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### **Editor's Note**

This issue of *JACA* provides opportunities for reflection on key issues facing communication administrators in this historical moment. Vanacker investigates university demonstration policies at private universities, identifying preventative and retributive policies and considering implications of the presence/absence and nature of these policies for administrative practice. Lagoe, Krishnan, Atkin, and Stephen examine correlates of communication units' name revisions from 2009 to 2015 as a response to trends in the discipline, providing a view of how these units frame their identities. Lynch, Foeman, and Nance offer a way to address preparedness of contingent/adjunct faculty members for teaching in the communication classroom, demonstrating how a state communication association can provide resources for communication departments seeking to maintain disciplinary identity.

Thanks to reviewers who provided their time and energy to maintain the quality of this journal's contents and to the authors who enrich our field and provide assistance to communication administrators in a time of decreasing institutional resources and increasing challenges to higher education. My continued thanks to Dr. Matthew Mancino, whose continued labors on behalf of this journal are much appreciated and needed.

## **Demonstration Policies at Private Universities: A Case Study and Analysis**

Bastiaan Vanacker<sup>1</sup>

*Unlike public universities, private universities are not bound by the First Amendment when regulating students' on-campus speech. This has provided administrators at private universities with great leeway in putting restrictions on student demonstrations. This article starts out with a case analysis of Loyola University Chicago, where the demonstration policy was loosened after pressure from the university community. This example frames the research questions of this study, analyzing the prevalence and nature of demonstration policies at private universities. Compared to public universities, private universities are less likely to have a demonstration policy, and the language and procedures contained in these policies tend to discourage or hamper public demonstrations.*

### **Speech Rights at Private Colleges**

Over the course of the last fifty years, some of the most significant instances of the right to assemble occurred at university campuses across the nation. Campus protests have been instrumental in the development of the anti-war and civil rights movements in the sixties and seventies. More recently, The Black Lives Matter movement and associated protests targeting the lack of diversity on college campuses have grabbed the headlines, drawing comparisons with those eras (Rochester, 2016). However, by their very nature campus protests can be disruptive, encourage counter-protest and create safety concerns. University administrators therefore are faced with the difficult task of balancing campus safety with guaranteeing students' ability to partake in organized protest. At public universities, these restrictions must comply with the demands of the First Amendment. When public universities tried limit protests to so-called free speech zones, they were rebuffed by the courts. (See, for example, *Roberts v. Haragan* (2004); *Liberty v. Williams* (2012).) Despite these rulings, many public universities still have them (Harris, 2016).

With the exception of California where the Leonard Law bars non-sectarian colleges from making or enforcing "any rule subjecting any student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of conduct that is speech," private colleges are not bound by these First Amendment concerns and are free to restrict speech as they see fit. As a consequence, speech rights of students at private universities are more restricted than those of their peers at public institutions. In the 2018 annual report of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), more private colleges received the organization's "red light policy" label for having speech-unfriendly policies (53.9%) than public institutions (26%) Some have argued that since private schools often receive funds directly or indirectly from federal and local governments, they are de-facto state actors and hence have to abide by the requirements of the First Amendment, but this approach has not been followed by courts (DeCresenza, 2008).

The only legal framework that seems to restrict private schools' ability to restrict speech is the one provided by contract law. In their promotion materials and mission statements, schools often refer to their commitment to free speech and robust debate (some schools, however, explicitly state that speech contrary to their values will not be tolerated). If

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<sup>1</sup> Loyola University Chicago

they then enact policies abdicating this commitment, this could under certain circumstances be considered as a breach of contract. Sarabyn (2010) advocated for such an approach to expose the “janus-faced” policies of many private universities.

However, change is more likely to come from within than from breach of contract litigation. Students, (journalism and communication) faculty and other stakeholders can advocate for more lenient speech policies at private colleges with a shared-governance structure. Loyola University Chicago’s demonstration policy serves as an excellent example of such an approach.

### **Case Study: Loyola University Chicago**

In January of 2015, Jane Neufeld, Loyola University Chicago’s Vice President for Student Development, sent out an email to students notifying them of recent updates to the community standards policy regarding on-campus demonstrations. The policy change was in response to concerns about the 10-day notification period required under the previous policy for students planning a demonstration (Runkel, 2015a). The new policy shortened the 10-day notification period to a three-day one, but in doing so drew attention to the fact that there was a policy with a notification requirement at Loyola for demonstrators in the first place. The notification requirement (which had been in place before the change) stipulated that organizers submit a form explaining the nature of their event and schedule a meeting and obtain approval from the Dean of Student’s office.

The new policy drew criticism for still being too restrictive and the university administration updated the guidelines again the following semester. This time, it allowed for demonstrations to take place without getting approval from the office of the Dean of Students. However, these protests only could take place at one specific location on campus, the Damen North Lawn (Runkel, 2015b). This location was picked because it was far from the classrooms (and therefore would be less likely to disrupt classes), tucked between two student centers and close to one of the entrances to the university. The policy also required that organizers of demonstrations used the university’s online reservation system to reserve the area. However, only registered student organizations are allowed to use this system, effectively limiting this right of semi-spontaneous protests to officially registered student organizations. Other stipulations in the policy also favored registered student organizations. Inclusion of language stating that the demonstration policy was drafted in the interest of “protecting the reputation and good name” of the university created the perception that the protest policy also could be used to restrict demonstrations based on their message. An exemption from the notification requirement for religious vigils did little to assuage these concerns. Given these perceived shortcomings of the new policy, critics advocated for a policy that would no longer require any form of registration (“Updates to demonstration policy,” 2015).

During the fall of 2015, representatives of the Student Government and the University Senate continued to work with the administration in revising the demonstration policy. This process was accelerated following a campus protest against racial inequality at Loyola in solidarity with the students at Missouri. The organizers, members of an unregistered student organization, had not asked nor received permission for their demonstration. Rather than subjecting the organizers of the demonstration to disciplinary action, interim president John P. Pelissero announced on December 5, that he had dismissed all the conduct charges against the organizers of the student protest, given the recent “increased interest in revising the current demonstration policy.” Three days later, he announced a moratorium on the demonstration policy while it was under review. In early 2016, after consultation with a variety of stakeholders,

an updated, far less restrictive demonstration policy was rolled out and is still in place today (Dayton, 2016). The current updated policy no longer requires approval from the Dean of Students, though students are encouraged to meet with him two days in advance. It stipulates certain content-neutral time, manner, and place restrictions that students are responsible for following.

By switching the policy from a preventive one designed to prevent any disruption from taking place to a policy that gave students free reign to protest as long as they do not violate certain clearly articulated rules, the administration gave in to those who thought the preventive regime was too restrictive and had a chilling effect on speech. In doing so, Loyola University made a choice that many other private colleges have to make about how to regulate protests and dissent on campus.

Administrators in well-intended efforts to guarantee campus safety might not always give appropriate consideration to students' free speech concerns. Faculty at journalism and communication programs are well-placed to alert the campus community about this and put this issue on the agenda of University Senates or other shared governance bodies. It is therefore important to gain an understanding how private colleges regulate campus protests. This study attempts to give a general overview of how private institutions address this issue in order to enable faculty members to assess how their school's policy measures up to the national trend.

### **Research Questions**

Most schools have some kind of anti-disruption policy, but these often are ill-suited to regulate protests. It is therefore important to find out whether or not an institution also has a specific demonstration policy.

RQ1: Do private universities have demonstration policies?

The Loyola case study showed how the institution changed its policy from a preventive to a retributive one. A preventive policy tries to prevent any disruptions stemming from protest by having students register their protest with university administration or go through some approval or reservation process. A retributive police on the other hand allows students to protest without having to ask for permission, but holds them responsible if they break any rules.

RQ2: Do the institutions with a policy have a preventive or retributive one?

As the Loyola example illustrated, long notification times, policies favoring certain speakers (student groups), or expressions (religious vigils) can also be problematic.

RQ3: Does the policy contain requirements that could put a burden on speech?

In order to have a point of reference, it is also important to compare these policies with those at public universities.

RQ4: Do the policies at private institutions differ from those at public universities?

## Method

Since universities often look to other "aspirational institutions" to model their own policies, the choice was made to look at top ranked private national universities. With the help of student research assistants, the policies of the 96 national private universities that were ranked by U.S. News & World Report in 2017 were analyzed during the Spring and Fall of 2017.

There were 98 nationally ranked universities, but the policies of Maryville University St Louis and Villanova are not publically available and were excluded from the analysis. Immaculata University's policy also is behind a login now, but was not when we first looked at this university's policy. While it cannot be ascertained that the policy has not changed, it was nevertheless included in the analysis based on the information previously obtained. Southern Methodist's policy also was behind a log in, but was available on the Fire web site. The link to Robert Morris' demonstration policy was dead at the time of this writing, so the information previously obtained when the link was active was used here. The policy that could be located for Harvard University only applied to the College of Arts and Sciences. Since no other policy could be located, this is the one used in the analysis.

We gathered information from student handbooks, university policies, from the pages of Deans of Student Affairs or other relevant sections of the site of the institution. Each institution was analyzed by two student researchers. In July 2018, the accuracy of the information was checked by the author who then analyzed the data to determine which institutions had a policy and whether this policy was preventive or retributive. Some attempts to create a coding instrument to measure other aspects of the policies were made, but the differences and nuances in policies were too subtle and nuanced and the language used too vague for a coding instrument to be used. During that same period, with the help of a student research assistant, the author also analyzed the demonstration policies of the top fifty public universities to provide a point of comparison. The decision to use a smaller sample was based on the fact these data only served as a rough point of comparison and were not the main focus of the analysis.

## Results and Discussion

### No Policy

For 13 universities, no policy could be located. For four more universities, only some general statements could be found that could be interpreted as applying to demonstrations but were not specifically mentioning them, leaving 18% of the universities without a policy. By comparison, only three of the 50 public universities (6%) lacked a demonstration policy. The absence of a publicly posted demonstration policy does not necessarily mean that protests cannot take place at these institutions. Given that most of these universities contain statements valuing free speech, it seems that the absence of a policy would mean that demonstrations are in fact allowed. If there is no demonstration policy, a student cannot break it. On the other hand, most universities contain language in their handbooks barring students from engaging in conduct that disrupts the functioning of a university that could be applied to protests. Which of these situations prevails at institutions without published policy cannot be ascertained based on these data.



