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SPECIAL ISSUE

Professional Journeys



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ABOUT SPECTRA

Spectra (ISSN 2157-3751), a publication of the National Communication Association (NCA), features articles on topics that are relevant to communication scholars, teachers, and practitioners. *Spectra* is one means through which NCA works toward accomplishing its mission of advancing communication as the discipline that studies all forms, modes, media, and consequences of communication through humanistic, social scientific, and aesthetic inquiry.

The NCA serves its members by enabling and supporting their professional interests. Dedicated to fostering and promoting free and ethical communication, the NCA promotes the widespread appreciation of the importance of communication in public and private life, the application of competent communication to improve the quality of human life and relationships, and the use of knowledge about communication to solve human problems.

Spectra is published four times a year (September, November, March, and May), and all NCA members receive a subscription. *Spectra* is also available via individual subscription for non-members.

In order to ensure that the content of *Spectra* reflects the interests and priorities of NCA members, the association has appointed a rotating advisory board that is composed of representatives from each of the four regional communication associations. The members of this group meet a few times a year to discuss ideas for themed issues, article topics, and authors. Advisory board members include:

Kevin Meyer, Illinois State University
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We thank the advisory board for its contributions.

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Our “Front Porch”

By *Steven A. Beebe*

The 100-year-old white, ramshackle farmhouse, where I grew up in rural Missouri, has a spacious and breezy front porch. That porch was the first place people visited when being welcomed to our home. My parents, who still live on the same farm (and are working on their 72nd year of marriage), would sometimes serve lemonade on the porch or make hand-cranked ice cream on muggy Missouri summer days for our guests.

The Most Important Room in the House

Our nearly 100-year-old association, our academic home, also has a front porch—our basic communication course. Consider these observations:

- The Basic Course is usually the first course to welcome students to the study of communication.
- Ninety-nine years ago, the Basic Course was the focal point for the development of what is now NCA, reflecting the belief of our founders that oral communication has unique instructional methods and academic content.
- The Basic Course is the largest single comprehensive instructional source of information about human communication in the world.
- The Basic Course is the primary source of communication majors in many departments, as well as a significant generator of credit hours.
- The Basic Course is a major source of employment for master's and doctoral students working on their degrees; the health of the Basic Course, where most of us learned how to be university communication teachers, is vital to our graduate programs.

Strengthening the Basic Course

Each year, approximately 1.3 million students take an introductory communication course, commonly known as the Basic Course, at U.S. colleges and universities. According to the latest national survey of U. S. Basic Courses published in *Communication Education*, about 50 percent of our Basic Course students take public speaking; a growing number (36 percent) take a “hybrid” course that typically includes units in interpersonal communication, small group communication, and public speaking; and the remaining 14 percent take a course that focuses on communication theory or a single communication context such as interpersonal or group communication. As former

NCA President Rich West noted in one of his *Spectra* columns last year, we don't all agree on what constitutes basic core content. So we really don't have a single Basic Course; we have multiple Basic Courses.

Because of the importance of the Basic Course to our discipline, our departments, and our association's mission to advance the study of communication, I've selected “strengthening the Basic Course” as my NCA presidential initiative for this year. I'm focusing on the Basic Course not only because of its prominence in our curriculum, but also because, on some campuses, our colleagues are being asked to justify its inclusion in general education programs. As some state legislatures are pronouncing a shorter time to degree completion by trimming general education credits, the Basic Course finds itself on the defensive at many institutions.

Goals, Questions, and Strategies

The primary goal of this initiative is to strengthen the Basic Course and, via the Basic Course, to enhance the profile of the communication discipline on our campuses. Questions we might ponder include:

- Should we move toward a more unified Basic Course?
- What core communication learning outcomes should be included in a Basic Course, regardless of which contexts, methods, or skills are emphasized?
- What are valid and reliable strategies for assessing the Basic Course?
- What are the best practices for teaching the Basic Course online?
- How does the advent of new media influence essential communication competencies that could or should be taught in the Basic Course?
- How do we ensure that the Basic Course reflects our contemporary scholarship and builds a bridge to upper-level courses?

I've appointed two NCA task forces to investigate these questions. One group that has been at work for some time, chaired by former NCA President Isa Engleberg, is seeking to identify common core competencies inherent in all Basic Communication courses. A second task force, chaired by Cheri Simonds from Illinois State, is charged with identifying specific ways

Continued on page 22



PROFESSIONAL JOURNEYS

It was the great Yogi Berra who advised, “If you come to a fork in the road, take it.” For the scholar/teacher in today’s complex, constantly shifting higher education environment, the forks in the road just keep coming. Navigating the ever-changing academic career odyssey is more complicated than ever. Understanding and monitoring the threats and opportunities in the academic and non-academic markets for Ph.D.s in Communication is critically important for new and seasoned professionals alike. This special issue of *Spectra* focuses on that career journey, highlighting the different stages that confront the contemporary academic along the way.

“Why would you *want* to become a department chair?” This question confronted Jon Hess as he interviewed for the chair’s position he now holds at the University of Dayton. A member of the NCA Chairs’ Advisory Council, Hess explores the risks and rewards, the challenges, and the opportunities of serving as a department chair. His conclusion: Department chairs operate in a strange “boundary land” between faculty and administration, and for many, being department chair is not just a job...it’s an adventure.

One of the more exciting interventions in the ongoing discussion about the academic career odyssey in recent years is David Perlmutter’s 2010 book, *Promotion and Tenure Confidential*. For this issue of *Spectra*, Perlmutter turns his attention specifically to the increasingly discussed

problem of “post-tenure dissatisfaction.” Across the academy, in Communication, and in other disciplines, associate professors are the most disaffected, over-stressed, unhappy members of the professoriate. Perlmutter explores the reasons for this dissatisfaction and provides some useful insights for avoiding the “unhappy associate professor” trap.

Trying to publish research, teach well, and find some work-life balance in a new job—such is the challenge of becoming an assistant professor in the early 21st century. And just when everything seems under control, a request comes to serve on a committee, be a representative to the University Senate, or lead a task force. Elizabeth Simmons draws upon her years of experience as an academic dean to provide insight and wisdom for the new assistant professor seeking to provide “pre-tenure leadership” to his or her campus community.

Most new doctorates in Communication immediately confront their first fork in the road as they struggle to navigate the academic job market. Increasingly, new Ph.D.s are exploring alternative career paths outside of academia—in government, industry, or the non-profit world. Some do so by choice, others by necessity. Melissa Epstein offers her own meditations on her choice to explore and cultivate a life outside of academia, and from those meditations provides useful advice on managing a career outside of the academy. ■

SPOTLIGHT

DATA ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE

With the release in late 2012 of the National Science Foundation's 2011 *Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)*, the National Communication Association drafted a report examining the survey's statistics about earned and conferred doctorates in Communication from U.S. colleges and universities. Though the *SED* reports some data on Communication doctorates from 1981 on, since 2009 the complete set of responses to the *SED* has included specific

information about doctorates received in Communication.

