

Communique

Summer 2007

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

Award-winning Undergraduates

The communication department has good reason to brag. The following five May 2007 graduates exemplify the diversity, warmth, citizenship and scholarship that can be found in communication undergraduates.



Tim Donahoe: Griffith Award

Donahoe switched majors to communication when he realized that production courses were what he really enjoyed — particularly the field production course with doctoral student Steve Price that produced a video for the Missouri Department of Corrections (see story on Page 3). He liked the professional feel of working together as a whole instead of doing individual projects.

Donahoe has produced more than 20 short videos and movies. He recently won the 24-hour Film Festival on local CATV by producing the best 3-minute “mocumentary” in 24 hours after being given just a topic (addiction) and a prop (a hat).

In preparation for a career in film or TV production, Donahoe completed an internship at KOMU-TV doing audio work for the 5 and 6 o’clock news. After graduation, he will look for film or TV production work, hopefully in the Midwest, before eventually moving to one of the coasts.



Mallory Hynes: Outstanding Undergraduate

Hynes fell in love with communication after taking Associate Professor Michael Porter’s large lecture class, Media and Society, and after taking Public Speaking with Teaching Assistant Stephanie Hamlett. She found Associate Professor M.J. Smythe’s class on gender and language especially

interesting — in it, she worked on one of her three honors projects, a study of conflict style and communication.

Hynes’ passion for dancing keeps her busy. She taught classes at Dance Arts of Columbia while continuing to

perform, as well. As a member of her sorority, she served as the dance director, helping her sisters prepare for homecoming and Greek Week competitions.

Hynes also minored in business and textile and apparel management. After earning an MBA at Rollins College in Orlando, Fla., she hopes to open her own studio and have the expertise not only to teach dancing but also to run the business and promote it successfully.



Beth Jung: Reid Award

“I heard good things about the communication department, and I’m not just saying that,” says Jung. She chose the major because she likes media and television but found that she especially liked her interpersonal communication classes. Her favorite class was nonverbal communication with Associate Professor M.J. Smythe. She says, “It made me more aware and observant of people as I talk to them.”

An integral part of Jung’s experience at Mizzou has been working the last two years with the American Cancer Society on the annual Relay for Life. This year she was in charge of inviting cancer survivors to participate in the opening lap and dinner that recognizes them for their success. Even though rain moved the event inside, Beth found it gratifying to see all the participants.

Jung plans to work in the media or public relations. In preparation for that, she did an internship at KOMU-TV on “Pepper and Friends” during summer 2006.



Joel Wessol: Reid Award

Wessol double majored in communication and political science because he intends to go to law school, and he believes the communication courses will make him more effective in his interactions with clients, juries and judges.

Some of his favorite classes were Gender and Communication with

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Let's Talk

by Michael Kramer

It's easy for the department you graduated from to become



just a place where people you don't know continue to do things that don't seem important. With this year's newsletter we hope to change that.

In this issue you can read stories of a set of outstanding May 2007

undergraduates. Perhaps they will remind you of some of your classmates. You can read about the service-learning projects some of our undergraduates did. Perhaps they will remind you of class projects you did. And as always, you can read about what the faculty have been up to lately, not just as teachers and researchers but also as family and community members. You might read about some of your classmates in "Alumni News."

You also can read that our department continues to be ranked one of the outstanding communication departments in the nation, rating in the top 10 in *Chronicle of Higher Education*. It is the students and faculty that you read about who make that ranking possible.

You can be an important part of keeping our program at the top of its field so that students receive the quality of education they expect and deserve. By supporting the department with your donations, you help fund capstone projects for undergraduates, as well as teaching and research activities for graduate students and faculty.

I hope that you will use the enclosed envelope to support our program. Sending us your business card helps motivate students when they see what they can achieve in the future. Sending donations to the fund of your choice helps support the program beyond what the state provides. We thank you for your support.

Award Winners

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Associate Professor M.J. Smythe and TV Criticism with Visiting Assistant Professor Melissa Click.

In addition to serving on the Arts and Science Student Council, Wessol was an active volunteer with Boys and Girls Club working as a mentor and friend to young students. After graduation, he will continue working with students when he joins Teach for America. He will teach elementary school in New York City for two years while earning a master's degree in education. When he's not busy with school, he can probably be found outdoors or reading a novel.