## Preventive Policies

Of the 79 policies that were found, 42 require protesters to provide some kind of notice to the administration when they are planning to demonstrate or reserve a space beforehand. Some universities only required a minimal notification effort while others put a much heavier administrative burden on students. At Washington University, for example, students are only required to reserve space through an online system while other institutions, such as Fordham or Seattle Pacific University, require organizers to sit down with university officials to discuss their planned protest. Some universities, such as Marquette University, combine both. Marquette requires that someone be appointed as the designated liaison for the protest, that this person meets with the Dean of Students and turns in a form before approval is given and a reservation for space can be made. All these requirements, even if they are not stemming from a need to restrict speech may have the net effect of discouraging protests.

At the University of St. Thomas, where students are required to submit an intent form and meet with the Dean of Students, the policy points out that this process does not “imply an approval process, but rather a consultative process that promotes the rights and responsibilities of students and the university.” But any regime requiring registration and notification of demonstrations, depending on how onerous it is, might discourage students from engaging in protests. Especially when combined with long notification periods as is the case at Southern Methodist (five days), Rensselaer Polytechnic (seven days), Brigham Young (five days), St. Thomas (four days), Immaculata University (four days), Seattle Pacific (four days), Northeastern (seven days), Hofstra (seven days), and Andrews University (ten days).

The notification process is also not always clear, some universities such as Seton Hall stipulate that permission is needed from the Dean of Students to stage a demonstration, but do not explain how this process works. St. John’s University’s policy is equally vague when it comes to clarifying the process of getting approval, while providing great detail on all the conduct and actions by demonstrators that are prohibited. At Benedictine University, students are also required to meet with the vice president for the Office of Student Life, without offering details about the process. These policies also do not stipulate how students can appeal a decision or on what basis these decisions are made.

Combined with punitive language stating that students can be arrested and suspended for partaking in a disruptive demonstration, protests there are treated more as a privilege that is granted than a right that can be exercised. Wake Forest has a similar policy characterized by language and procedures that consider a demonstration mainly as a threat and a nuisance, not as something that students are entitled to and encouraged to engage in. (“Distribution of printed material, flyers, etc. is prohibited....Law enforcement may photograph or video record the event and persons or activities involved with the event....participants may be subject to metal detection devices/equipment and may be required to wear identification supplied by the University”).

The policies of many universities also craft a distinction between (members of) student organizations and regular students. In some cases, like in Stanford’s policy, this distinction is made explicitly: “Events in White Plaza must be organized by University entities (student groups, departments, and programs) and require prior approval from Student Activities and Leadership (SAL).” Southern Methodist University requires that protests “be sponsored by an SMU department or Chartered Student Organization.” (It also requires assurance that the protest is “consistent with the mission and purpose of the department or organization.”).

Demonstration guidelines are often posted on the web pages geared towards student organizations or universities require that a demonstration is sponsored by a student

organization with application forms asking to list the sponsoring student organization. Some universities create confusion by putting demonstration policies both in the student handbook and in the handbook for student organizations. At Northeastern, for example, the student handbook addresses demonstrations, but also states: “Please consult the Campus Activities Student Organization Resource Guide for the most up-to-date policy.” This resource guide then contains additional information but seems to be written specifically with student organizations in mind.

These policies indicate that for some university administrators, protests are considered a student activity akin to a fundraiser, concert, or BBQ, requiring a registration process similar to these events. But this ignores the fact that a student protest can also originate from students without affiliation to a recognized student group. The University of Denver does not stipulate that only student organizations can protest, but requires that organizers use the Live25 system to reserve a location for the event, but this seems to be only accessible for student organizations (“Student organizations and DU departments may place room reservation request though [25Live](#).”).

Requiring students to reserve space or notify administrators when they plan to stage a protest does not necessarily lead to the problems identified above. However, whereas public institutions have to ensure that registration and approval processes are not arbitrary or overly burdensome, their colleagues at private universities do not have these restrictions.

### **Retributive Policies**

As the overview above shows, colleges requiring students to register their protest with administrators risk making the process to hold a demonstration onerous. The alternative approach is to allow protests and demonstrations to go forward and hold students responsible if these demonstrations do not follow certain stipulated rules (not blocking exits, not disrupting classes, following the student code of conduct, ...) or become too disruptive. A total of 32 universities follow this approach. These policies might encourage (University of Chicago, Duke, Loyola University Chicago, Carnegie Mellon, University of Southern California), but do not require notification. Some universities only state that demonstrations need not disrupt or interfere with others, other institutions are more detailed in listing what is expected from protesters. Universities that require some kind of registration but make exceptions for impromptu demonstrations also were included in this group.

Some universities such as Cornell explicitly stipulate that no permission needs to be sought (in most instances): “Outdoor picketing, marches, rallies, and other demonstrations generally pose no threat of long-lasting exclusive use of University grounds or property. No university permit is required for such outdoor activities.” Emory’s policy clarifies that “[n]ot having registration for space is not reason to shut down protest.” Georgetown as well allows demonstrations to take place “regardless of whether the space has been reserved for that purpose, as long as the actions do not violate other university policies, disrupt university business, or curtail the free speech rights of others.”

Other universities in this category do not mention explicitly that no permission is needed, but state that demonstrations should not be disruptive and do not mention any requirements regarding asking permission or giving notice. Some do point out the right of the universities to regulate the time manner and place of protests, but absent an explicit requirement that students do notify them, it can be assumed that these restrictions are applied to ongoing protests. De Paul University, for example, states that it “may also reasonably regulate the time, place and manner of speech and expression for a variety of reasons, including

to allow for the continuance of University business or to ensure the safety and security of the campus and members of the DePaul community,” but this does not seem to come with an obligation of the students to notify.

### **Speech-Unfriendly Retributive Policies**

In the analysis, five universities had policies that seemed to indicate that they allowed protests without prior approval, but nevertheless seemed to be rather restrictive and speech unfriendly because of other reasons. The Illinois Institute of Technology, Case Western Reserve University and Gardner-Webb University, only referred to protests as a potential violation of student conduct by stating that participating in a disruptive protest is not allowed. On their face, these policies seem to indicate that participating in non-disruptive demonstrations is not a violation of student conduct and therefore allowed (without permission), but by only addressing the right to demonstrate as a negative right, (not engaging in disruptive protests), without clarifying what constitutes a disruption or establishing the right to protest as an important value to the university, these policies seem to provide students with little guidance.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) and Shenandoah University, even though they affirm a right to protest, also use language that also seems to be chosen to dampen students’ desire to protest. WPI’s policy states that students “come to learn, not to demand; to be guided, not to direct. If they do not like some of the rules, regulations, traditions, and policies of WPI, they do not have to enter....” Shenandoah also recognizes the right to dissent, but warns those thinking about taking it too far: “Demonstrations that disrupt normal activities of the institution will not be tolerated at Shenandoah. Any student who participates in any form of disruptive action is subject to immediate interim suspension and lawful prosecution in the courts.”

### **Implications and Limitations**

Assessing the freedom to protest at universities based on the policies posted on their web sites does not paint a complete picture. As mentioned above, a significant number of private colleges do not have a demonstration policy (or we could not locate it). At the very least, this absence of a publicly available demonstration policy seems to indicate that these universities do not think that demonstrating should be clearly articulated as a right that students have. The lack of guarantees to such a right, particularly at a private university, seems to allow administrations to apply general non-disruption policies to students. Even if some of these universities might actually be tolerant of demonstrations, administrations should nevertheless, in the interest of transparency, provide clarity to prospective students about their policies. Some of the universities with a retributive policy also sometimes use language that still gives administrators leeway to punish students after the fact for “interfering with the rights of others” or for “disruption.” Policies only tell part of the picture, but the general trends observed here show that the majority of private universities that have a demonstration policy have some approval or notification process in place.

Of the 96 policies studied, only 32 (33%) had a policy that made it clear that students can protest without approval as long as they comply with a set of rules (this number excludes the five retributive policies discussed above). By contrast, 37 of the 50 public universities studied (74%) embraced this approach for at least some demonstrations. The policies at public universities also tended to suggest and encourage students to notify them rather than require

it. The majority of the policies that did require notification at public universities only did so for demonstrations of a certain size. However, it is important to put this difference in context. Some students might prefer institutions where they will not be exposed to demonstrations or expressions of certain viewpoints. In these instances, a restrictive policy makes sense. Further research could clarify to what extent these policies meet a student demand and whether religious institutions favor more speech restrictive policies.

### Legal Context

It might be tempting to frame the decisions of administrators as thinly veiled attempts at censorship. In the example of Loyola University Chicago discussed earlier, students were eager to paint the policy as an attempt to police their speech, but administrators maintained that safety was their one and only objective, not censorship. Demonstrations do create a certain risk at a campus that go well beyond the disruption of classes. A group of students marching through a campus, crossing streets, blocking access to emergency exits present safety concerns that could expose universities to legal liability.

From the beginning of the previous century until the sixties, colleges were granted parental authority over the students, and with it came legal liability. This paternal responsibility, *in loco parentis*, was slowly eroded during the 1960s when students asserted more individual rights and finally abandoned in 1979 *Bradshaw v. Rawlings*, when the Third Circuit established that universities were not responsible for the well-being of their students or for their actions, shielding administrations from a wide range of law suits. In the case, the court refused to hold a college liable when a minor who got drunk at a college-sponsored event where alcohol was served, injured another student in a crash (Lee, 2011).

However, over the last twenty years or so, the pendulum has swung back in the other direction. The decline of the *in loco parentis* doctrine has not stopped courts from holding universities responsible for students' actions under different theories of general liability (Newcomer, 2017). As a result, universities do not always get to walk away when students are engaging in behavior that leads to injury. This new realization caused many universities to assume a bigger responsibility in supervising their students, if not out of parental concern, then out of concern for legal liability.

As a result, recent decades have seen an increase in universities regulating hazing, alcohol abuse and sexual assault on campus. College administrations have also taken further measures to ensure mental health and other factors affecting students' well-being in the realization that students are not full-fledged adults, but are still growing up. At smaller private colleges, these obligations can be even more pronounced.

Given this context, it is perhaps not surprising that Deans of Student Affairs at universities in general and private universities in particular want to be proactive in regulating potentially high-risk activities such as student demonstrations. Balancing students' higher expectations regarding the duty of care their administrations have towards them with their desires to enjoy individual freedoms, in addition to the looming risk of liability, makes the task of crafting and enforcing demonstration policies one that will always leave some parties dissatisfied.