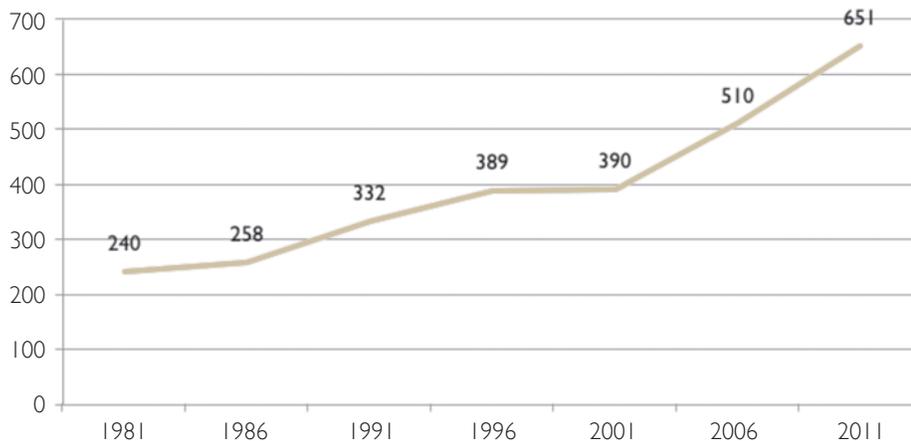
Key findings from the 2011 SED:

- The number of Communication doctorates conferred by U.S. institutions has risen 171 percent since 1981 and 28 percent since 2006. This rate of growth is larger than some related disciplines and is consistent with the overall growth in faculty positions advertised and available in Communication. See NCA's *Analysis of Job*

Postings 2005–2010 at www.natcom.org.

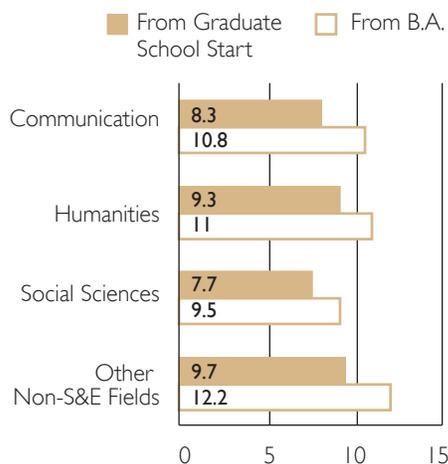
- Communication saw the largest percentage growth among all the disciplines in female doctorate recipients over the 10-year period from 2001 to 2011—a 12.4 percent increase.
- More than 20 percent of Communication doctorates are non-U.S. citizens holding temporary visas.
- 77 percent of U.S. citizen, Communication doctorates classified themselves as "white."

Number of Conferred U.S. Doctorates in Communication, 1981-2011



Source: 2011 SED, Table 12. available at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/sed/2011/pdf/tab12.pdf>

Time to Doctorate, in Median Years



Source: 2011 SED, Tables 32 & 68, available at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/sed/2011/pdf/tab32.pdf> and <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/sed/2011/pdf/tab68.pdf>

TEACHING

No matter the stage of one's academic career, the one thing most everyone in our field does is teach, whether in a traditional campus-based classroom setting or any number of educational settings in one's community or workplace. Through NCA's Virtual Faculty Lounge, we have been capturing the voices of outstanding teachers as they reflect upon their teaching careers. The interviews are in two categories: master teachers and experienced teachers of specific communication courses. In the Teachers on Teaching, master teacher section, **Sara Hayden**, winner of a Western States Communica-



Hayden



Owen

tion Association teaching award, discusses 10 strategies for excellence in the classroom that include the importance of incorporating research into the classroom and using the knowledge that the students already possess. Also in Teachers on Teaching, **A. Susan Owen** discusses teaching as performance, arguing, "Teaching is

performance. I perform teaching. Teaching is a dramatic art form."

These are just two of many award-winning teachers interviewed. In the Course Teaching Tips interview series, experienced instructors provide insight into preparing for and teaching various typical communication courses, from the basic hybrid or public speaking course to more topic-specific courses such as family, health, or gender and communication. To stream or download MP3s of the interviews, visit the Virtual Faculty lounge at www.natcom.org/vfl and click on the Course Teaching Tips or Teachers on Teaching tabs.

PUBLIC PRESENCE

Communicating the Value of the Humanities

In this time of sequestration and trillion-dollar deficits, with new budget crises and new congressional impasses happening every month, a few million dollars in humanities funding may seem insignificant. But as they say in Washington, “a million here, a million there... pretty soon you’re talking about real money.” That’s why, since 2000, NCA members have journeyed to the nation’s capital to join humanities scholars and advocates from across the United States to lobby members of Congress on behalf of funding for the humanities.

Sponsored by the National Humanities Alliance, Humanities Advocacy Day (HAD) brings to Washington hundreds of scholars, teachers, and advocates who visit with senators and representatives and their staffs about the importance of

funding for the humanities. NCA members and staff also promote humanities funding that supports the discipline, highlighting for members the research and educational possibilities in the communication arts made possible by federal funding for humanities scholarship.

The 2013 HAD featured advocacy training sessions and a national meeting about the role and importance of humanities funding. Speakers at the meeting included Karl Eikenberry (a former U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan), Sens. Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Brown University President Christina Paxson. Representing NCA were members of the National Office staff, as well as Research Board member **Shane Moreman**. Other communication scholars participating in HAD included **Theresa Donofrio**, **Mary Anne Fitzpatrick**, and **Matthew May**.



NCA Research Board member Shane Moreman joins humanities scholars at the annual Humanities Advocacy Day in Washington, DC.

IN OUR JOURNALS

Johanna Hartelius, “Models of Signification and Pedagogy in J.L. Austin, John Searle, and Jacques Derrida,” *Review of Communication* 13 (2013): 23-47.

John Searle and Jacques Derrida’s dispute over J. L. Austin’s speech act theory is commonly interpreted as a conflict over first assumptions and/or as an historic engagement between the French-German and American-English philosophical traditions. This essay proposes that from Searle’s and Derrida’s respective interpretations and deployments of Austin’s work, alternate pedagogies may be explicated. Hartelius extends the literature on academic pedagogy by identifying teaching models in teachers’ scholarly subjects. Moreover, as her investigation of teaching and signification follows students’ assumptions about what is rhetorically possible, it joins the ongoing disciplinary conversation about the efficacy and agency of language and language users.

Ragan Fox, “‘Homo’-work: Queering Academic Communication and Communicating Queer in Academia,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 33 (2013): 58-76.

In this personal narrative, Fox relies on academic tales and anecdotes to advocate a specific deployment of queer pedagogy that focuses on the peri-performative aspects of queering Communication. He considers how Communication scholars are uniquely positioned to specify how academic communication might be queered and he also critiques the ways in which some people in academia communicate about queer people.

The essay challenges the grammars of compulsory heterosexuality in instructional settings and proposes specific ways to queer academe.

Celeste Michelle Condit, “Pathos in Criticism: Edwin Black’s Communism-as-Cancer Metaphor,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99 (2013): 1-26.

Condit offers a critical re-reading of Edwin Black’s 1970 *QJS* essay on “The Second Persona,” providing a glimpse into the academic/scholarly life of the critic and her/his work. Condit charges that Black ignored the role of pathos in both the rhetoric he purported to critique and the construction of his own audience. As such, Black’s essay misdescribed key features of Robert Welch’s Blue Book, which was his explicit example of right-wing discourse. Condit’s critique of Black’s essay invites readers to explore further the relationship between ideology and pathos and expand our tools for building pathos and examining pathos in public rhetoric, including the use of pathos in our own academic writing.

