Students (aka COGS) has had a productive year. Under the leadership of Kasey Mathes (2010 alum) in the Fall and Brittany Black and Ashley Miller in the Spring semester, COGS hosted a series of meetings focused on academic and professional development. In the Fall 2010 semester Dr. Angie Jerome presented on preparing papers for conference submissions and constructing presentations. Dr. Kumi Ishii and Dr. Holly Payne conducted a session on preparing for the non-thesis Capstone project, and two alumni (Tara Ohning and Rachel Walston) attended the December meeting to discuss the job market, how they used their degrees and careers in communication. In the Spring 2011 semester, COGS hosted a session with Dr. Holly Payne and Dr. Jennifer Mize Smith on writing a thesis and a session with the Career Services Center on tips for resume and cover letter writing. For the first time, the organization has secured SGA funding ($500) and is hoping to use the money to support their activities and provide assistance to graduate students preparing for conferences. Thanks to Kasey Mathes for her work in leading the organization. We wish her the best in her new position at Yum! Brands, Inc. in Louisville, Kentucky. Ashley Miller, Brittany Black, and Lauren Oliver are the incoming officers for the coming year.

- Holly Payne, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Lambda Pi Eta Inducts New Members

Lambda Pi Eta is the official Communication Honors Society and is a part of the National Communication Association; and, membership is by invitation only. In order to be invited to Lambda Pi Eta, communication students must have completed 60 hours of undergraduate study, 12 of which must be communication courses. Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0, but a Communication GPA of 3.5 and show a dedication to the Communication field.

On March 20, the Rho Nu chapter of Lambda Pi Eta inducted 16 new members. Please congratulate the following people on their communication achievements and Lambda Pi Eta membership.

Sasha Boustani
Jessica Bowen
Sarah Burton
Whitney Churchman
Drue Eberhardt
Stephen Green

Katherine Harmon
Melissa Meige
Ashleigh Miller
Katie Nelson
Emmanuel Owusu
Felix Perrone
Kelly Potts
Laura Ringer
Rebecca Schaefer
Daniel Shaw
Elizabeth Stewart
Kristin Waller

Lesley Greenwell, a Corporate & Organizational Communication major, defended her honors thesis and passed with Honors of Distinction. Lesley was also one of the top three WKU students in line to be awarded the 2011 Ogden Scholar Award. She was recognized as one of the Potter College of Arts & Letters Scholars during the 2011 Commencement.

Kasey Mathes, received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award for her achievements while pursuing her masters degree in Communication Studies. Her many accomplishments include:

- Top Paper award at the Central States Communication Association conference in April 2011, which received this honor among all faculty submitting papers to the Public Relations Division.
- President of Communication Organization for Graduate Students (COGS), where she organized workshops on writing, submitting, and presenting at academic conferences, and completing the graduate capstone project.
- She reached out to help socialize new students in the program, and created a buddy mentoring system to help part-time graduate students.

Kasey’s stellar academic record, focus on research, and professional involvement are indicators of her success at WKU.

Molly Merrick, received the Outstanding Communication Studies Student Award. She was one of the top three WKU students in line to receive the 2011 Ogden Scholar Award. She was recognized as one of the Potter College of Arts and Letters Scholars during the 2011 Commencement.

Jessica Paulsen, received the Outstanding Corporate & Organizational Communication Student Award.
Message from Helen Sterk, Department Head

Years ago, when I was a graduate student in WKU’s Department of Communication, I discovered several things—a love of Communication as a discipline, a desire to be part of this department, and a recognition of myself as a scholar. My wish for students today is that you find these things here, too.

The Department of Communication can be your home within the university, a place where you develop talent, increase learning, make friends, find a mentor, develop an identity, and get a headstart on life. This is a place where you matter.

I come to WKU from Calvin College, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I chaired the Communication Arts and Sciences department for six years and taught for eight. Before that, I taught at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Before that, I earned my Ph.D. at the University of Iowa in Rhetoric. And before that, I received my M.A. in Speech and Theatre here at WKU. And before that, I taught high school for three years and earned a B.A. in Speech and Theatre at Calvin College.