### Concluding Remarks

For educators in journalism and communication programs at private colleges, this reality presents a challenge and an opportunity. The norms of the professions we train our

students to enter tend to value freedom of information and many of our classes, such as media law courses, are designed to foster a reverence for the principles of free speech within our students. While some private institutions reserve the right to regulate content that contrasts with their beliefs or that discourage protests altogether, most claim to adhere to the principles of free speech and to merely regulate the time, manner and place of a protest. However, some of these demonstration policies are incompatible with this stated principle and faculty lose credibility if they extol the value of free speech in the classroom at an institution with policies that do not reflect this value. On the other hand, this can also be embraced as a teachable moment. For example, media law classes can study an institution's demonstration policy and evaluate whether or not it could withstand constitutional scrutiny.

Assuming that a college commits itself to the values of free speech and freedom of assembly, its policies should reflect this commitment. This does not necessarily mean that a notification and approval process should be off limits, but too often the language, procedures, and requirements set out in these policies constitute an impediment to the exercise of free speech. A policy that allows students to protest without prior approval as long as they respect certain norms will therefore in most instances provide a more speech friendly environment. As the example of Loyola University mentioned previously shows, change can be affected under the right set of circumstances, and journalism and mass communication faculty members can be instrumental in this process.

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## **What's in a Name? Department Name Revision and Its Relationship to Scholarly Productivity and Prestige Score in the Communication Discipline**

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*The field of communication is one that must change and evolve with current trends to survive. Part of this transition involves updating institutional curricula and departmental identities to reflect current norms and practices in the field. To explore this phenomenon, the present study offers a snapshot of how communication units behave in transitioning to new names or altering their current ones. Study data are based on a dataset from the CIOS database containing a subset of communication programs that underwent departmental name revisions from 2009-2015. Trends indicate that departments are moving toward “communication studies” designations and away from those of “speech” or “public communication.” Data also illustrate the increasingly hybridized nature of journalism programs. Departments who primarily rely on “communication” as an identifier in their name publish more frequently, employ more faculty members, and have higher prestige levels than those who do not. Results provide a snapshot of useful information regarding administrative trends in the communication discipline.*

Scholarly productivity has long been heralded as the “gold standard” by which program quality is assessed across disciplines, including communication (e.g., Hickson, Bodon, & Turner, 2004). Several studies have addressed peer-review journal productivity levels of departments in the communication discipline (e.g., Feeley, LaVail, & Barnett, 2011; Griffin, Bolkan, Holmgren, & Tutzauer, 2016). As Lagoe, Atkin, and Mou (2012) note, these studies assume greater importance as universities confront growing financial pressures, particularly for emerging disciplines like communication. Rogers (1994) recounts the evolution of communication from its origins in subdisciplines such as rhetoric and journalism during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This hybrid identity can be implicated as an obfuscating factor in tracking disciplinary trends (Craig & Carlone, 1998). Having been recognized by the Department of Education only since 1966, communication still struggles for legitimacy on many campuses (e.g., Gehrke & Keith, 2015). As a nascent discipline, several programs offered under the umbrella of communication were particularly prone to budget cuts and administrative reorganization after 1990, even as the field ranked among the largest and fastest growing since 1966 (e.g., Nelson, 1995).

In spite of administrative reorganization in the 1990's, data indicates that communication is the only humanities discipline in America to experience growth in the conferral of bachelor's degrees in 2015 (National Communication Association, 2017). Job posting data analyzed by the National Communication Association signal a general increasing trend in vacant faculty positions from 2009-2017 (National Communication Association,

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2018). Taken together, much of this growth can be attributed to the proliferation of digital communication in our academic and professional landscapes.

Even still, like many emerging and applied disciplines, communication has not been fully embraced by venerable private institutions like Harvard (e.g., Entman, 1994; Graham & Diamond, 1996). This “newcomer” disciplinary status helps explain the historical predominance of Midwestern programs—notably those with origins in agricultural journalism—among the most productive and highly rated in the field (e.g., Hickson et al., 2004; Lagoe et al., 2012; Rogers, 2004). These variegated epistemological, geographic and historical origins also contribute to a wider variation in program labeling than is typically found in other disciplines (e.g., Rogers, 2004; Gehrke & Keith, 2015). Neuendorf et al. (2007, p. 25) observe: “The academy’s hesitancy to recognize communication as a discipline may stem from program identification challenges; that is, few academic units in communication use the same name (e.g., journalism vs. [mass] communication; communication vs. speech).”

By examining trends in the academic makeup and naming of communication departments along with faculty composition and research productivity, we can explore possible relationships between a communication program’s identity and research behavior. These dimensions are crucial to understand, since how a department/school identifies itself – via its name – is likely to impact what areas it chooses to emphasize, in terms of teaching and research. The present study presents an analysis of a dataset from the CIOS database that captured name-changing trends within a six-year period. CIOS is a database that continuously harvests publication and faculty membership data that can be used to identify insights about communication pedagogy, publication productivity, and prestige.

## Background

Despite the growing importance of program output and “branding,” scholars have yet to examine the relationship between departmental name and productivity. As Craig and Carlone (1998, p. 67) suggest, such identification is complicated by the discipline’s “amorphous contours,” as “rapid intellectual, institutional, and societal changes have rendered old familiar explanations obsolete and we no longer understand the field well ourselves.” They note the National Communication Association (NCA)’s nomenclature encompassing such sub-areas as general communication; advertising; public relations and organizational communication; journalism; broadcast journalism; radio and television broadcasting; radio/television, general; communication media; and communications among others. Communication thus represents a hybrid discipline that encompasses liberal arts and applied professional domains, as these designations have been joined by such others as “speech/rhetorical studies,” drama,” “film,” and “communication disorders sciences and services” (e.g., Neuendorf et al. 2007).

Some schools or colleges of communication, for instance, also have documentary/film studies, information sciences, etc. as part of their portfolio. Examples include Rutgers’ School of Communication and Information and Northern Arizona University’s School of Communication, which has an MA in documentary studies. At other schools, these same fields are either solitary programs (Center of Documentary Studies at Duke) or attached to other departments like English. This confusion has even complicated program evaluations conducted within the discipline. For instance, Stanford was ranked among the Top 5 programs in Radio-Television, according to *U.S. News and World Report* (2004), despite having no such program.



Gehrke and Keith (2015) note that this programmatic diversity presents opportunities as well as challenges in framing the identity of communication as a discipline, one that's not shared by allied fields like sociology or psychology. This, combined with the newness of communication as a discipline, complicates the task of explaining our pedagogy and scholarship to other stakeholders. Even though undergraduate enrollment numbers place communication among the six largest disciplines nationally (McKinney, 2006), the field's amorphous contours complicate the task of explaining what we do to outsiders. This, in turn, can present difficulties in advocating for resources when administrators from more traditional disciplines do not have a full grasp on the nature of what communication scholars truly do. These identity issues are intensified by the rapidly changing media environment that form a significant area of study under communication research. Columbia president Lee Bolinger garnered national attention when he argued that their journalism school should de-emphasize its traditional focus—involving the teaching of skills by practitioners—to emphasize scholarly issues in a rapidly changing communication discipline: “To teach the craft of journalism is a worthy goal, but clearly insufficient in this new world and within the setting of a great university” (See Arenson, 2012, p. 1).

This begs the question of how research orientations vary between professional, media-oriented programs and communication units, which may have traditionally emphasized speech communication. Focusing on publishing patterns in journals indexed by the National Communication Association (NCA), Edwards, Watson and Barker (1988) found that objective tallies of faculty productivity correlate positively with subjective peer evaluations (e.g., National Research Council, 2010) as well as publication records, with faculty of doctoral institution's salaries, and with other objective measures of quality. Barnett and Feeley (2011) uncovered moderate correlations between subjective ratings and indicators of quality placements of graduate students.

Hickson and colleagues (2004, 2009) conducted studies of the most prolific scholars based on their publication totals in 24 journals included in the *Index to Journals in Communication Studies*. Although that index was discontinued in the mid-1990s, the CIOS database compiles the number of a scholar's career publications in communication journals, which can then be compared across individuals and institutions. Scholars (e.g., Feeley et al. 2011; Hickson and associates 2003, 2004, 2009) have provided comprehensive tallies of publication frequency for communication scholars and programs over time. Productivity analyses have also focused on research productivity in such subareas as mass communication (Hickson, 1991), advertising (Zhou, 2005), law and policy (Burrowes, Bah, & Mesidor, 2000), telecommunication (Atkin & Jeffres, 1996; Vincent, 1991) and even across various ethnic diasporas in the field (e.g., So, 2001). The CIOS database reflects scholarly productivity for individual authors, reflecting their departmental and institutional affiliations.

This reinforces the need to consider objective measures of productivity, particularly given the high stakes in these evaluative enterprises (e.g., Feeley et al., 2011; Schweitzer, 1988). In particular, scholarly publication activity represents a key determinant of institutional appointment, tenure and salary and the primary method through which scholarly productivity can be assessed (e.g., Lagoe et al., 2012). Although various metrics have been used to assess productivity among scholars in other academic fields, little work comprehensively addresses the productivity by department type (e.g., Speech Communication v. Journalism).

Productivity levels can be uneven; however, as Hickson et al.'s (2003, 2004, 2009) analyses of productivity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century found that the mean, median and mode in NCA-sponsored journals was one publication. Similarly, in another CIOS sample Stephen and Geel (2007) found that *more than one-third of the membership of the scholars had not contributed any articles to*

*the field's mainline periodical literature. Despite this rich literature on aggregate productivity across the discipline, little work addresses the influence of a unit's name and academic orientation on scholarly productivity.* In an attempt to provide a yardstick to help departments gain a better understanding of whether they are “on-trend” with the field as a whole, we pose the following research questions for descriptive purposes:

- RQ1: How have trends in labeling departments evolved in recent years?
- RQ2: What is the relationship between departmental orientation/name and research productivity?
- RQ3: What is the relationship between number of faculty and unit publication frequency?
- RQ4: What is the relationship between departmental orientation/name and prestige score?