THE RISKS AND REWARDS OF SERVING AS A DEPARTMENT CHAIR

By Jon A. Hess

During my interview as an external candidate for department chair at the University of Dayton, scheduling complications compressed my meeting with the provost to less than 10 minutes. The provost greeted me in a businesslike, yet friendly, manner, then fixed his stare on me and asked a single question: “Jon, I just want to know one thing. Why would you *want* to become a department chair?” And after a brief pause, he proceeded to offer his perspective on why he saw the chair as the most difficult position at the university. I have reflected on that conversation many times over my five years as chair, and while I have found the role meaningful and rewarding, his warnings about the position were not incorrect.

Serving as chair is a significant point in the career of any faculty member who inhabits the office. It is a position with high highs and low lows, significant stressors and some perks, the chance to have a positive impact on a program, and the near certainty that at some point you will generate disagreement with almost everyone in the department. The department chair is a boundary position between the university administration and the faculty; a chair inhabits both worlds, but resides fully in neither. Chairs are charged with numerous responsibilities and often lack full authority needed to accomplish their mission. In short, the department chair is a position unlike any other, and time spent in that role will not be soon forgotten.

Setting aside any negative perspectives implied in the provost’s inquiry, his question is one that demands to be answered. Too many people move into chair positions for the wrong reasons, and they and their departments pay a price. That isn’t to say that taking the job for the right reasons assures positive outcomes. Plenty of people go in for the right reasons only to discover that either they lack the ability to do the job well, or they do it well but it takes a significant toll on them. Fair warning: I have known far more chairs who yearned for the day they could return to their faculty role than those who loved their time as chair. But for individuals with the right motivation and abilities, the job of chair can be a satisfying experience.

Why would anyone want to be a department chair? There are many answers, but for me, it is the opportunity to make a positive impact on a larger scale than is possible as a non-administrative faculty member. If you have a concern for the common good, an insightful sense of vision, a love of making things better, and tenacity in pursuing those goals in the face of obstacles, the chair’s office offers a unique opportunity to contribute. Not only can you make the department better, but the work as chair also is central to the well-being of our discipline, as I’ll explain later. This is important work that affects individuals at your institution and the community at large.

What, then, are the wrong reasons to be chair? The biggest offender is narcissism. Too many

faculty seek leadership positions out of self-interest—to improve their self-image, to increase control, or to make financial gains. Anyone who goes into the chair's position for self-interest is likely to become cancerous to the department and its members. *Being a chair is not about you.* In fact, the opposite is true. As chair, you often need to set aside your interests because your concern is the department. Your success as a faculty member is measured by your teaching quality, publications and grants, and your service. But your success as a chair is measured by how well you make your department and its members better. While it is true that chairs need to make time to pursue their own interests (such as by maintaining their scholarship), that is not the metric by which their work as chair is assessed.

So, what can a person anticipate as a chair? First, don't expect to have the same control over your time and agenda as you had in a faculty role. Every day, chairs get dozens of e-mails and calls to tackle issues that arise. Some of these are exciting, such as opportunities for faculty or students. Others involve coordinating the department's work with the rest of the campus—getting information from outsiders to appropriate department members, and getting information from the department to the right outsiders. And much of it deals with solving problems of every sort. In that regard, the chair functions as the tonsils of a department. My limited understanding of anatomy is that tonsils' general role is to trap bacteria and other potentially threatening agents, allow the person to produce antibodies in defense. Every problem in the department that can't be satisfactorily handled by the individuals involved shows up in the chair's office, and it's up to the chair to resolve those problems so they don't become more threatening issues.

These day-to-day logistics are often frustrating for chairs because they can be so time-consuming that they drain time and cognitive resources chairs would prefer to devote to addressing foundational issues. More than a few chairs have complained, "I spend so much time bailing that I don't have a chance to steer the ship!" There is much truth to this. Chairs spend more time attending to details than leading with vision. Putting schedules together, dealing with facilities, resolving complaints, serving as a conduit for information, minding budgets, and managing other operations typically engulf large portions of a chair's time without offering the opportunity for transformative work.

If you have a concern for the common good, an insightful sense of vision, a love of making things better, and tenacity in pursuing those goals in the face of obstacles, the chair's office offers a unique opportunity to contribute.

Fortunately, in some cases the response to small problems can offer a vehicle for addressing larger, important issues. For example: A student complains that she got bad advising. Does the department do anything to prepare faculty to advise well, or even know anything about the quality of advising within the department? Another student complains that a class didn't provide him with information he will need for his future. Does the program have clear and appropriate learning outcomes, and do the

required classes contribute to those outcomes in ways the instructors understand and follow? Addressing these issues and others like them can provide an opportunity to help shape the department in a meaningful manner. Even so, resolving day-to-day issues while still making time to show visionary leadership is a difficult challenge for all chairs.

While chairs in every discipline face common challenges, the chair of a communication department will face some issues specific to our field—and these matters are of no small importance. This is a pivotal time for the academy. Higher education is in the midst of what may turn out to be the greatest period of transformation in its modern history. Significant changes in our national economy, tuition costs that are becoming unaffordable for many Americans, dramatic cut-backs in state and federal support, the rise of online and hybrid delivery options, competition from for-profit institutions, a considerable increase in students beginning college with substantial AP or dual-credit course work, a sudden jump in international student enrollment, and sharply increased demands for evidence of student learning from the government and accreditation agencies are just some factors forcing colleges and universities to open almost every aspect of higher education to review.

In this landscape, no department can take its future for granted. Even departments in some of the more established disciplines, such as physics and philosophy, have been targeted for elimination in recent years. The risk of reduced support or elimination is even greater for less established disciplines like communication.

As perilous as these times are, they also hold unparalleled opportunity for communication departments, and chairs need to take advantage of that. The well-being of our discipline re-



“Time spent as department chair often leads to self-reflection about career ambitions,” according to author Jon Hess.

CREDIT: MIROSLAW PIEPRZYK/ISTOCK

sides in the strength of our scholarship and our individual departments. If we produce scholarship that is used and respected outside our discipline, and if every campus nationwide has a high quality and well-supported communication department, our discipline will flourish. If our scholarship is disrespected and departments lose resources or risk elimination, our discipline will face trouble. *Collectively, communication departments must rise to this challenge if we are to retain or enhance viability as a discipline.* Chairs can support quality of scholarship by discouraging research shortcuts, and supporting individuals’ grant-seeking and opportunities for scholarly development. They can make a difference for the department by helping to

strengthen quality of curriculum and attracting resource support.

Almost no one questions the importance of our discipline. Survey after survey shows that communication knowledge and skill (including specific domains such as interpersonal skills, group decision-making, leadership, and persuasion) are *the* top quality employers seek in new hires. Communication is often valued even above job-specific skills. This finding is robust across professions and over time. Departments need to take advantage of that and leverage it for resources. What people question is not our importance, but whether our scholarship, curriculum, and teaching meet those demands. In many cases, there is a mismatch between societal needs

and the content of our classes. For instance, are our public speaking classes teaching students how to choose a topic, a skill they are unlikely ever to use in public speaking, on the job or in civic engagement? Material like that could be replaced with topics that are important at that institution. Do departments even know what communication skills employers are seeking in new hires?