I’m interested in a million different things, but first and foremost, in students. Your lives enrich mine. From students, I’ve learned about Edward Sharp and the Magnetic Zeroes, the “Twilight” series, men’s movement rhetoric, “Arrested Development,” and many more things. On Facebook, I interact with former students from all the phases of my life—one goes back to 1978 with me. Through Twitter, I keep up with others, including one who now works on “Modern Family.”

I also care about research and writing. Currently, I’m finishing a book on mother and daughter communication. It should be out late this year. My daughter is doing the final edits on its bibliography and citations. With my daughter-in-law, I wrote a chapter on what happens to mother-daughter relationships when a daughter becomes pregnant and has a child of her own. I’m also writing a journal article on women’s leadership in higher education and one on how birthing is an heroic act.

Just as I care about and support students, so too do I care about faculty. You’ve got an amazingly dynamic and committed group of faculty members here. Their teaching and research and service to the community enriches us all.

Please feel free to drop in and say hi some day. I’d like to hear about your family, your studies, and your dreams. If there is something you need that I can help with, I will. My job is to help to make this major one of the best choices of your life.

Sincerely, Helen Sterk

Lambda Pi Eta Hosts Internship Panel

“Our discipline makes sense when we see it in real life.” These were the words spoken by Dr. Carl Kell at the Lambda Pi Eta internship panel on March 30. Roughly 60 students were in attendance, and seven representatives from companies with internship positions were present. Companies in attendance included the Corvette Plant, Northwestern Mutual, the WKU Alumni Association, US Congressman Brett Guthrie’s office, Junior Achievement, Fastenal and the 4-H Extension Office. Each representative spoke for roughly five minutes about their internship opportunities, before Dr. Kell spoke about the requirements for internship course credit. The group then spread out to allow students to ask questions on an individual, one-on-one basis.

Overall, the panel was a success and provided communication students with a networking opportunity, as well as, the chance to learn more about internship opportunities around Bowling Green.
When Sabine was a child, she had many plans for her professional future including becoming a pianist, English teacher, veterinarian, physiotherapist, and pastor. Teaching at Western Kentucky University was not one of those plans, but after a long educational path, turned out to be the perfect fit for her. A native of Austria, Sabine earned a Masters in Protestant Theology from the University of Vienna in 2001. She then, spent a year in Taiwan improving her Chinese. In one of those language classes she met her now husband, Shua. Together they hatched the idea that Sabine could continue her education in the U.S. and together they moved to San Diego, CA, where Sabine attended San Diego State University and got an M.A. in Communication Studies. Shua had graduated from Medical School in Texas and used the same time to complete his residency in internal medicine at UCSD. At the end of their California years, they moved to Maryland where Sabine pursued her PhD at the University of Maryland while Shua decided to move his focus to epidemiology and complete the EIS program with the CDC.

From the first time she left Austria by herself when she was fifteen and got to spend a summer in England, Sabine fell in love with traveling and exploring different cultures. Although adapting to new cultures is never easy, she feels incredibly rich because she had the chance to see so many places, meet so many different people, and learn from their ways of seeing life and the world. The more time Sabine spent away from her home country, the better she understood that teaching others about culture and how it influences us, understanding cultural differences and how to become better at communicating across cultural boundaries was what she wanted to do with her life. She joined the Department of Communication at WKU in Fall 2010 and will mainly teach Intercultural Communication courses as well as Research Methods. Her research focuses on topic in those same areas, such as issues of identity, adaptation and negotiation between members of different cultural groups. Between work and taking care of her son Torben, she recently has not really had much free time, but when she has time she enjoys baking, reading, and watching Chinese soap operas.
From Theory to Practice: The Intercultural Interaction Project

Half way through the Spring 2011 semester, students in COMM263, Fundamentals of Communication and Culture, were sitting together in small groups with their international guests discussing issues of adapting to a culturally different environment. “So, for example, who do you spend most time with here? Who are your friends?” Ashleigh Miller asked Guadalupe Muñoz Perez from Mexico. “Most of my friends are also Mexican, or from South America, or at least other international students” was the response. “Why do you think that is?” I asked them. The group quickly agreed that it was just easier to communicate with and connect to people with a similar background, the same language, and similar problems. “I have never communicated with someone from a foreign country before either”, added another group member.