### **Method**

The data for this study were culled from data systems created by the Communication Institute for Online Scholarship (CIOS). CIOS is an independent non-for-profit organization that is supported through university library subscriptions. CIOS provides a number of databases and other electronic services in support of scholarship and education in the communication/journalism field including ComAbstracts, ComVista, and ComAnalytics. The data for this study are drawn from CIOS's ComAbstracts and ComVista operations. ComAbstracts is an abstracts database, with links to full text, that tracks all papers published in approximately 145 central journals in communication and journalism from 1915 on. ComVista is a census-level database tracking department faculty membership at more than 700 university departments in communication/journalism in the US and Canada. These two databases merge in ComAnalytics, which provides normative publication frequency data for individuals in the field and for departments in the field. The present analysis compared department name, publication frequency, number of program faculty, and prestige score from the years 2009 and 2015.

### **Variables of Interest**

**Department name/identifier.** The specific names of each department in 2009 and 2015 are identified in the database. This category includes any name used to signify an academic unit (e.g. department, school, unit, etc.). All the names (old and new) were normalized to remove words like “and”, “of” and “in”, and phrases like “Department of” and donor names.

**Publication frequency.** Publication frequency refers to the number of manuscripts that each department published in CIOS-tracked journals in 2009 and 2015. These include journals such as *Communication Monographs*, *Human Communication Research*, and *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, among others. This number reflects collective publications by all full-time faculty regardless of rank or tenure status.

**Program faculty.** Program faculty refers to the number of full-time faculty in each department in 2009 and 2015. This includes all full-time faculty regardless of rank or tenure status.

**Prestige score.** Prestige score refers to the overall stature rating of a department based on frequency of publication in CIOS journals weighted by the prestige level of the publication outlet. This score is computed by multiplying each publication in CIOS databases attributed to a faculty member from that department by its “prestige weight.” The prestige weight is a CIOS metric that reflects the degree to which a publication is associated with perceptions of scholarly excellence in the communication field (see Stephen, 2011, 2012a for information on metric validity and a description of how prestige scores are computed).

## Analysis

Consistent with past work, the present study employed a range of analyses to explore the data. First, basic content analytic methods were used to review departmental names and identify themes. Once thematic categories were created, department names were re-reviewed and coded into categories (specified below). After coding took place, descriptive statistics were used to determine the most and least popular naming categories. Descriptive statistics were also used to provide information about publication frequency, faculty employment, and prestige scores. Correlation analyses were used to examine the relationship between number of faculty at an institution and publication frequency. Independent samples *t*-tests were applied to determine whether those three variables differed based on two predominant categories used to name communication departments.

## Results

### Trends in Departmental Names or Identifiers

In total, 240 communication programs changed their name from 2009-2015. Names were initially reviewed by a single coder and coding categories were developed based on the content of each label. First, categories were identified for departments solely represented with the term communication (e.g., *communication*, *communication studies*, or *communications*). Second, categories were identified for departments that used a different term to represent their program. These programs either included more specialized areas of the field (e.g., *journalism*) or fields complementary to communication (e.g., *media studies*). Whenever the word *communication* was paired with another area, the code defaulted to the category represented by the specialized or complementary area of the field (e.g., *journalism and communication studies* would default to *journalism*). Some department names included more than one specialized or complementary field in the title (e.g., *radio, film, television*). These names were separated out into their own categories if they were identified more than three times in the 2009 and/or 2015 data. Any programs with hybrid department names identified fewer than three times were placed into the “hybrid” category. Programs that did not include specialized or complementary communication identifiers (e.g., *communication and philosophy*) were deemed uncategorizable.

With regard to the naming trends queried in RQ1, department names in 2009 were varied (See Table 1). Some of the most commonly identified programs included (1) *communication*, (2) *media* or *media studies*, (3) *journalism*, (4) *communication studies*, (5) *theater, dramatic arts*, and/or *dance*, (6) *communications*, and (7) *speech/public communication*. Table one outlines a full list of category frequencies for 2009. In total, 14 departments were deemed “hybrid” programs based on the previously specified criteria, i.e., whether an area of specialization was included in the title and whether the name required its own category, based on representing multiple specialties on a frequent basis. Another 15 departments were uncategorizable in this dataset.

In 2015, the most commonly identified types of communication departments included (1) *communication*, (2) *media* or *media studies*, (3) *communication studies*, (4) *theater, dramatic arts*, and/or *dance*, and (5) *journalism*. In total, 19 departments were deemed “hybrid” programs based on the previously specified criteria. Another 16 departments were uncategorizable in this dataset.

In the shift from 2009-2015, some new trends emerged, and others remained consistent. Even though all departments within the dataset altered names to some degree, the frequency of departments labeled as (1) *communication* and (2) *theater and/or dramatic arts and/or dance* remained relatively similar. Most programs moved away from the term *communications* in favor of other options such as *communication*, *communication arts*, and *communication studies*. A substantial increase can be seen in the number of programs that labeled themselves as *communication studies* (19 in 2009 vs. 39 in 2015). A clear drop was found in the number of programs that identified as *speech* or *public communication* (16 in 2009 vs. 1 in 2015).

Although a dip can be seen in the number of programs solely titled as *journalism* or *journalism communication* (25 in 2009 vs. 15 in 2015), further analysis of the data indicates that departments are not shifting away from journalism programs completely. Instead, journalism programs are becoming more hybridized with a diverse range of specializations and/or complementary areas. In 2009, journalism programs were most commonly paired with mass communication. Another four programs in the *hybrid category* signaled that journalism was also paired with film, creative writing, and theater on a less frequent basis. In 2015, journalism was most often paired with public relations and various forms of media (e.g., digital, new media). Within the eclectic hybrid category, journalism was again paired with creative writing, and film.

New labeling trends that emerged in 2015 included (1) *strategic communication* and (2) *communication and/or media arts*. The strategic communication framework reflects trends in the field to use an umbrella term to label the diverse but converged nature of offerings in public relations, digital media, and mass communication.

Table 1  
*Categories and Frequencies of Department Names in 2009 and 2015 (N = 240)*

Name	2009	2015
Advertising	2	1
Broadcasting	4	0
Communication	36	38
Communications	18	4
Communication Arts and/or Media Arts	9	15
Journalism	25	15
Communication and/or Media and/or Media Studies	21	36
Communication Studies	19	39
Rhetoric	3	5
Theater and/or Dramatic Arts and/or Dance	19	14
English Literature and/or Writing and/or Language	5	5
Film and/or Radio and/or Television	5	4
Speech Communication or Public Communication	16	1
Public Relations	2	0
Strategic Communication	0	5
Digital Media	0	1
Advertising and Public Relations	3	2

Journalism and Mass Communication (or Media)	9	9
Communication Arts and Sciences	5	1
Journalism and Public Relations	0	5
Theater or Performing Arts and Speech Communication	8	1
Communication and Visual Design	2	4
Hybrid	14	19
Not Categorized	15	16

### Publication Frequency

Per the publication trends queried in RQ2, it was found that general communication departments (i.e., those with the name *communication* or *communication studies* in 2015) significantly differed from other types of programs in their frequency of publication ( $t(99.71) = -2.78, p < .01$ ). The average publication frequency for *communication/communication studies* programs was 26.57 ( $SD = 41.22$ ) while that of programs without the above name was 12.56 ( $SD = 23.35$ ). This difference was not found in 2009.

### Faculty Employment

As for the faculty size dynamics queried in RQ3, full-time faculty in each department ranged from 1-26 in 2009 and 1-24 in 2015. The average number of full-time faculty per department was 5.26 ( $SD = 4.34$ ) with a median of 4.00 in 2009 and 5.66 ( $SD = 4.19$ ) with a median of 5.00 in 2015. Significant differences in number of faculty employed ( $t(238) = -2.72, p < .01$ ) in communication ( $M = 6.17, SD = 4.74$ ) vs. non-communication departments ( $M = 5.16, SD = 3.82$ ) were identified in 2015. A positive and strong correlation was also found between number of faculty and publication frequency in both 2015 ( $r = .76, p < .01$ ) and 2009 ( $r = .68, p < .01$ ).

### Prestige Scores

Per the relationship between department name and prestige scores (RQ4), in 2009, overall prestige scores ranged from 0-973.59 with an average score of 24.16 ( $SD = 78.59$ ). In 2015, overall prestige scores ranged from 0-431.98, with an average score of 26.14 ( $SD = 58.94$ ). In 2015, a significant difference existed ( $t(86.85) = -3.10, p < .01$ ) in departments that solely used communication identifiers ( $M = 48.01, SD = 88.07$ ), which presented higher prestige scores than those that did not ( $M = 15.81, SD = 33.96$ ). This difference was not identified in 2009.

## Discussion

The present investigation explored the relationships among several variables including departmental labels, trends in department name changes, frequency of departmental publication, number of program faculty, and prestige score among a subset of communication programs within the CIOS database that underwent departmental name revisions from 2009-2015. Results provide information regarding administrative trends in the discipline of communication, which could prove helpful in enabling programs to attract students and resources while enhancing the health of the discipline as a whole.

Given the eclectic nature of the field, communication grapples with more extreme framing challenges than other academic disciplines (e.g., Gehrke & Keith, 2015). Pending disciplinary expertise, communication programs can take on social-scientific, humanistic, and rhetorical approaches. Another layer to this challenge involves accounting for applied areas of study such as film, journalism, television, radio, public relation, digital media, marketing, new media, etc. We also find ourselves utilizing theories and concepts that have grown out of other social-scientific, humanistic and rhetorical domains. The diverse nature of our field thus presents unique challenges in framing the discipline in a consistent and coherent manner. Communication scholars have long since called for efforts to re-imagine our fractured paradigm—thereby turning our weakness into a strength by aggregating these scattered ideas—so that communication can be the sole discipline that synthesizes and connects literature across traditional social-scientific, humanistic, and rhetorical boundaries (Entman, 1993).

Building on this knowledge, interesting descriptive trends emerged in approaches to naming departments. Across a six-year span, names using the terms (1) *communication*, (2) *media* and/or *media studies*, and (3) *communication studies* tended to be the most frequently utilized departmental labels within the dataset. These descriptors indicate that programs appear to be more focused on broad-based identifiers of communication programs rather than unique areas of specialization. It also appeared as though many programs were moving away from specific trends such as the use of the terms (1) *communications* and (2) *speech* or *public communication*. The trend to move away from the term *communications* may have resulted from scholars' interest in shifting away from a consistent misnomer that has plagued programs in the field. Although sometimes used interchangeably with *communication*, these terms have distinct meanings. The term *communications* refers to specific technological methods that are used to transmit or send information; by contrast, *communication* addresses the process of exchanging messages between individuals or entities. By changing names from *communications* to *communication* or other specialized areas of the field, departmental names are likely becoming more accurate reflections of the content addressed within their courses. Another important trend reflected in the data demonstrates programs' likelihood of moving away from names using the terms *speech* or *public communication*. This signals that programs could be moving away from a speech focus in the discipline to other more general or applied approaches to the field (see Stephen, 2014).