Extensive consultation at the University of Dayton showed that other departments didn’t need their students to learn about communication contexts (e.g., public speaking or interpersonal communication), as most departments structure their curricula. Rather, they needed transferable knowledge and skills that span contexts, such as persuasive advocacy, the ability to engage in collaborative dialogue, and the capacity to explain complex ideas to non-experts. Among other topics, employers saw a need for students to better understand how social media can be used more effectively in the organizational context, both for internal and external communication. Are our curricula built to support such needs? And does our scholarship offer sufficient guidance for the questions people are asking?

It is incumbent on communication departments to meet the needs of society by attending to how well our scholarship and curriculum are meeting these needs. Participants at the 2012 NCA Summer Chair’s Institute discussed—among other topics—the idea of using a department advisory board to foster better connections between the department (curriculum and extra-curricular elements) and the community it serves. This is but one idea that chairs might use to make the department stronger. Regardless of how it is done, the collective product of individual departments’ work will determine whether our discipline is strengthened or diminished in these changing times.

Earlier I noted that a person's time as chair will not be soon forgotten. In part that is a result of the nature of the work a chair does. But there are other reasons. Serving as chair causes permanent changes. Chairs gain a broader understanding of how the department and university work; that knowledge stays with them upon return to the faculty. Relationships with colleagues often change, and because decisions and actions from the time as chair are part of a relationship's history, many of those relationships are never quite the same after a return to the faculty. Furthermore, the time spent as a department chair often leads to self-reflection about career ambitions. For most, it brings a new appreciation of the positive elements of faculty

life. But for some, the work as a chair brings its own rewards and leads to aspirations of an administrative career path.

I once asked a dean I respected why he chose to move into that position. Among the more substantive elements of his response, he added, "I figured if nothing else, it would be an adventure." The same can be said of the role of chair. The department chair can be a turbulent boundary between faculty and administration. Looking back, some people will feel pride and accomplishment in their work as chair, while others will characterize their time with more frustration and regret. Almost all will see both rewards and struggles in their service. But whatever the outcome, time spent as chair certainly will be an adventure. ■



Jon A. Hess, Ph.D., is a

professor and chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Dayton (UD). His

research centers on relationship maintenance and instructional communication. His publications have appeared in *Human Communication Research*, *Personal Relationships*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, and *Communication Education*. Hess is a member of the NCA Chairs' Advisory Council. At UD, he has served as president of the Academic Senate and a member of the Dean's Executive Council. He previously served as basic course director and director of graduate studies at the University of Missouri.

A black and white promotional poster for the National Communication Association 99th Annual Convention. The background is a night photograph of the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, with their lights reflecting in the water of the Tidal Basin. In the foreground, the steps and columns of the Lincoln Memorial are visible on the left. The text is centered and reads: "National Communication Association 99th Annual Convention" in a serif font, "CONNECTIONS" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, "November 21 - 24, 2013" and "Washington, DC" in a smaller sans-serif font, and "For more information see www.natcom.org/convention" at the bottom.

National Communication Association 99th Annual Convention

CONNECTIONS

November 21 - 24, 2013
Washington, DC

For more information see www.natcom.org/convention

An NCA Founder's Academic Odyssey:

Leading up to NCA's centennial commemoration in 2014, Spectra will feature short columns detailing some aspect of the history of the communication arts & sciences as a discipline.

On Saturday morning, November 28, 1914, the University of Iowa's Glenn Newton Merry joined with 16 other public speaking teachers to discuss the possibilities of forming what would become the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (NAATPS). Then just 28 years old, Merry was selected to serve as the treasurer of the new organization—the beginning of a sustained involvement with an association that he would lead and to which he would contribute much.

Aside from his pivotal role as a founder of what is now the National Communication Association, Professor Merry's professional career as a scholar and a teacher is illustrative of the career pathways taken by academics in the early 20th century. That career involved many different titles, a variety of roles and institutions, and even the acquisition of a new degree in mid-life followed by a shift to an entirely different discipline. With all of those changes across those many decades of the early 20th century, Glenn Merry's academic odyssey is a compelling and fascinating tale.

Born in 1886 in Orleans, Nebraska, Glenn Newton Merry attended Greenville College in Illinois (listed on his biographical statistics sheet from the University of Iowa as his high school or academy), graduating at the age of 19 in 1906. His A.B. degree was from Northwestern (where he was a commencement speaker in 1910) and he completed one year of



Glenn Newton Merry

post-degree study at the Cumnock School of Oratory, an elocution program at Northwestern founded by Robert McLean Cumnock in 1878. Of course, Cumnock's school became Northwestern's School of Speech in 1921, and the School of Communication in 2002.

Merry's first academic appointment was as a part-time instructor of public speaking at Crown Point High School in Indiana. Just a year later, he

moved to Urbana/Champaign and the University of Illinois, only to leave the land of the Illini to join the Hawkeyes at the University of Iowa beginning on January 3, 1912. While at Iowa, Merry earned an M.A. degree in economics in 1915 (after the founding of the NAATPS) and in 1916, he was named a research assistant in public speaking in Iowa's Graduate College.

Like so many at the time, Merry also was an academic called upon to

Adventures in Academia and Industry

serve during a time of war. According to his obituary in *Spectra*, during World War I, Merry investigated domestic cases of “disloyalty” as an agent in the “Secret Service” while also chairing the Iowa Division of the War Speakers Bureau and the NAATPS War Committee.

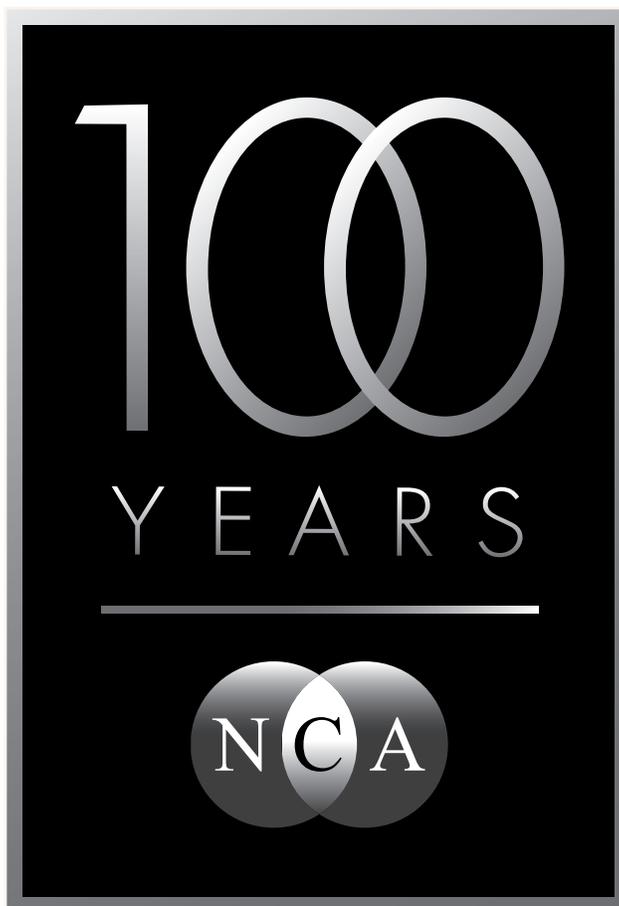
Ultimately, Merry would receive a Ph.D. from Iowa in 1921, writing what was identified as the first doctorate in “laboratory research” on public speaking. His dissertation was titled *Voice Inflection in Speech*. This line of research saw publication in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, including articles on “Accessory Sinuses and Head Resonance”

and “A Roentgenological Method of Measuring the Potentiality of Voice Resonance.” Merry also wrote several textbooks devoted to instruction in public speaking and served as the NAATPS’s seventh president in 1922.