Marcel Whittaker: Wolfe Award

Whittaker came to MU planning to major in communication because he enjoys working with people and wanted to become even more effective. He especially liked the field production course with Steve Price (see story on Page 3) because it was "incredible to have a shooting schedule and work together and finish it on time."

Whittaker's favorite class, however, was Organizational Communication with Associate Professor Debbie Dougherty. He found the course applicable to his work experience in Campus Dining Services (CDS). In the class he learned ways to improve communication and management; he also participated in management workshops sponsored by CDS. Taken together, these have strengthened his ability to work with people.

After graduation with a double major in sociology and communication, Whittaker hopes to gain some additional production experience working at a local television station. Then he plans to attend graduate school at St. Louis University where he will study advertising and public relations.

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Communique is published annually by the Department of Communication at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The department appreciates hearing from alumni and friends. Send announcements or milestones to the address listed above.

Students Apply Knowledge to Serve Society

As part of their education, communication students are often involved in serving the community. Here are five examples from the past year.

Restorative Justice program to use class video

During summer 2006, the field production class, taught by graduate student Steve Price, worked with the Missouri State Department of Corrections to produce a DVD, "No More Victims."

The DVD includes a music video of the song "No More Victims," and interviews address issues of victims of crime. It includes interviews with the artist, Johnnie Williams, an offender in the criminal justice system, and a victim, Mata Weber, the chair of the St. Louis Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children. The video is dedicated to Mata's daughter, Karen Weber-Hock.

Price and his students spent three weeks on the storyboard, script and shooting schedule, followed by six days of shooting. They created four hours of raw footage and spent another 120 hours editing the project. Each student in the class was in charge of a particular scene or two from storyboarding through editing, with Price making final edits.

The DVD will get national exposure as the Restorative Justice program makes its way to departments of corrections across the U.S.

Capstone project assists parents of small children

Parents in College is an MU student organization that supports students who must balance their academic ambitions and involvement in student activities with their role as parents of small children. A small and relatively new group, its founder, Rachel Jones, approached the Department of Communication for help increasing visibility and participation. Students in Professor Michael Kramer's capstone class in fall 2006 designed three different programs to assist the group.

One group developed new communication strategies for making MU students aware of the organization. A second group developed a communication program to reach out to students at Stephens College and Columbia College so the organization could serve parents who are students throughout Columbia. The third group developed a plan for an all-day seminar that included separate and combined activities for the students and their children. Jones is excited about the plans and looks forward to the growth of the organization.

Student-created campaigns benefit Red Cross

Students in Assistant Professor Rebecca Meisenbach's fall 2006 capstone course used their talents to generate some valuable and feasible campaigns and programs for the Boone County Chapter of the American Red Cross to

implement for its non-blood related services. One group focused on fundraising for the organization, providing plans for Mizzou- and community-focused programs. A second group focused on the Be Red Cross Ready program and promoted the program in area elementary schools. A third group addressed the significant need for increased and long-term volunteers for the organization. The final group developed a campaign to increase awareness among community and military families of the range of services the Red Cross provides to military personnel and their families.

Students commented that they were amazed and sometimes overwhelmed by how much the local chapter is responsible for accomplishing with just four paid workers. Consequently, students noted that they hope their communicatively based programs will assist the organization in accomplishing its mission.

Expanding Montessori services to the underserved

Myke Gemcow, a Columbia resident, has a dream of creating a free Montessori school for underprivileged children in Columbia's 1st Ward. Associate Professor Debbie Dougherty offered the skills and services of her capstone class to help Gemcow achieve his dream.

"This was by far the most complex problem I've ever asked a capstone class to solve," explains Dougherty. The students gathered research from a variety of sources, including residents of the 1st Ward, other nonprofits who serve a population similar to Gemcow's school, other non-profit Montessoris and potential funding sources. Students recommended how the client should proceed with starting a school. Since the students' presentations, Gemcow has completed much of the necessary legal paperwork and is in the process of forming a board.

Need a training seminar?