Descriptive data also signaled that departments addressing certain applied areas of the field (i.e., *journalism*) are becoming increasingly hybridized. Standalone journalism programs represented a substantial proportion of the dataset in 2009 ( $n = 25$ ). By 2015, many journalism programs incorporated other areas of the discipline such as public relations, new media, digital arts, and mass communication in their name. These shifts could reflect trends in the field toward convergence and the increasing value being placed on communication professionals who are versatile and have a deep understanding of multiple areas of the field in our ever-changing digital landscape. For example, in our current era of online journalism, journalists must possess skills beyond interviewing, writing, and editing. Journalists are now often required to create and publish video packages and effectively manage a professional presence on social media.

A sizable portion of hybridized programs were not represented with specific category labels because these unique pairings occurred so infrequently (three times or fewer) in our dataset. One example of this type of pairing is a department of communication and philosophy. One explanation for this phenomenon could be that unique pairings of disciplines in single departments tend to occur at small schools where enrollment in a single communication major cannot justify the resources required to sustain a full department. If the

institution does not happen to have a complementary discipline to connect with communication, the program may ultimately be connected with anything in the humanities, social sciences, or arts.

These findings can be used as a guide for scholars in the field to gain a greater understanding of whether their units are consistent with the field as a whole. As a discipline, what are we communicating to outsiders? On balance, journalism programs have been only half as productive as communication programs. This may reflect the fact that journalism programs have traditionally emphasized skills as opposed to theory and methods. It will be interesting to see how initiatives like Bollinger's at Columbia, aimed at promoting scholarship in Journalism, alter these trends over time (e.g., Arenson, 2012).

Moving to inferential relationships between variables, significant differences were found in publication frequency, number of faculty, and prestige scores in departments titled as communication departments vs. communication-related departments that did not highlight communication as the primary focus of their departmental name. Differences may have emerged for multiple reasons. One can surmise that departments that don't box themselves in specific categories and have broad names such as "communication" or "communication studies" follow a broad discipline-oriented research agenda and successfully publish across multiple areas in the field of communication. It is useful to note, however, that research productivity is not necessarily the primary goal for many communication programs, especially for those that only offer undergraduate degrees. Such departments might adopt names that are easily marketable to potential communication majors and minors, such as Department of Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts; Department of Film, Video, and Interactive Media, etc.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

While the current study provides a comprehensive description of naming, prestige and administrative trends among communication departments across a six-year period, this investigation is not without limitations. First, a high level of variance exists within the publication frequency and prestige score variables. This is due to the fact that the majority of scholars within the field have published one or zero articles over the course of their career. The tendency for scholars to publish so infrequently may be partially to blame for our lacking recognition in the academy. If researchers in our discipline are not publishing as often as others, it could diminish the likelihood of scholars from other disciplines coming in contact--and gaining familiarity--with work in communication. Since this was a secondary analysis, we were also limited by the variables and dates in the current dataset. For instance, 2009 was selected as an initial start date because it was the first year that CIOS began systematically harvesting department data for the database. Moreover, the information in the CIOS dataset was gleaned from individual departmental websites and potentially can contain some error. Department websites may not have been updated to reflect personnel changes when data were collected. Even though the dataset captured information only for those departments that changed their names in the time period between 2009-2015, the findings can be categorized as having high longitudinal validity and generalizability, due to the fact that this is carefully-harvested census-level data. As such, this analysis provides a revealing portrait of the shifting nature of our discipline's identity. Future investigations might determine whether these trends persist within predominantly undergraduate institutions as well, given that their orientation may be more professional and less research-oriented than their graduate counterparts. This would be particularly useful in determining whether institutions with identities and missions

that differ from research institutions (e.g., liberal arts) take a distinct or similar approach in framing the focus of their communication departments.

### Conclusion

As Lagoe et al. (2012) observe, the fact that communication was incorporated in the NRC's most recent decennial ratings signals growing recognition for the discipline. Scholars in many fields argued the NRC ratings were poorly done, and that they did an especially weak job of representing the communication field (Fink, Poole, & Chai, 2010; Stephen, 2012b). But at least the field was included this time — showing up is half the game. And though the NRC's methodology may have been less than ideal, the importance of program naming issues was evident even in that murky data. Of the 13 NRC-ranked communication programs in the top decile of the field, seven were named communication, three mass communication, and of the remainder, one each of speech communication, communication arts and sciences, and communication studies. No program with a more exotically hybridized name appeared, and no program with journalism in its name appeared. Clearly, program names signal the academic coherence of a unit, and they provide focus for the program's disciplinary identity and its agenda as one aimed primarily toward scholarly productivity versus training in applied areas. Thus, names are of consequence, and the present study can help programs ascertain how to better position themselves for future evaluation.

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## **New Jersey Communication Association’s Adjunct/Contingent Faculty Certification Program: What Makes a Communication Classroom?**

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*The New Jersey Communication Association’s Adjunct/ Contingent Faculty Certification program provides a place of reflection for potential adjunct or contingent faculty and prepares them for teaching in a communication classroom. New Jersey state law requires an oral communication course for every college student. Disciplinary departments who may not have a direct connection with the field of communication often sponsor and teach these classes. Recruiting potential candidates to teach a communication class raises challenges for administrators and department chairs especially when many sections of the course are needed. The perception of non-communication administrators is sometimes that anyone can teach this core course. The danger is that our disciplinary focus is lost in the process. This article describes need and implementation of this two year certification program and some issues that potential communication faculty might reflect on. While not required it provides one more credential to potential candidates. It concludes with a discussion of how a communication classroom differs from other academic classrooms.*

### **The Objective**

What is the scope of the communication discipline? Who should teach it? Early rhetoricians from the Sophists to Plato and Aristotle have grappled these questions (Billig, 1987). We continue to struggle with it in an age when on different campuses in departments across the spectrum from Communication to English to Theatre to Business teach our core communication classes. Some outside our discipline claim to be experts in our field, while others wonder what the relevance of a discipline such as ours is since every person already knows how to talk. Creating a territorial war is not the aim of this article, but rather to try to carve out a niche for the communication discipline and provide ideas for those who administer communication programs. The issues hit home for Communication department chairs and administrators in the weeks before classes begin and there is a need to find instructors to teach our communication classes that were added at the last minute. Applicants to teach our classes come from diverse backgrounds and the danger is there is no time to train them in discussions about the mission of our discipline. We send them armed with a generic textbook into communication core courses (National Communication Association, Basic Course).

This paper is the result of a practical discussion at the first training for communication professionals as adjuncts or contingent faculty that was held at the New Jersey Communication Association’s Annual Meeting in April 2015. Contingent faculty are any faculty member on a limited contract that does not offer tenure. From now on, those who teach one or more communication classes, not on a tenure track will be called contingent faculty. We came up with a plan to certify these faculty members to teach in communication classes. This does not guarantee a person a job, but it does try to create dialogue on how a communication class

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differs from classes and pedagogies used within other disciplines. The program is open to anyone with a M.A. in communication who aspires to teach within our discipline or anyone in a communication related field. It becomes an additional tool for them to use in their professional life. At this point not every state institution has committed to the program, but it has potential to focus our core courses across institutions within the state. It is our understanding that New Jersey's Communication Professor Certification program is the first of its kind. The 20 initial participants and department chairs around the state claimed it was long overdue because we often reflect on what communication does but do we reflect on how it is taught.

According to the National Association of University Professors in 1975, over 30 percent of faculty were employed part time; by 2005, that number had grown to approximately 48 percent of all faculty members in the United States (Monks, 2015). Other sources say that in 2011, 70 percent were contingent faculty (Edmonds, 2015). One of the authors of this article is part of a department that at one point had over 60 contingent faculty (most teaching one or two courses) and 10 resident faculty.

This number of contingent faculty will only increase as universities and community colleges adapt to corporate models. These faculty members come from diverse backgrounds and academic disciplines. It becomes easy to pay them lower wages and send them into classes armed with a book that teaches how to give a speech that could be used in a Theatre or English version of the class. They are not included in shaping the vision of higher education because they are still outsiders. They feel like strangers in institutions of higher education eventually becoming demoralized (Moser, 2014). In the end our students and our discipline suffers. An example is when a theatre professional is hired to teach a core communication class but does not understand our focus on critical thinking and argumentation, but merely focuses the course on delivery style.

Socialization of new faculty members into higher education system focuses on professionalism, classroom conduct and environment, as well as, creating syllabi. These are important issues and in our experience, many institutions train new hires in these areas and is not the direct scope of our certification.

We hope our paper presents arguments for department leaders and hiring committees for contingent faculty to share some ideas on the qualities to look for and the goals in hiring. It is for departments who face administrators threatening to enlarge the size of the communication classroom. Our hope endeavors to provide some arguments for even adding communication to the curriculum. The focus discusses the aims of the New Jersey Communication Association Certification process.

Now that we have laid out the objective, we will move on and discuss the details of the certification process and a representative anecdote that makes one reflect on the place of communication as a discipline in the academy. We then turn to some myths about our field and some theoretical foundations that help to ground our discipline. Finally, we raise some questions for reflection and practical classroom applications for communicators and conclude with how this program can shape a community among contingent faculty.

Now that we have discussed the objectives and rationale for the certification, we move on to discuss how the certificate is earned, a representative anecdote that opens a conversation so we can reflect on the myths and theoretical foundations of our field. We will then move on to raise questions for reflection as well as practical applications. We conclude by suggesting that this certification provides the possibility of building a community among contingent faculty.