Upon leaving Iowa that same year, Glenn Merry headed east and earned an M.B.A. from the Harvard Business School (HBS) in 1925. As the *HBS Bulletin* revealed in 1975, Merry’s time at Harvard was “a challenging experience” in part because he was considerably older than his classmates. Three generations of Merrys would receive MBAs from Harvard, including Glenn’s sons Eugene (1936) and Robert (1939) and his grandson Glenn

(1975). For 21 years, after working on Wall Street and in private industry, the elder Glenn Merry was a professor of marketing at New York University from 1935 until 1956 and a frequent contributor to the *Journal of Marketing*.

From founding a national association to serving as its president, from working on the home front in World War I to producing scholarship about vocal resonance, from changing disciplines and shifting industries, Glenn Newton Merry’s career odyssey across several institutions from Iowa to New York is a tale of innovation and change, risk and reward, perseverance and experimentation. ■



NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

In 1914, seventeen speech teachers formed the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, which ultimately became the National Communication Association.

Please join us in Chicago in 2014
to celebrate
NCA’s first 100 years!

There will also be a series of special activities honoring our centennial throughout the year.

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AVOIDING POST-TENURE DEPRESSION SYNDROME

By David D. Perlmutter

I know about two dozen academics who were tenured and promoted to associate professor last year. They traverse the spectrum of the academy, from engineers to language scholars; they work at community colleges, research universities, and small liberal arts colleges; they range in personality type from the quiet and studious to the brash and outspoken. None of them is *happy in the sense that we are familiar with in popular culture: the open joy of football players doing flips and giving high fives after winning a big game, the father of a new baby announcing the birth to relatives in the hospital waiting room, or the business professional who has just gotten a major promotion.* In contrast, most of the new associate professors were so low key about their promotions that I found out about them only when their e-mail bylines changed or I received a Facebook status update.

In my book on academic careers, *Promotion & Tenure Confidential: The People, Politics and Philosophy of Career Advancement in Academia*, and my “Career Confidential” column for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, I write a great deal about surviving graduate school and the tenure track. But not until now has there been much focus on the immediate response to getting tenure, what might be called post-tenure letdown syndrome—its causes and, I hope, its cures.

The phenomenon of post-tenure dissatisfaction is not just an anecdotal observation. The *Chronicle* recently devoted a special survey to substantiating that “academics are most upbeat at the beginning

and at the end of their careers. Those who have been in their roles for less than two years, for instance, gave some of the highest marks to their institutions’ career-development programs. The most satisfied group of campus employees by age was composed of those 65 and older.”

Another *Chronicle* article, “Historians’ Rocky Job Market,” draws on other survey data to conclude that “associate professors were the most disaffected group in the history profession.”

Why are the years when we have “made it”—that is, achieved the often decades-long dream many of us started out with (getting tenure)—not more upbeat? And can anything be done about it?

I think one answer to the first question was articulated by the lead character in the pilot episode of the *Sopranos* television series. New Jersey mob boss Tony sits with a psychologist and laments, “I’m getting the feeling that I came in at the end. The best is over....I think about my father. He never reached the heights like me. But in a lot of ways he had it better. He had his people. They had their standards. They had pride. Today, what do we got?”

Jokes asides, academia is not the mafia. But some part of the analogy is useful because there is no doubt that Tony Soprano was created to express the angst many baby boomers feel. I think a meta-reason for associate professor doldrums is that we all realize academia is radically changing and few of those changes seem to be for the better for the status, income, job security, and freedom of the professoriate.



CREDIT: WWW.HBO.COM

TV character mob boss Tony Soprano expresses the angst of his “professional” success.

My parents were professors, so academia is my family business. I still recall one of the only conversations my late father (who was still productive in his late eighties) and I had on this topic. He recounted that, to the best of his recollection, years went by in his early career as an associate professor when he did not have to fill out a form, show he was in compliance with some university policy, or contend with the avalanche of paperwork and minutiae that now encroach upon the professor’s job. I also think that the pressures of being a professor today, as well as different generational, social, and cultural patterns, are stressing home lives as never before. A female colleague once exclaimed, “I wish I had a secretary and a full-time at-home wife!”

So associate professor lows are, I believe, in part based on an accurate forecast. Yes, I am a “winner,” but what exactly have I won, and will it prove to be declining in value?

Yet I am naturally optimistic by nature, and I do not think perpetual despondency is where anyone in our trade should be or should want to be. Over the years, I have collected several observations that I think helped me through my associate professor years and are currently helping some of the associate professors I know who seem more satisfied than others.

You are not alone—as a scholar or as a discipline. In the research for my book, my workshops on faculty development, and the many, many talks I have had with faculty of all ranks, I note several facts about associate professors:

- They may feel a post-tenure let-down, but also feel a little guilty about it—after all they are the “winners” and well realize how many other scholars are struggling still toward tenure or are struggling to even get on the tenure track.

- They feel that their discipline has some unique challenges for associate professors.

- They don’t feel comfortable asking for “help” or admitting they may be having problems coping with their new situation.

Obviously, one bit of succor for all such colleagues is the numbers: There are some variations across disciplines, but basically there are lots of harried, frustrated associates out there—in art history, chemistry, and communication studies. If so, it follows no guilt should be attached to any low

moods. You have a right to question your condition and try to improve it.

Plan ahead for post-tenure. Sometimes the track to tenure is so all-consuming that, after your goal is achieved, you feel like Robert Redford in the classic film “The Candidate,” unsure what to do after victory. Obviously, you shouldn’t take too much time off from actually getting tenure, but as the deadline looms, take some time at least to ponder what your goals will be for the next phase of your career.

Negotiate. Colleagues, along with academic publications and websites, have endless advice about negotiating your tenure-track job position. But after getting tenure, your relationship with your department needs a new set of agreements. I admit I am biased here: Every department chair dreads the Dr. Jekyll assistant professor who drops into his or her office right after tenure and becomes a Mr. Hyde of demands, as in, “I never want to teach undergraduates again. Also, all my classes must be held on Wednesday morning.” Rather, after you have thought about what you want, have a long lunch with your chair or dean. Mutually—and hopefully amicably—define your relationship for the next five or so years to come. The two of you should have built enough trust that the unit head will appreciate that tenure does not translate into piling a lot of extra service work on you and sabotaging your quest for full professor.

Celebrate. Congratulate yourself and those who have helped you, from your family to your mentors, to achieve the great prize. Do not immediately plunge into the next big project. Take that special summer vacation you have been putting off. Buy yourself a long-postponed toy. Clear your mind. Relax. Enjoy. Discover the world that exists outside your office and off your laptop. Stop obsessing over some of the trivialities that so consume you.