Here we were, looking at such impressive increases in the number of international students at WKU and most of my students reported that they had never talked to one before, missing out on this great opportunity to learn about another culture, improve their intercultural communication skills, make new friends. “So, what would it take to get U.S. and international students to spend more time together”, I asked them. “Projects like this one” they said, “where we can just get together and talk”. A safe space, where mutual respect and interest is guaranteed, with a clear structure for working together.

So, what have we been up to in the last two semesters in COMM263? Thanks to the generous support from the Department of Communication and an HFEG Grant from the Honors College, we were able to establish a fruitful cooperation with the International Student and Scholar Services on campus. Students in COMM263 had the opportunity to work in small groups with one international student guest each discussing topics such as history, education, government and politics, interpersonal relationships, language, and different values and belief systems. Students then used the information from their guests together with their own literature research to complete research projects on the culture of their guest and present them to class at the end of the semester. This past semester, we were able to welcome guests from Belgium, China, France, India, Korea, Mexico, Mongolia, Nigeria, Taiwan, Tanzania, and Vietnam.

The purpose of the project included not just acquiring knowledge of a foreign culture but practicing intercultural communication skills, experiencing how theoretical concepts discussed in class applied to real life interactions, and yes, I was hoping that they would have fun together and become friends.

And how did it go? Based on student feedback, students gained a deeper understanding of and appreciation and respect for other cultures through communicating with their international peers, experienced personal growth, lost fears of interaction with culturally different others, and learned to enjoy and look forward to these interactions. Students reported not only increased understanding of complex cultural issues, but also felt better prepared for study abroad experiences as well as their professional future in a diverse working environment. And yes, many became friends with their international student guests.

-Cristina Balderas Gallegos, Anna Beth Gillon, Hunter Flynn, and Jeff Creech discussing Mexico

Assistant Professor Sabine Chui, Assistant Professor
Amanda Belcher, 2010—B.A. Communication Studies—Amanda is working as an Executive Team Leader for Target in Nashville, Tennessee. She is also continuing her education in the Department of Communication graduate program at WKU.

Hannah George, 2009—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication—Hannah is currently attending graduate school for a degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs at the University of South Carolina. She is working as a graduate assistant in their Admissions Office in Tele-counseling. She has also worked with market research, as well as, Academic Skills Coach. In addition, Hannah has published an article on Leadership in Higher Education Administration in the Journal of Academic Leadership. Hannah is also planning a wedding for next May to another WKU Alum, Kyle King.

Timothy Gray, 2006—B.A. Communication Studies—Tim has been working as a Hall Director in PFT from Fall 2006 to present while he completed a M.A. in Counseling & Student Affairs in August, 2010. He is about to begin training at the Police Academy, and will be hired as a WKU Police Officer upon completion.

Amanda Grego, 2010—M.A. Communication Studies—Amanda is working as an Assistant Account Executive at Creative Alliance working with the KFC franchise and Einstein Bagels team in Louisville, Kentucky.

Shae Manning, 2008—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication—Shae is currently working at US Bank, and has applied for the M.A. in Occupational Therapy program at Shawnee State in Port Smith, OH.

Kasey Mathes, 2010—M.A. Communication Studies—Kasey is a Creative Services Account Coordinator, Public Affairs with Yum! Brands, Inc. in Louisville, Kentucky.

Cody Norris, 2009 - M.A. Communication Studies—Cody is working as a Public Affairs Officer with the Forrest Service at Sequoia National Forrest, Kern River Ranger District in California.

Tiffany (Graham) Vincent, 2008—B.A. Corporate & Organizational Communication—Tiffany is working at Citizens First Bank as a Loan Processor. She was married to Jonathan Vincent (WKU Alum ’05 & ’07) in June 2010. Tiffany has enrolled in the masters program at WKU in Exceptional Education-Learning & Behavioral Disorders.

The Department of Communication would like to reconnect with you.

Please update your information on our web site:
http://www.wku.edu/communication

We look forward to hearing from you!
CommuniQuotes

Public speaking is the art of diluting a two-minute idea with a two-hour vocabulary.

~ John Fitzgerald Kennedy ~

Communication works for those who work at it.

~ John Powell ~