

UBCOMMUNITY

Department of Communication Newsletter Volume 3, Issue II



A Message from the Chair

From Dr. Melanie Green

Congratulations on finishing up another great academic year! The department is celebrating many accomplishments this spring, including our fantastic graduates and departmental award winners (some of whom are featured in this newsletter). For continuing undergraduates, there are still a few openings in our summer courses, and we also have an exciting selection of classes for the fall – you can learn more about some of our popular elective classes here in the newsletter. We also encourage you to get involved with the Communication Undergraduate Student Association (CUSA). For those of you who are moving on, we wish you the best of luck with your new adventures, and for those who are continuing, we look forward to seeing you in the fall! Have a wonderful summer, everyone!

The Department of Communication is here to support you!

We are located at:
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Buffalo, NY 14260

You may contact us at:
[716-645-2141](tel:716-645-2141)

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Summer Classes

Registration is open until June 3 so there's still time!

COM 217: Communication in Organizations

Remote with Raphaela Martins Guedes Azevedo Velho from May 28 to July 8

Provides a practical introduction to principles of organizational communication, including basic theories, methods, and applications of organizational communication.

COM 225: Interpersonal Communication

Remote with McKenzie Vorpahl from July 9 to August 16

Conducts an in-depth analysis of psychological and sociological processes involved in interpersonal communication.

COM 240: Introduction to Mass Communication

Remote with Bonnie McCracken Nickels from May 28 to July 8

Considers formal organization, functions, and development of mass media; communication as a social process; audience characteristics; structured networks; and communication in bureaucracies.

Join CUSA!

CUSA, the Communication Undergraduate Student Association, serves as a hub for Communication majors, minors, and students intrigued by communication. Its mission is to foster connections among students, alumni, and faculty, facilitating networking opportunities and relationship-building within the discipline. CUSA is dedicated to enhancing the sense of community within the department, relying on active student



participation to achieve this goal. As a newly established club, CUSA is eager to evolve into a valuable and enjoyable student resource. Suggestions for meeting agendas, events, or any feedback are warmly welcomed as they work to shape the club into a vibrant and enriching space for all!

Scan the QR code to follow the club's Instagram!

Fall Special Topics

These courses will be running in the Fall of 2024

COM 466: Entertainment to Change the World: Storytelling for Health Promotion and Social Change

Tuesday/Thursdays, 12:30 - 1:50 p.m., North Campus

We will examine the evolving entertainment-education communication strategy and discuss social impact entertainment practices in television series, music videos, digital games, and AI chatbots to address issues like sexual health, mental health, gender equity, climate change, and more.

COM 473: Entrepreneurship and COM

Tuesday/Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:50 p.m., North Campus

Entrepreneurship is the process by which new businesses are created. While most people think of entrepreneurship as the creation of new products/services, entrepreneurial success also involves individuals who help the organizations they work for become more effective, what is referred to as Intrapreneurship. This class will delve into key social, psychological, and communication processes involved success beyond college.

COM REPRESENTED AT 74TH ANNUAL ICA CONFERENCE

On June 20 - 24, 2024, the 74th annual International Communication Association (ICA) conference will occur in Gold Coast, Australia. This year, the following faculty and graduate students are represented in presentations and papers, including:

- Janet Yang, Professor
- Yini Zhang, Assistant Professor
- Perna Shah, Doctoral Student
- Laura Arpan, Professor
- Xinxia Dong, Doctoral Student
- Mark Frank, Professor
- Byeong-Hyeon Lee, Doctoral Student
- Gavin Raffloer, Doctoral Student
- Melanie Green, Department Chair and Professor
- Rui Wang, Doctoral Student
- Lindsay Hahn, Assistant Professor
- Irina Andreeva, Doctoral Student
- Maddie Taggart, Doctoral Student

Congratulations to all!

Faculty News

Professor Janet Yang, PhD elected AAAS Fellow



Janet Yang

Professor Janet Yang has been announced as one of the distinguished 2023 American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellows class, a lifetime honor within the scientific community. The AAAS is one of the world's largest general scientific societies and publisher of the Science family of journals. This latest class comprises 502 scientists, engineers, and innovators across 24 AAAS disciplinary sections. Dr. Yang's addition is in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the field of science communication, particularly her evaluation of public risk perceptions regarding various diseases and environmental

hazards, as well as her efforts to disseminate this information to both the general public and fellow researchers. This recognition celebrates Professor Yang's achievements and highlights her dedication to advancing scientific knowledge and fostering inclusivity within the academic community.

Professor Yang's commitment to excellence and her impactful contributions to the field of communication make her a deserving recipient of this prestigious honor. Her work continues to inspire and shape the future of scientific inquiry, making a lasting impact.

Check Out Conversations about Communication!



Zach Carr, Ph.D. has created the Department's first podcast, *Conversations about Communication*. The podcast explores the world of communication science and the many aspects of human interaction. Includes interviews and discussions with scholars in the field! Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to visit the Spotify page!



The Department's Postdoctoral Associate



John Brooks

John J. Brooks is a native of western Illinois and grew up on a farm outside Carthage, IL, near the Mississippi River. He pursued his undergraduate degree in Theatre/Gender Studies at Northwestern University. Following this, he spent twelve years living and working in Chicago, during which time he earned his M.S. in Health Communication and later his M.A./Ph.D. in Media, Technology, and Society, also from Northwestern University. During his graduate studies, John found the interdisciplinary nature of his program enriching, allowing him to explore diverse research areas and integrate perspectives from various disciplines.