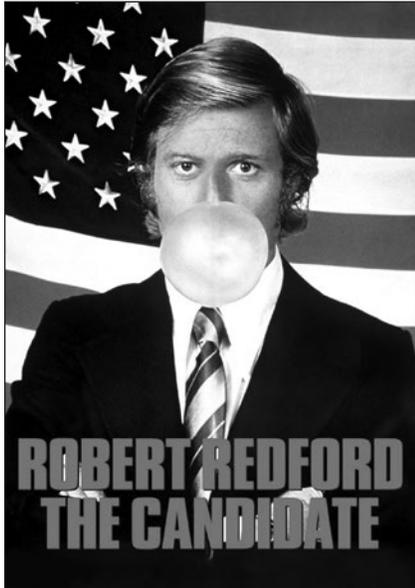
Form a support group. Assistant professors and graduate students naturally gravitate to cohorts that encourage each other to slog forward against the many obstacles to dissertation completion, getting a good job, and tenure.

Maybe because associates tend to have spent long and lonely times on their work and are more likely to have families that reduce the hours for collegial socialization, they are less likely to be found in mutually encouraging groups. Maybe, as well, too many tenured faculty don’t think they need “help.” But now is a time to think about who you want to hang out with and who will give you the intellectual stimulation and personal encouragement that are vital to moving forward and upward.

Think 50, not just five. In another *Chronicle* essay, “Your 50-Year Career Plan,” I passed along a further piece of my father’s wisdom. Looking back at his 50 years after tenure, he noted that he wished he had looked forward

more to them. First, if he had thought in the long term, he would have been able to complete some of his projects with more efficiency and maybe dump some of the ones that didn’t really seem particularly significant. Second, he would have been somewhat less anxious along the way, accepting that so long a journey will always have bumps and detours. Last, more globally, he wished he and many other faculty of his generation had seen the incremental diminutions of professorial autonomy as a true threat and not just a series of small annoyances.

In short, I think the associate professor years can be both productive and fulfilling, but only if we view them not as a time of being imposed upon by others. I say: Take charge and get involved, not only in your own career, but also in the direction of our profession. ■



Bill McKay (played by Robert Redford) in “The Candidate” epitomized the feeling of “now what?” after a victory.

CREDIT: WWW.FANSHARE.COM



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PRE-TENURE LEADERSHIP

By Elizabeth H. Simmons

As the dean of a college whose faculty includes many assistant professors, I am frequently asked for advice on how much service they should undertake. The twin horns of their dilemma? They know that service counts for less than teaching or research in annual and promotion evaluations...but they also know that demonstrating leadership potential through community engagement is important.

The tines on the horns? Time itself is an issue: theirs is limited and service is notorious for temporal rapacity.

The kinds of service that junior faculty members cite as essential for proving their mettle as future leaders tend to fall into two categories. Some feel compelled to join high-profile (which often means high-workload) committees to make their dedication visible. Others believe they must hold titled positions, such as committee chair, to document their capabilities.

I agree with the goal but not the methods. Early-career faculty can demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and engagement in myriad ways, few of which require devoting long hours to committee work or vying for titled roles. For a pre-tenure faculty member, establishing yourself as an effective teacher and scholar is paramount. Demonstrating the kinds of leadership skills that will translate, post-tenure, into significant service to the department, university, and profession can and should be undertaken through efforts that also contribute to your teaching and scholarship.

What constitutes leadership? What does it mean to act as a leader in an academic setting? It entails translating a relevant vision into action. In other words: identifying a goal that the community needs to meet, gathering consensus about how to proceed, and ensuring that the consensus is acted upon. Each of these pieces is essential. The goal must truly improve the functioning of the community (not just meet the needs of the individual); the methods must be seen as valid by those affected; the community must deem the individual appropriate to take the necessary actions; and the individual must follow through effectively.

When considering whether a junior faculty member is demonstrating leadership, I do not just enumerate the committees they have joined or titles they have held. Instead, I scan to see what that committee accomplished and what parts of that success are attributed to the individual. I look to see whether the faculty member has sought to work with colleagues on a new course, grant proposal, or paper. I look for evidence that they took the time to act as a peer mentor to an even newer faculty member. In other words, I look for evidence of initiative and impact.

I also look to see whether they are creating or reinvigorating anything in our college that advances our academic mission: a course, a lunch series, a student group, a journal club, a research collaboration. Initiating something that others value (as shown by their participation) is evidence of the capacity for leadership.

How to act as a leader?

To act as a leader, first identify a goal that you wish to champion within your unit. As a pre-tenure faculty member, pick something that will assist you with your primary mission of becoming an effective and efficient scholar and teacher. At the same time, it should have similar impact on your colleagues so that it benefits the larger community. Ideally, it will be consistent with broader departmental aims such as promoting undergraduate research, fostering interdisciplinary work or conserving energy.

An immediate corollary is establishing why the goal has not already been achieved. Is it something the community has deliberately chosen not to do? Are you the first to spot this as an opportunity for improvement? Has no one had the time or skills to make it happen? Conversations starting with open-ended questions like “Has the department ever thought about...?” or “Do you think anyone would be interested in...?” can elicit crucial insights as to where this idea may fit into the cultural landscape of your department.

Be prepared to learn of practical reasons why the idea cannot easily be implemented or may not be seen as very important by others. Conversely, if others are enthusiastic, be prepared for them to want to help shape the path toward reaching the goal.

Building support for an idea (even one that appears to be practical and consonant with departmental culture) will involve still more conversations. You will need to marshal detailed evidence that suggests your goal will be feasible and will lead to the desired improvements. You must also ascertain whom you must consult and in what order.

For instance, if your idea involves creating an online syllabus repository, you should be able to explain how it will help all instructors, note that other new faculty members have asked

for such a resource, and suggest how it could easily be kept up to date. You may need to consult the curriculum committee, the departmental chair, the faculty advisory group, and even the administrator of the departmental website.

Early-career faculty can demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and engagement in myriad ways, few of which require devoting long hours to committee work or vying for titled roles.

As another example, if your idea involves starting a journal club to promote research collaborations, consider how it could also contribute to graduate education or boost participation in existing speaker series. The associate chair for graduate studies or the colloquium committee may turn out to be valuable partners.

Even if your idea is deemed sound, someone else may end up being tasked with accomplishing it. Perhaps it requires technical expertise that is beyond your skills. Perhaps it is seen as sufficiently sensitive that only a tenured person should undertake it. Perhaps it will be expensive to implement and the department chair will need to first find the money. Offering to help with the aspects accessible to you can nonetheless provide valuable experience, demonstrate your determination to follow through, and give you a chance to work with someone more senior.

If you are the right person for the job, then it will be essential to see it through to completion. Discuss a plan of work and likely timeline with a seasoned mentor to ensure you are setting yourself up for success. Vet early versions of the final product with

others to keep on track with departmental expectations. Let colleagues know when the job is done so they can start using what you have created.

Finally, reflect on what you have learned from the experience, how it shows your capacity to act as a leader, and how it has helped you advance your teaching and research programs. If possible, identify a campus workshop you can attend to acquire skills that might make you more effective the next time you lead a project. Incorporate these thoughts and plans into your annual merit review documents or C.V., so that others can appreciate what you have accomplished and offer feedback.

Above all, keep your eyes open for further opportunities to simultaneously develop as a teacher, scholar, and leader. ■

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of Lyman Briggs College and a professor of physics in the Department

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CHOOSING A LIFE OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA

By Melissa Epstein

A few weeks before starting my first post-academic job, I wrote the following to my dissertation committee. “This is a bittersweet moment for me. I am excited about the changes that are ahead of me. But I am heartbroken that I will no longer be working in the field full-time.” Little did I know that my post-academic adventure would bring me hard work, travel, multiple job changes, crumbling institutions, professional recognition, friendship, love, and marriage. But that’s the second half of the story. I should start at the beginning.