## Earning a Certification

So how does the New Jersey Communication Teaching Certification work? We expect that a candidate attend two annual conferences and learn from the sessions about innovative issues in our field. The individual attends two sessions at each conference directly related to the Certification. Tenured communication faculty from different universities and community colleges lead the sessions. The first session is more theoretical and grapples with issues of our mission; the second session is more hands on and providing teaching ideas. All sessions are interactive. The candidate then goes to the New Jersey Communication Association's website (<http://njca.rutgers.edu>) and views some short videos under the organization's certification link. The candidate writes a short reaction paper after learning about how to analyze a speech or film from a communication perspective or how to enhance dialogue in a classroom. The final step is to teach two communication classes and have a tenured faculty member write a teaching evaluation after a discussion of pedagogy with the candidate. The certificate does not guarantee theoretical competence but adds credibility to one's resume with the claim that one knows the expectation of a Communication classroom. Our hope is that a non-Communication M.A. contingent faculty member will learn about communication's theoretical material by attending sessions, interacting with others in the field and by a strong textbook.

Since our initial training in 2015, we have since had four other trainings at annual state conferences. We now have fifteen people who have received this certification. We have a certification coordinator who sits on the organization's board and facilitates the process. Candidates who complete the certification can have a brief resume listed on the organizations home page. This then becomes a resource for departments across the state. We do not claim to solve all the challenges of the communication classroom, but have made an initial start and are trying to grow the program. To date there is no fee for the certification other than the standard fees for attending the conferences.

The National Communication Association in 1996 proposed that departments prepare future faculty to form partnerships with "local or regional departments" to help train colleagues in the demands of our discipline (Sprague, 1996). The scope of the New Jersey project is to deal with the issue raised above as to how a communication class looks, sounds and has pedagogies that are unique to our field. The goal is to create a seamless thread within the diversity of our communication classes so faculty and students have a common focus.

This is not to imply that 'one size fits all' programs, but raises questions about who communication professionals are in the classroom. At the same time it cannot accomplish all that needs to be done, but hopefully is a step in the right direction that can evolve over time.

The program is coordinated by a director (elected for a three year term) with a constant core group of four faculty as direct advisors. After each session the program is discussed and evaluated. At least once a year the board of the New Jersey Communication Association reviews the program. The need currently is to ensure that more chairpersons get involved. One step toward this is promoting what the program has accomplished in the first four years.

## A Representative Anecdote

The section that follows examines a way of focusing on who we are as a discipline using a representative anecdote. First, we look at the representative anecdote to try to understand how our scope is different from other disciplines.

A *Family Circus* cartoon shows two children looking out the same window. The little brother says, "I see sun and rainbows and red birds in the trees." The big sister looks and say

“Huh! I see dirt and fingerprints and dead bugs.” The little brother responds, “Silly, windows are for looking through, not at.” Communication looks to the bigger picture. That does not mean we do not see what is right in front of us, but we are willing to explore the whole picture and go beyond just the obvious to discover newer perspectives and possibilities.

The psychologist might look at the inner motivation of each child. The biologist or chemist would look at how to make the windows clearer and what time of day it is. The English professional would examine the sentence structure of each child’s words. The best way to stage the scene might be the focus of the theatre academic. The communicator would ask why the children are not outside on such a beautiful day and then proceed to open the window. Our discipline has an impact on how people live their lives and looks at the bigger picture.

The outcome is a change in perspective and a new way of seeing and understanding. Ours is a practical science that is always open to new possibility by reducing bias and bringing theoretical perspectives to what is before us. It involves looking at the total picture.

Misunderstandings about the contribution of the communication discipline, often, occur within the academic world. Even though we were one of the four key disciplines in the Greek academy, through the years, myths have evolved that distorted the true mission of our discipline. The implication is that our core courses taught in every institution of higher education do not live up to their mission within the communication field. Unfortunately, most students only have exposure to our basic course or a public speaking class or an oral performance class (McCroskey, 1998). Our disciplinary role becomes distorted in the academy.

So now, we examine some of the myths that have evolved through our training sessions.

### **Myths and Theoretical Foundations**

These myths have existed back to the time of Socrates and the Sophists (Billig, 1987). They became locked into a group’s mindset over time and can lead to misperceptions. Some have been labeled over time, but others are so implicit that even those who are impeded by them have not always been mindful of the implications. The discussion that follows is an outcome of the authors’ reflections after our joint one hundred years of teaching experience. We have shared these with faculty focus groups to reach consensus. As we debunk these myths, we will lay out some theoretical foundations from communication pedagogy.

The first myth of communication is that anyone can teach it. Administrators have placed our courses in English, Business and Theatre departments through the years. The sense is that anyone who can speak can teach communication.

One of our mentor’s once said that communication is the most difficult class to teach in the academy because not only are you sharing content, but also you are teaching critical abilities that challenge students to see themselves in new ways. We not only teach content but we teach regarding issues of self-image, body language, finding a voice. All these issues are critical for the traditional young adult college students.

A communication classroom becomes a vulnerable environment for the instructor and the students. We critique how students see themselves and challenge them to reach for new potentials. This can be challenging to a twenty-something that is very body conscious and feels on top of the world. These students do not like challenges especially when they stress facing issues like “can I pay my college tuition” and “will I get a job?” The communication professional walks a tightrope between affirming students and helping them to grow as learners. One communication educator claims that this demands the communication instructor to be “an almost heroic breed” (Sprague, 2004).

Many communication administrators in the last minute rush to add new courses or to fill empty teaching positions will hire anyone who can stand in front of our students and teach from a book. Textbooks, often, written generically to be adopted by many diverse departments have lost the essence of communication. Lack of proper training only compounds the issues (National Communication Association, Basic Course).

This leads to the second myth that communication is easy. We need to be honest with ourselves, many majors turn to our discipline because they can avoid math in their careers. Our classes can be fun because we are dealing with real life issues. We use icebreakers and are concerned with comfort zones. This has appeal for the outgoing student who likes working with people and can present oneself as an expert on anything. However, we cannot stop there. The test becomes can you back your claims up with argument and evidence. Our discipline must be grounded in research and that research should be evaluated to discover where claims are strongest. There are many levels to research. In a core course it might include newspapers and articles or even interviews (Gamble & Gamble, 2013, 323-334). In more advanced courses students can use communication scholarly resources by using their library's communication data bases. The important thing here is that communication is not always about opinion, but needs to build credibility through legitimate sources (Keyton, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2010)).

We want students to be comfortable in our classes. An old Seinfeld joke says that there are two roles at a funeral. The person speaking the eulogy and the dead person. Seinfeld concludes, "Most people would rather be in the role of the dead person." While it is true many people fear death more than giving a presentation, we need to be mindful that our classes cannot be just about creating a comfort zone for students. This is a first step but as we will discuss later in many ways we want to take them beyond their comfort zone so they see life from new perspectives and become empowered to bring about change.

Connected to this is the third myth that ours is a "how to" discipline--- How to give a speech, how to operate a camera, how to run a meeting, how to write a press release. Communication education specialist, McCroskey (1998) notes that this places us in a third tier in the higher education system today implying low in intellectual content (p. 204). What people with this understanding forget is that our discipline is not about giving a formula for an exercise such as a speech but teaching critical reflection so a student can learn to adapt to changing circumstances and audiences. Schon (1984) wrote about the reflective practitioner. He claimed that professionals need to develop the ability to problem solve, adapt to changing situations, become creative. He was concerned that higher education was focusing too much on teaching one way of doing things. This is certainly true two decades later when we are in the heart of a communication revolution, when audiences, technologies and values are in constant flux. Anyone who teaches in the field of communication needs to encourage students to become reflective practitioners so that they can think critically and adapt to the needs of the audience.

The fourth myth of communication is that it is 'just' speaking (National Communication's Learning Outcomes). Many academics, students and parents think of communication as the speech class when someone gets up with sweat on her brow, knees shaking and a dry mouth to deliver the required speech. While this is part of our discipline, they do not realize that many communication professionals never give speeches but are involved in careers that involve one-on-one communication, working in small groups or interacting with others using technology. The unfortunate outcome is that many students steer away from our discipline because they fear speaking.

The talk show phenomenon has certainly embraced the notion that just talking about problems will solve them. The reality is that the communication scholar must approach issues

with a certain humility. Communication does not always work, but it provides alternatives. It also teaches the learner that not every idea has to be expressed.

Stanley Deetz (2017) giving the keynote address at the 21<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Communication Conference noted that we have taught our students how to shape the elements of a speech to argue their points, but challenged listeners to examine how we encourage interaction and dialogue in our classrooms. We have done well in teaching the rubrics of a traditional speech but in our contemporary social environment, many students and communication faculty admit they cannot enter into a dialogue with family members without the discussions becoming defensive and angry. How do our classes teach that communication is not about ‘me and my speech’ but how can we connect lives (Sprague, 2004)? The danger is students listen passively to each other’s speeches and there is no discussion of the issues or the creation of models of dialogue.

Arnett (1992) raised the notion of dialogic education in communication. His focus was on creating a conversation in our classrooms that instills values within students. Building on the work of thinkers like Thomas Dewey, Carl Rogers and Paulo Freire, Arnett talks about dialogical education. This involves walking what Martin Buber described as walking ‘a narrow ridge’ or finding a balanced commitment to a value system but not being controlled by our academic specializations or ideologies. It is the difference between authoritarianism versus shared democracy in the classroom. It is a commitment to a conversation with our students rather than propaganda. This involves a realistic hope, yet the recognition that educators can fail at their tasks. Education becomes a lifelong conversation and making our students feel at home in that conversation. At times it involves giving voice to our enemies and appreciating difference. We have moved far from ‘just speaking’ but teaching a way of life that promises no easy answers. It is a process of dialogue versus monologue as we walk the narrow ridge (Arnett, 1986).

Yet another, fifth myth about our discipline that needs to be debunked is that communication is manipulative or seductive (Billig, 1987). The original name for communication was rhetoric. Unfortunately, over time society has labeled “rhetoric” as pure jargon or subjectivity. We joke about the rhetoric of politicians as lacking in credibility or the stereotype of the used car salesperson who will tell us anything so we will buy the car. Unfortunately, the line becomes blurred between yellow journalism and true news reporting. Many people view the media skeptically and focus on the biases of journalists or the sensationalism of journalists like Brian Williams that feel the pressure of ratings and telling an exciting story. However, we miss that true journalism and communication is rooted in evidence and research just as a biologist or chemist does research. Have we as communication instructors bought into the degradation of rhetoric and positioned ourselves in secondary roles to scientists in our universities?

Socrates, one of the early communication teachers, was executed, by his government, with the charge that he was “a corruptor of youth.” Through a process of questioning, he taught his students to think for themselves (Plato, 1969). This involved asking questions about their perspectives and how those perspectives endorse the hegemonic system. Another school of communication from ancient Greece, the Sophists, taught that truth was fleeting and we often put labels of truth on ideas to seduce and teach conformity.