John's research focuses on mass communication at the intersection of health and politics, specifically employing narrative techniques to address contentious topics including reproductive rights, gun violence, and affective polarization. He is currently engaged in projects aimed at fostering understanding and acceptance of transgender individuals through narrative messages. At UB, he is serving as a postdoctoral associate and was drawn to the position by the opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Green since they have shared research interests, and he holds admiration for her work. While primarily research-focused, his role also involves mentoring graduate students, overseeing the Narrative Lab, delivering guest lectures and department talks, and overall offering a diverse range of experiences. John values the welcoming scholarly community at UB, highlighting the warmth of the faculty as his favorite aspect.

Regarding advice for students, John emphasizes active engagement in classes, believing it fosters a collaborative learning environment beneficial for both students and instructors. For those contemplating a doctoral degree, he stresses the importance of self-reflection to clarify motivations, suggesting its importance for navigating the challenges and rewards of graduate school effectively.

In his free time, John immerses himself in various forms of media, including television, video games, film, journalism, audiobooks, and podcasts. He also enjoys playing tabletop roleplaying games with friends, a hobby that bleeds into his work with graduate students at UB. As for cuisine, he delights in Korean, Indian, and Ethiopian dishes, eagerly seeking recommendations in the Buffalo area.

Thinking about Graduate School?

Explore your opportunities with UB!

Graduate programs in the Communication Department at UB focus on merging communication theory with modern research techniques and fascinating themes, emphasizing the social scientific study of human communication processes.

Consider applying if the following are of interest to you:

- Narrative communication and social influence
- Science, health, environmental, and risk communication
- Digital/social media and well-being
- Political communication
- Facial expressions and deception detection
- Social support, social networks, and end-of-life communication
- Entertainment, morality, and positive media psychology

New students are admitted once a year, and the application deadlines are:

- December 1 for all PhD applicants
- April 1 for international MA applicants
- August 1 for domestic MA applicants



Current graduate student, Madeline Taggart, describes the department as “a community where helping each other is the top priority. UB makes learning fun and fulfilling, and if you are passionate about Com, this is the place to be.” Furthermore, “The faculty always have their doors open to offer a helping hand, students work with faculty other than just their advisors, and the TA office is always full of graduate students working on projects and having a great time.”

Graduate Student Highlight

Two stories of current graduate students at UB!

Madeline Taggart

Maddie is a dedicated graduate student whose academic journey at the University at Buffalo is fueled by a passion for communication research and a commitment to success. Maddie's path to pursuing a Ph.D. in Communication at UB was ignited during her first semester when she enrolled in a seminar on Media and Moral Panic with Dr. Lindsay Hahn, sparking a fascination with the intersection of entertainment media and moral values. She then transitioned to an undergraduate research assistant in Dr. Hahn's lab, Maddie delved deeper into her research interests, setting the stage for her future academic endeavors. Graduating with a bachelor's degree after only two years, Maddie embarked on a master's program at UB to fulfill her aspiration of becoming a communication scientist. Throughout her master's journey, Maddie's scholarly pursuits focused on the moral dimensions of entertainment media and audience responses, culminating in a thesis exploring the affective disposition theory (ADT) and audience engagement with true crime entertainment. Despite facing challenges, including maintaining a work-life balance and avoiding burnout, Maddie's unwavering passion for research and scholarly inquiry propelled her forward. Guided by supportive faculty mentors and immersed in a vibrant academic community, Maddie thrived in UB's communication program, honing her research skills and preparing for the rigors of a PhD program. Reflecting on her journey, Maddie emphasizes the invaluable mentorship and collaborative spirit within UB's communication department, underscoring the program's unique strengths and supportive environment. For prospective students considering a master's degree in communication, Maddie advocates for UB's vibrant academic community and opportunities for scholarly growth. As she looks towards the future, Maddie's aspirations to become a communication scientist are fueled by her passion for research and her transformative experience at UB, where her academic journey continues to flourish.

Graduate Student Highlight

Odinn McLoughlin

Odinn is a driven graduate student whose academic journey at UB reflects a passion for communication and a quest for knowledge. Originally from Long Island, Odinn's transition to Buffalo six years ago marked the beginning of an enriching chapter in his educational journey. After completing his undergraduate degree in Communication at UB, Odinn felt compelled to deepen his expertise and broaden his horizons through a master's program. Motivated by a desire to stay in Buffalo and capitalize on the reputable faculty within the Communication department, Odinn began his master's journey with enthusiasm. Throughout his time at UB, Odinn's experiences have been filled with meaningful interactions with faculty and peers, shaping his academic and personal growth. A huge resource of his have been current masters or PhD students since they were just in his position. His research focus on misinformation and political communication, exemplified through his involvement in the MEME Lab, underscores his commitment to understanding complex societal issues. Despite facing initial challenges balancing work and academics, Odinn's resilience and proactive approach enabled him to thrive, engaging in various projects, labs, and networking opportunities within the department. Reflecting on his journey, Odinn highlights the invaluable support of UB's faculty and emphasizes the program's emphasis on rigorous academic research and professional development. As he looks towards the future, Odinn's advice to prospective students echoes the importance of maintaining balance and finding joy amidst the demands of higher education. Odinn embodies the spirit of inquiry and growth fostered within UB's Communication program through his dedication and holistic approach to learning.

Resources

Counseling Services:

120 Richmond Quad (North Campus), 716-645-2720

202 Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-5800

Health Services:

4350 Maple Rd, Amherst, NY 14226, 716-829-3316