Academia had been the only world I had known. My father is a professor of physics and chemistry at The Ohio State University. As a teenager, my career goal was not to become a professor, but to become a graduate student. I just needed to find a field. As an undergraduate, after a stint in Japanese studies, I wandered into and fell in love with linguistics. I took a one-year “break” between undergraduate and graduate school with a master’s degree in Jewish studies at Oxford in the United Kingdom, then moved from gray skies and sheep to cars and sunshine to begin my Ph.D. in linguistics at UCLA.

My first inkling that academia was not a good fit came during my fourth year of graduate school. I remember breaking down in tears as I listened to Faure’s Requiem while analyzing data. At that moment, I couldn’t imagine doing what I was doing for the rest of my life. I was tired of trying to sell myself and my research to funding agencies and journal editors. I wanted to spend evenings and weekends with friends without feeling guilty. And I found the dismal academic job market frightening.

I resolved to take six years to complete graduate school to figure this out. I conducted a few informational interviews in speech technology and found, to my frustration, that prospective employers were looking for engineers, not linguists. I sent out a few post-doctorate applications because that was the comfortable, easy thing to do. That effort resulted in an offer of a three-year position at the University of Maryland Dental School in the fifth year of my Ph.D. program. So I quickly finished my dissertation and moved to Baltimore.

I soon learned that I didn’t like living in Baltimore, and I wasn’t happy about the academic job prospects in other cities either. At the beginning of my second year, I received a call from the University of New Mexico, asking me to apply for a position there. I was tempted to stay on that comfortable path and apply for the position. But I realized I didn’t want to spend my early thirties trying to obtain tenure in a city I didn’t want to live in. Suddenly, it became crystal clear that if I wasn’t willing to give up everything else to pursue the academic dream, it wasn’t the dream I wanted to follow. So I did not apply for the position and began my hunt for a post-academic job.

The hunt took two very long and difficult years. I started the hunt with dreams of pursuing a career in science policy in Washington, DC, and ended up taking the one and only job offer I had in research administration in New York City. Looking back on the process, I do wish I had known others who were going through the same thing at the same time. In that spirit, I founded NYC VersatilePhD in 2010 to provide a support network for those who are interested in leaving academia. A list of thoughts and resources appears below.

Advice for graduate students and post-grads leaving academia

- Are you leaving out of choice, because you've decided that for whatever reason you dislike something about academia enough to make other careers seem more attractive? Or are you leaving because it has become necessary, despite the fact that you would prefer to stay inside academia? Most people will fall somewhere along a spectrum of those two extremes, but it's useful to identify why you want to leave and to recognize that many other people are leaving for the same reasons you are. In addition, leaving (for whatever reason) does not brand you as a failure. Nobody outside academia, once you have landed and are beginning to thrive in your first non-academic job, will care what you did previously or why you left.

- How do you know it's time to leave? No moment ever seems like the right time, but that's because there is no right time. There is always an element of risk in any decision, but from the perspective of someone inside academia, you are likely to have learned to play down the risks inherent in staying.

- Network, network, network. You can use social media resources like LinkedIn and Meetup, but you should also take advantage of your alumni networks, your family and friends and people whom they know, and anyone who you think would be well-disposed to having a conversation with you about why they do what they do. The best way to network is to conduct informational interviews. Many online resources offer advice about this.

- Apply, apply, apply. You cannot get a job you did not apply for. And in today's economic climate, you are likely to need to apply for a significant number of jobs before you get an interview. The process of putting together applications gets easier the more you do it, so remember to tell yourself that your first applications

can be bad ones—you just need to complete them.

- Take advantage of career counseling at your undergraduate and graduate universities.

- Take advantage of psychological services at your current institution. There is no shame in asking for help.

- Hire a career coach. Many specialize in helping academics leave academia.

- Get together with a group of friends or colleagues to share ideas and work together on putting together resumes and cover letters. (If you are uncomfortable doing this with people in your department, try to find people elsewhere at your institution or even at another university in the area.) This is also a good way to practice interviewing for jobs.

- Learn to talk about yourself with confidence and remember that you have passions and interests beyond your work even at the moments when things seem most bleak. Broad-based alumni groups such as IvyLife or public speaking groups can help you gain confidence and meet people who may be helpful to you in your job search while providing a structured format of a regular meeting.

- Numerous websites such as VersatilePhD.com, howtoleaveacademia.com, and phinished.org provide support from former Ph.D.s and ABDs now pursuing other careers for people leaving or wanting to finish their degrees quickly. VersatilePhD also has a list of books you may find helpful. In addition, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* hosts discussion forums. These may provide helpful advice, but keep in mind that many of the participants are still invested in academia. Don't be surprised at the tone of the discussion.

- Remember that a job may merely be a means to an end. Also, your first job is rarely going to be what you dream of, but it is unlikely to be your last job and in many cases you have the power to make lemonade out of lemons.

- Also remember that it is okay to grieve.

Advice for those considering academia

- Think twice. Consider taking a year or more off to work before starting graduate school. Academic jobs are few and far between. Tenure-track positions are even fewer. The nature of the university is quickly changing, and the situation is unlikely to improve. If you are determined to pursue a career in academia, you must know this reality: adjuncts and other part-timers now teach more than two-thirds of all college courses, and the position of part-time instructor has now become a permanently entrenched underclass in the academic world. Many adjuncts take on permanent overloads for little money while teaching at numerous institutions within their local area, leaving them no time for research (and thus professional advancement) or anything else. You may think you are the one out of 100 who will get that tenure track job, but what if you aren't?

- Be realistic about the opportunity cost of graduate school. While you pursue graduate degrees for 5 to 10 years, you are also giving up 5 to 10 years of job experience, salary increases, retirement savings, and other investments that may be difficult, if not impossible, to make up in the long run. On a personal level, graduate school also can be costly by delaying relationships, marriage, and parenthood, and settling down in a community.

If you must pursue that academic dream:

- Only go to a program if you are guaranteed funding for enough years to complete the degree (this could be a mix of TAs, RAships, and fellowship money). Find out how many years it takes for students to finish their degrees. Graduate school can be a wonderful experience, but graduate school debt never is.

- Find out what has happened to all the students who have entered the program (not just the few students who managed to get academic jobs in the past 10 years).

- Have a Plan B: Knowing that the probability of your finding an academic job is quite low, what else might you like to do after 5 to 10 years of graduate school? Then go and learn more about that field. You should also be open to creating a Plan C (or as many plans as it takes).

- Take courses in areas that might be interesting or helpful later, such as in business, languages, and statistics.

- Volunteer or work part-time. Any non-academic experience you can get will help you find your first job. Foreigners in the United States can do this on campus up to a certain number of hours per week and may be able to explore other options.

Advice for faculty

- Know the actual job market in the field and be honest with current and incoming students.

- Encourage students to develop skills that will allow them to be successful outside of academia.

- Be respectful of those who have doubts about the academic path and

toward those who have left. Hold up alumni of your department who did not end up in academic jobs (for whatever reason) as positive examples and helpful resources for current students. Make sure they feel welcome to attend alumni events run by the department and appropriately acknowledge their career successes on the departmental website.