The schools of thought differed and ignored their own biases, falling into the danger that contemporary educator, Freire (2000) spoke about when he labeled his banking model. Are we teaching students how to pass the test or are we teaching students to question their worlds? Perhaps good communication pedagogy means asking good questions rather than focusing on learned answers that get students through exams, but are quickly forgotten.

Wagner (2008, 2012) claims that critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, adaptability, initiative, curiosity and imagination, analysis of information, oral and written skills are what matter most in our future world. He claims that our schools have failed in these areas. A study (Casner-Lotto, Barrington, Land Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2006) conducted by The Society for Human Resource Management interviewed human resource personnel and found that most claimed that college graduates entering the workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century lacked abilities in these same areas: critical thinking/problem solving, creativity, ethics, diversity teamwork, oral and written communication, creativity. They perceived these to be the top qualities needed in future professionals. Communication professes to teach all these life skills. Communication can have a central place in shaping the contemporary workforce.

Hart and Burks (1972) talked about the ideal communicator as possessing rhetorical sensitivity. These communicators recognize that there are diverse roles one can take on in an interaction, as well as diverse mediums of communicating that message. The communicator never says the first thing that comes to her mind but also reflects on the audience. This does not mean the communicator is wishy-washy, but rather strategic. This can be manipulative, but the rhetorically sensitive individual also thinks of the needs of the other. The communicator is not a chameleon. Communication is effortful because there is always a risk that we may not be accepted.

Foss and Griffin (1995) went on to say that, whenever we try to persuade another it is always invitational because the other has his or her own perspective and needs to be respected for that. Speaker and audience must be equals for genuine communication. We do not know if the other will accept the message. The ideal communicator is also open to a new perspective. This moves beyond force or conquest and beyond mere tolerance to a genuine listening to the other. They go on to claim that ultimately the persuader persuades oneself. In this way, rhetoric can be transformative because individuals ultimately persuade themselves and may see the world or at least the situation from a new perspective. Traditional communication viewed the communication process as something the speaker did to an audience through persuasion. Contemporary communication builds on Kenneth Burke (1969) and sees communication as an interaction that starts with identification among audience members with the communicator (Foss and Foss, 2003). People not from our discipline need to be aware of the difference between a traditional and invitation perspective of communication. The second approach calls for a communicator to build a relationship.

Darnell and Brockriede (1976) contrasted the noble self and the rhetorical reflector with rhetorical sensitivity. The noble self is the communicator whose goal is compliance. That individual holds to a rigid perspective. At the same time, the rhetorical reflector is that chameleon type person who changes to fit the needs of others. The ideal is the rhetorically sensitive person who can not only change others but also be willing to change and adapt while walking Buber's "narrow ridge" (Arnett, 1986).

Messages we send and receive create a process of change that makes communication a transformational discipline. The communicator has a humility to be changed by the message itself. Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator (2000), might be the exemplar of the goal of the communicator. Ultimately, it is about transformation. We meet individuals or audiences where they are and try to move them. Not in a manipulative way but as equals. The communicator learns from the interaction as well. This is where teaching communication becomes a dangerous profession because we might be an authority because of our degrees but we must recognize the authority students bring to the classroom that we might not have. The communication professor enters a process with students and hopefully change occurs in the communication classroom through open dialogue.



Students move through stages of thinking (Perry, 1990). The first is that there are clear-cut answers, often from learned by rote. The second stage, develops after an introduction to liberal arts education, students view everything as subjective and opinion. Often going to the opposite extreme of the first stage. Sometimes the student stops the process and becomes a procedural learner, one who can memorize and pass the game of exams but still by rote. Others move to the final stage where they become committed thinkers who can bring spontaneity and creativity to the thinking process. For some students this can be a painful process of going out of their comfort zones (Perry in Chickering, 1990).

Many have bought into the sixth myth that communication is apolitical. It is easy to become comfortable in our classrooms and avoid risks and anything that suggests confrontation, but a communication classroom is the place where students and professors learn to navigate through uncomfortable or difficult conversations. We know that silence can be a rhetorical space just as much as argument. Classrooms are not neutral places, especially the communication classroom. Our classes deal with issues of identity, hegemony, power and privilege. Our classrooms are sites of social influence (Sprague, 2002) because we know that our words and symbols accept and reify information, maintain it or change it. The communication classroom can never be a place of just passing along information learned (Arnett, 1992). It is a place to deconstruct and questions our rhetorical visions or ideologies that impact on our lives. This means that communication professors always takes the risk of even debunking their favorite theories and ideologies.

We need to realize that even our teaching is political because the professor has power in a classroom. Do we reproduce the status quo or do we offer fresh perspectives so we can empower our students to look beyond the systems that are around us like the air we breathe and like that air often become taken for granted. The communication professor tries to change students, not that they are a reflection of who he or she is, but so students can discover whom they are and in their own ways bring transformation to the world they inhabit day in and day out. In our core courses, we often give feedback to our students that mirrors back or reflects what the quality of work done on an assignment, however we cannot stop there we need to realize that communication feedback must become reflexive rather than reflective. Reflexive action is moving beyond mirroring to showing new perspectives and new possibilities (Fassett & Warren, 2007; Allen in Mumby, 2011).

Here is where we return to our roots with Socrates and the Sophists. This puts ourselves at risk because we become corruptors of youth, just a bit so students can learn to question traditional ways of seeing things. This does not mean we create rebels against traditions, but we give alternate perspectives so students can learn what steps can lead to change in their lives. We need students to be realistic and change what they can change, but they need we need to make a start in our classes.

Frey and Palmer (2014) take it a step further claiming that we cannot stop with just perspective shaping. We need to create ways that our students can become change agents in their communities. They claim that too often we stop with theoretical concepts. Communication pedagogy needs to teach citizenship by showing how theory can be applied in our communities for social change. They note that charitable fundraising is a start but it only reinforces structures that lead to oppression and contributing to the marginalization of people and groups. A Communication Activist Pedagogy (CAP) challenges the very systems and teaches students to become civic change agents. Dr. Lawrence Frey (2012) as keynote speaker at the New Jersey Communication Association claimed that few cite communication journals, which is where the focus of our research has been. He challenged the group to find ways to make our discipline more alive by motivating students toward action.

## Questions for Reflection between Contingent Faculty and Administrators

As a follow-up to the previous section, we have created some possible questions during contingent faculty interviews or trainings. For that matter, these questions might be used by resident faculty, to reflect on their unique role in the academy. They questions cut to the heart of communication as a discipline. We have focused our annual training sessions around such questions.

- 1). How does the uniqueness of the communication discipline inform your teaching?
- 2). What are the values that bind communicators together in the midst of areas of specialization in our discipline?
- 3). How do you challenge your students to see their worlds differently in a communication class?
- 4). How can you teach your students to be more creative and curious?
- 5). How will your class guide students in a search for the “truth?”
- 6). How does your class create an environment that encourages dialogue?
- 7). How do you teach your students to be open to diverse ways of seeing?
- 8). How do students engage in dialogue, rather than passivity, after hearing a speech?
- 9). Does a focus on public speaking create a dialogue or monologue?

## Practicalities

We can turn around the myths of communication by teaching our students to look at their worlds in new ways. However, we cannot stop there or we just turn in on ourselves. In this section we raise some specific ideas for participating in a communication class. Our list is far from complete or definitive, but it hopes to raise some thoughts on how a communication classroom differs from others in the academy from the class environment to providing feedback to grading.

We must begin to teach genuine dialogue. A communication classroom is interactive (Arnett, 1992). It starts by helping students to find their voices in our basic communication classes. We need to build safe environments where students build relationships with an instructor and classmates. It involves finding ways to encourage curiosity and a playfulness about learning. Getting to know each other’s names, icebreakers that promote learning, breakout sessions in groups or dyads, encouraging questions after a lecture are just a few ways to help students overcome fears of speaking out and begin to find their voices.

However, dialogue is more than just hearing one’s own voice (Fassett & Warren, 2007). Peters claims that “listening to others is a profound democratic act” (cited in Macnamara, p. 30). Most of our daily communication involves listening; how can we build dialogue by teaching listening? (Adler, Maresh-Fuehrer, Elmhorst, & Lucas, 2013) One way might include students summing up in a few sentences what a classmate said in a speech. Work on role-plays where students have to paraphrase what they hear another say. Have students listen to news stories or sum up a film or the class reading assignments.

Providing evidence and proof brings credibility to a student’s verbal and visual claims. Build evidence based discussions asking students, “Where is the evidence?” Discussions of controversial issues provide opportunities to explore significant issues while learning the practice of dialogue and evaluation of evidence (National Communication Association’s Learning Outcomes).

As leader of class the instructor needs to ask “courageous questions” (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2003). Courageous questions move us beyond taking issues for granted. For example, if students do not like to listen to the news, ask them what they do not like about the news and at the appropriate moment gently ask them what would happen if we all stopped reading print or listening to electronic media. Ask students why they are always on their smart phones can open the class to discussion about the role of communication technology in their lives.

Instructors must remember that they do not have all the answers (Arnett, 1992). Admit it to the class. In this way, we become models to our students that we do not have to know it all. Sometimes just sitting with the questions is enough. Yet according to Schein (2013), we live in a society where we expect each other to know all the answers. A communication classroom is the ideal place to call into question what we reify and build as expectations in our society.

We have potential to be models of good communication speaking skills. We do this by defining key terms and being aware of information overload in our classes. We need to know our audience and how much material a class can absorb at a time. At the same time, we want to reinforce abstractions with solid examples. Persuasion class teaches us that we learn best through our own active engagement with the material, so it becomes important that students identify and relate to ideas. Students need to be encouraged to share their ideas giving them an opportunity to test their presentation skills by learning to get to the point while making the message clear. Do not forget to invite the quiet students into the discussion, even if it involves just asking for clarification or a question.

Encouraging students to see differing perspectives is at the root of our discipline (National Communication Association Core Competences). Why not have a class debate over some central issue. You might even want to divide the class into different personas on an issue. Each group represents a different perspective. Doing this encourages students to listen to voices beyond their own interest groups on issues from race and gender to the environment.