And for the second half of the story... Ten days after my post-doc ended, I received my first and only job offer: to become an Institutional Review Board (IRB) analyst at a major academic medical center in New York City. Like most researchers, I liked the IRB nearly as much as taxpayers like the IRS. But I had no other options, so I accepted the position and moved to New York, selling the desk at which I wrote my dissertation. Then I made a life and career for myself. I met my future husband three months after moving to New York. I am now in my fourth IRB job and preparing to give a career seminar to young IRB professionals on behalf of my professional society.

What is my parting advice? Just do it. Schedule an informational interview. Apply for that first job. Have

confidence. As a post-academic, you are articulate, thoughtful, motivated, and organized. You may not have the workplace experience that competing candidates offer, but you can learn quickly; you are inquisitive; and you can provide sophisticated writing, thinking, and presentation skills that are the basis of all successful interactions in business and beyond.

Good luck in your job search! ■



Melissa Epstein, Ph.D., is an administrator for the Institutional Review Board at Albert Einstein College of Medicine

in the Bronx. She writes policies and procedures and develops the school's electronic application process. Epstein received her Ph.D. in Linguistics from UCLA in 2002 and spent three years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Maryland Dental School. She left academia in 2005. She currently is pursuing a master's degree in bioethics at Einstein and Cardozo Law School. In 2010, she founded NYC VersatilePhD, a networking group for people who have left or are considering leaving academia.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

With some dismay I noted two pieces (on "Teaching" and "On Teaching Public Speaking Online," *Spectra*, March 2013) that focused most of their time on the mechanics of organizing an internet-based course in "public speaking," without much attention to the consequences of removing the "speaker" from a real place and time. We need not romanticize the idea of the Agora to note that recording a message in an empty or nearly empty room is not public address. There is no visible public. There is no instant feedback loop. There is less chance to use one's presence to command attention. And there is no expectation of real-time reciprocity. Can we afford to be that indifferent to the richness of unmediated interpersonal connection? Surely the value of such an exercise ought to be the question rather than the presumption of *Spectra's* essays.

Gary C. Woodward
Professor, Communication Studies
The College of New Jersey

SUBMISSIONS

We encourage readers to respond to *Spectra* articles through letters to the editor. Letters should be no longer than 150 words, must refer to an article that appeared in the last two issues of the magazine, and must include the writer's city, state, institutional affiliation, and phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Due to space constraints, not all submitted letters will be published. We will make every effort to confer with writers about edits to their letters.

The deadline for submitting a letter to run in the September issue of *Spectra* is July 31. Please email submissions to spectra@natcom.org with the subject line "letter to the editor."



NATIONAL
COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION



NCA INTRODUCES NEW LOGO

The eve of our centennial is an opportune moment to update the association's image in a way that is authentic to our history and sensitive to our future, and we are pleased to introduce NCA's new logo. There is not one iconic image that embodies the whole of what we do. As such, this logo incorporates several design elements that reflect components of our discipline and our professional lives as scholars, teachers, and members of a community.

Fundamentally, this logo reflects the transactional model of communication—that of collaborative and ongoing message

exchange between or among individuals with the goal of understanding one another. The circle is the symbol of perfection and harmony. The white area in the center created by two overlapping circles implies that effective communication creates understanding and illumination. Multiple colors in the logo reflect our diversity across many dimensions, including race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and gender; as well as across geographies, areas of disciplinary interest, and types of institutions, among other things.

From a practical perspective, this logo is highly versatile and can be adapted for different contexts, including our centennial.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 3

NCA can strengthen the Basic Course.

When I visited with Basic Course directors at their annual conference in January, the number one suggestion they had was that the NCA website should have a link to consolidate NCA resources and information about the Basic Course. Done.

Concerns

Although I've touted the virtues of the Basic Course, I realize that not everyone may be enamored with a brighter bulb illuminating our front porch. I've heard concerns about that light shining too brightly. For example, the communication discipline

offers much more than the introductory communication principles skills taught in our Basic Courses.

The Basic Course doesn't adequately represent the full spectrum of our inquiry. Some have suggested that we divorce our Basic Course from the larger communication curriculum. Perhaps you work in a university where your Rhetoric and Composition colleagues in English have established a separate department, distinct from the English literature curriculum. I believe, however, that curricular estrangement is not the answer to strengthening our Basic Course. The communication disciplinary community loses power when we become fragmented and isolated from one another.

A Brightly Burning Porch Light

A strong Basic Course—one that is perceived as relevant and of high-quality and that is confirmed through assessment results to offer valued skills—will reflect positively on our individual efforts as educators and on our collective credibility as an association. Our "front porch" course not only should add curb appeal to our discipline, but also should be a place where all are invited to learn vital communication principles and skills that provide lifelong benefits. Join me to make sure our "front porch" light is burning brightly to welcome others home.

Steven A. Beebe, Ph.D.
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JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Merrimack College

Visiting Assistant Professor – Communication

Merrimack College invites applications for a one-year visiting Assistant Professor in Communication Studies to teach courses in the Communication Arts and Sciences Department beginning fall 2013. A Ph.D. in-hand is preferred, but ABD candidates will be considered.

The successful candidate should demonstrate teaching effectiveness in courses that would complement the department's current undergraduate curriculum, which features concentrations in Applied Communication (Interpersonal/Organizational Communication) and Mass Communication (both media criticism and production). In addition to being able to teach courses that complement one or both established concentrations, the successful candidate should feel comfortable teaching in a curriculum that strives to balance communication theory with real world application. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to develop courses in her/his area of expertise.

The Communication Arts and Sciences Department anticipates hiring a tenure-track appointment at the Assistant Professor level in the fall of 2013. The successful candidate for this one-year position would be eligible to apply (at that time) for the position.

Merrimack College is a selective four-year Catholic college in the Augustinian tradition, offering programs in liberal arts, business, the sciences, and engineering for its students. The college is located in the Merrimack Valley, approximately 25 miles north of Boston. Merrimack College is committed to enhancing the diversity of its faculty and staff. We encourage applications from people of diverse backgrounds.

Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the job is filled. For questions, please contact Dr. Deborah Burns, Chair of the Communication Arts and Sciences Department at Burnsd@merrimack.edu.

Interested applicants should send via email current curriculum vitae, letter of application, evidence of teaching effectiveness, one sample of scholarly research, and contact information for three references to Dr. Deborah Burns Chair, Communication Arts and Sciences at Burnsd@merrimack.edu. Only complete applications will be considered.

Merrimack College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

SPECTRA JOB ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

Deadline for September Issue: July 31

Deadline for November Issue: September 30

Deadline for next spring's combined March/May double issue: February 28, 2014

Advertisers are asked to submit their text-only ads online at www.natcom.org/careercenter. Payment information must be submitted along with the text.

NCA accepts Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and purchase orders. To submit a graphic ad, visit www.natcom.org/advertising. Questions? Contact spectra@natcom.org.

NCA supports continued efforts to eliminate discriminatory hiring practices. All employers are asked to identify the inclusion of sexual orientation in their affirmative action statements. Advertisers must provide information about the availability of domestic partner benefits. NCA is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of advertisements.

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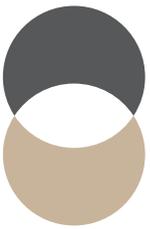
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