One tension for many new instructors is how to preserve theory while allowing for differences in application. The speech class is a prime example. Do we just assess students based on eye contact or organization or speech with a clear-cut thesis statement? We live in an age when hip-hop lyrics have created one of the most innovative shows on Broadway. Can the same happen in our classes? We need to applaud student innovation and creativity. There must be room for alternatives (Arnett, 1992). At the same time, all students need to recognize traditional organization and the importance of issues such as proper eye contact (Adler et al., 2013).

One way to deal with this dilemma, early on, means pointing out that even our traditional speech structures are flawed because they follow the confines of Western education (Bailey, 2019). We must be willing to criticize our own structures if we expect students to change their own systems of thinking.

The elephant in the room for any discussion on the communication classroom is the question of criticism. We live in an era when nobody want to hear bad news about an assignment. Yet this is the heart of communication. We work through it in our classes by breaking students into small groups to provide feedback on what worked and what needs improvement. The security of a group, sometimes, makes it easier for students to provide feedback. We spend time talking about the importance of feedback and criticism in the professional world. Provide creative ideas for improvement; this makes the criticism more positive. Create a game by putting some positive ideas on the board, such as good examples, fine organization, developed research, positive eye contact, etc. Then students are asked to

identify which speaker did best. You can also use the inverse idea after stating some positives, discussing areas for improvement.

Another option is for the instructor to teach reflective pedagogy, where students analyze their own work. The University of Surrey (2018) raises some fine questions that can be adapted to a communication class where students can learn to be more reflective by asking themselves questions that attempt to move them to a deeper level of critique of their own work.

Small group discussions are a common element of any classroom (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999) and the reality of any office. Other disciplines use discussions to help reinforce learning content. Communication professionals move discussions a step further to encourage students to reflect on the process of group discussion. We need to examine how each member engages in the group dialogue. Hopefully over time the communication student has learned to take a leadership role and bring diverse people together (Adler et al., 2013). More and more learning is interdisciplinary and the classroom bridges interaction between disciplines. The communication student learns how to bridge the diversity while bringing his or her perspective to the topic.

Group presentations in the communication classroom involve all members of the group focused on the topic and each other. Instead of speaking as isolated individuals, members of the group work together to present a tightly organized, goal driven and unified presentation. In the core class in speaking communication students learn that listening is just as important as talking. We realize that each member of a group serves as a role model for the audience so the other members should not be looking at notes during a presentation. Neither should they be huddled in a dark corner of the room near the computer console.

Writing papers can never be relegated to English programs (Fisher, 1987; Hantzis & Park-Fuller, 1988). The Internet has brought new forms and styles of writing and speaking. Our discipline often encompasses filmmakers, public relations professionals, radio announcers, journalists and bloggers. Communication teaches that there are different genres of writing from scriptwriting to a journalistic style to a public service announcement. The communication professional does not always teach basic rules of grammar but serves to reinforce good rules of composition. Often students end up in a communication class after having mastered a composition course and presumes that there is only one way of writing. The communication student needs to realize that the medium used to shape a message is also a communication and different ways of writing depend on the situation and the audience.

In addition, the communication writer thinks in terms of argument and evidence (National Communication Association's Learning Outcomes). Audiences that are more specialized might need writing that is succinct whereas laypersons need examples and illustrations to engage them and draw them into a discussion and critical thought. The communication writer is aware of the importance of citing sources as a way to bring depth to any message but as a means of credibility. The communication writer makes claims and does not forget to provide evidence (Keyton, 2015).

PowerPoint has become a key tool in the classroom and in the office (Adler et al., 2013). The communication professional is aware that the amount of words should be limited on a PowerPoint slide. We view a billboard on a highway while driving by. These billboards need no more than eight words. Billboard advertising models PowerPoint slides because students are psychologically passing by. A PowerPoint slide should, generally, have no more than six to eight words and supporting images to enliven the presentation. The communication professional realizes that the PowerPoint slides are a support for a presentation. (Hetz, Kerhof, & Voerkum, 2016.)

When creating poster assignments students in a communication class are sure to cite sources and bring depth to their poster project by making sure that the poster tells a story that can be understood without needing an explanation. The International Forum of Visual Practitioners (IFVP) is an organization that works to enliven PowerPoint slides and class or facilitation sessions by creating imagery rather than linear designs that focus on words ([www.ifvp.org](http://www.ifvp.org)).

Often we fall into the trap of the movie theatre as soon as a speaker begins all the lights are turned off and the speaker and audience sit in darkness. The communication professional shuts off one or two lights in the room, only as needed, but in a dynamic presentation, the focus is not on the support material but on the presenter and the audience. The presenter speaks all the words on the slides to engage an audience rather than making audience members as passive participants.

Technology can have power over our lives and in itself can be a message that shapes and controls us as human beings (McLuhan, 1964; Ong, 1982; Rushkoff, 2016). Communication involves looking at questions of power and asking how that power shapes our interactions with each other whether related to advertising images or hegemonic mindsets related to gender of hate.

Reading seems to be a dying skill in parts of the academy (Johnson, 2019). Our students learn that reading is different from the medium of speaking or watching a film (McLuhan, 1964; Ong, 1982). They learn that the first activity involves interacting with a text to uncover the logical argument while a film or a speaker can engage the emotions because of the appeal of the visual. Students need to learn that by googling readings they might get only a superficial explanation; reading and interpreting an article often invites the reader into the deeper structure of the article's meaning (Rushkoff, 2016).

Critical thinking is taught in every classroom but the communication professor encourages students to go beyond phrases like "that's the way it always was." Probing deeper and asking the question 'why' helps students see diverse perspectives. The communication faculty member is always using the phrase "prove it." Pointing out that good evidence builds a credible case (National Communication Association's Learning Outcomes). This is true across our discipline from creating visual images to writing a press release. The communication professor always attempts to get students to look at issues from multiple perspectives so that as listeners students can develop an understanding that will help them to engage in dialogue and see the bigger picture (Levitin, 2017; Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Loudon, 1999).

Grading is an element of any discipline. The communication professor encourages students to engage in dialogue so that they can understand grades and reflect on ways to deepen their research and creativity. Sometimes students come to our field because they perceive communication will be an easy route to graduation. We build pride in our students by challenging them to reach their potential and being aware of our own grading patterns. We need to reflect on how the grade fits the needs of the students without compromising values of our field. This is always a delicate balance.

One myth not discussed earlier suggests that grading is subjective in the communication field. Clearly laying out grading expectations becomes a way for professors to model good communication and by example teach that this is a scientific process. Creating and sharing rubrics with students as part of giving an assignment could help in the process. Even the professor learns and grows through the communication classroom because it is ultimately a dialogue between professor and a diverse audience of students. Displaying examples of work well done or examples of work from other semesters that needs improvement becomes a learning experience.

The communication must move beyond time spent in class (Frey, 2014). How are we leading our students to action? This might involve reading the news and learning how to take an objective stance. It might involve students getting involved in civil actions to know that they do have a voice and that each voice matters and can make a difference.

Remember the ultimate goal of the communication classroom is not just to train professionals who have learned a good skill. We reach towards our disciplinary mission when we encourage our students to see the whole picture and look beyond taking ideas for granted and move toward awareness and action. When this happens, windows open and our own lives enriched. The fresh air we breathe connects all people. This is communication always remembering to create communities of dialogue among students and faculty.

We have now come full circle from the representative anecdote cited earlier. Communication looks out through the academic window and tries to find the bigger picture. This becomes a process where we walk the “narrow ridge” not only challenging our students but challenging our ways of looking at the world.

### Community

We have found that contingent faculty, remember these are faculty not on a tenure track, are seeking places within the academic world where they can be at home. The communication discipline is the perfect place to be at home because we are all about dialogue and community. Those with the teaching certification have become an integral part of the New Jersey Communication Association. They keep coming back year after year because they have found a place to share ideas and to learn. Departments can provide the same service by inviting these faculty to departmental events and meetings. Allow opportunities where they can get together with each other and share ideas. Communication is at its best when we build communities in dialogue amid difference.

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## **Journal of the Association for Communication Administration**

### *Guidelines for Submission*

JACA is a scholarly, academic journal sponsored by the Association for Communication Administration that is committed to publishing invited and refereed manuscripts related to scholarship and research in the administration of communication units at all levels of the academic institution. The journal will consider for publication all scholarship in the broadly defined field of communication that makes a significant contribution to the knowledge of human communication, especially as it relates to the administration of the academic unit.

### **Guidelines for Submission**

All types of manuscripts are considered for publication, including research reports, papers of topical interest, state-of-the-art reviews, and other manuscripts directly related to ACA concerns. Manuscripts may be philosophical, theoretical, methodological, critical, applied, pedagogical, or empirical in nature. Materials published are not restricted to any particular setting, approach, or methodology.

### **Review Process**

JACA uses a blind review process. All manuscripts are initially screened by the editor, who will reject any manuscript without review if it is clearly outside the scope of the journal or fails to comply with the guidelines. Members of the editorial board review all other manuscripts. The final decision concerning publication is made by the editor after examining the recommendations obtained from the editorial board members. Authors normally will have an editorial decision within three months.

### **Submission of Manuscripts**

A copy of the manuscript must be submitted via the Internet in English and must conform to APA (6th edition) guidelines. Manuscripts should not exceed 25 double-spaced typed 8 1/2 x 11 inch pages, exclusive of tables and references, be in 12 point Times New Roman typeface, and submitted in Microsoft Word. Manuscripts must be original and not under review by other publishers. The manuscripts should be written in the active voice and employ nonsexist language.

### **Manuscript Format**

The title page should include the title, author(s), corresponding address, telephone number, and Internet address. Because manuscripts are evaluated through a blind (or masked) review process, author identification should be on the title page only. Any references that might identify the author should be removed from the manuscript. The text of the manuscript (including its title) should begin on the next page, with the remaining pages numbered consecutively. Avoid self-identification in the text of the manuscript. Notes and references should be typed double-spaced on pages following the text of the manuscript. Tables and figures must be numbered, supplied with an identifying title, and placed on a separate page at the end of the manuscript. The proper location of each table or figure should be indicated after the paragraph in which it is referenced by the line "Insert Table [or Figure]" in the manuscript, separated by parallel lines above and below.

### **Book Reviews**

JACA will publish reviews of books on topics related to communication, administration, and/or organizational processes. The reviews should be between 4-5 double-spaced 8 1/2 x 11 pages and submitted electronically to the editor.

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