The titles of the communication skill-based training seminars that students created and presented for Assistant Professor Loreen Olson's spring 2007 capstone class were unique: "Conquering Conflict," "Seven Steps to Success in Group Problem Solving," "SQUASH Sexual Harrassment," and "Don't let angry customers GRIND your gears! We're here to help!"

After spending the early part of the semester learning how to design a training seminar, the students put their knowledge into practice by identifying their clients, designing one-hour skill-oriented communication training sessions centered on the specific needs of their clients, conducting the training and evaluating their performances. Clients included a property management company, a coffee shop, a business fraternity and a student-based political organization. The experience provided students with some very practical uses for the theories, concepts and skills they have learned as communication majors.

Faculty Kudos

Jennifer Aubrey broadened her research areas this year and works on such diverse projects as the uses and gratifications of reality television and the effects of Facebook and social networking Web sites on social capital. She looks forward to going back to her roots by continuing her research on the effects of media on young people's sexuality and body image with two articles coming out this year on these topics: one in *Media Psychology* and one in *Mass Communication and Society*. She recently finished a series of experiments examining media framing on body image. She is taking a self-appointed writing retreat at the Lake of the Ozarks this summer so she will have the time and space to get lost in the data. Sadly, this is her idea of a summer vacation.

After returning from spending most of the spring 2006 semester in Hong Kong as a visiting scholar (see story on Page 5), **Bill Benoit** is editing *Communication Studies*. He had two books published this year (*Political Campaign Communication*, and *Bush Versus Kerry*, with several co-authors). He and his wife, **Pam Benoit**, have a book on persuasive speaking that will be published this fall.

The 2006–07 academic year was a wild ride for **Melissa Click**, who had her first child (a son, Trey) in late May 2006. Thankfully, students in her television criticism and new technologies courses put up with her lack of sleep and tolerated repeated screenings of photos of Trey. She continues to work in the area of audience studies including online fandom. She is itching to begin work on two new projects: one on *Ugly Betty* and one on the role of independent theaters in small towns. Click is still the department's internship coordinator, so please contact her if your employer has a space for the department's great students!

Debbie Dougherty received tenure and was promoted to associate professor at the beginning of 2006–07 academic year. She published several scholarly articles in journals such as *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Sex Roles*, *Communication Studies* and *Western Journal of Communication*. She was cited in the *New York Times*, CNN.com, and other news outlets. She and her family moved to a new home on a small farm in Callaway County where her husband is raising sheep, including a rare breed of heritage sheep. Yep, Debbie is now a farmer.

Jon Hess continued his work on closeness and distance in personal relationships by publishing an article on strategies people use to make relationships closer. With Michael Porter, he participated in a four-week faculty development seminar focused on better facilitating difficult dialogues in the classroom. Hess also put his experience as former director of the introductory public speaking course to good use, serving as a consultant for the Educational Testing Service this year, as it

reviewed and updated the Communication Praxis Test, a test used for licensing high school speech teachers.

Michael Kramer will continue as chair of the department, a role he has served in for more than three years. His research with Debbie Dougherty on institutional review boards was cited in the *New York Times* last spring. He continues to publish research on sharing leadership in theater groups (*Journal of Applied Communication Research*) and dialectical tensions in groups (*Southern Journal of Communication*). Continuing his participation in community theater, he portrayed Captain Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* last fall, a role he had wanted to play since he was in college. He looks forward to spending more time with his retired parents who are moving to Columbia.

Mitch McKinney returns to the department after working for the National Communication Association in Washington, D.C., this past year (see Page 8). Even while away, he remained an active scholar, with his research on political communication appearing in several book chapters and articles in journals such as the *American Behavioral Scientist* and *Communication Studies*.

Since arriving in Columbia in August 2006, **Rebecca Meisenbach** has been settling into life in the Midwest and working on several projects. Her dissertation on fund raisers was nominated by Purdue University's School of Liberal Arts for the CGI/UMI social sciences dissertation award. This summer she is using her summer research fellowship to explore issues of managing occupational taints. She plans to examine the identity negotiations of stay-at-home mothers. Rebecca also continues to explore issues of organizational rhetoric and ethics as can be seen in recent publications in *Communication Yearbook* and *Management Communication Quarterly*. In addition to loving graduate-level teaching, she enjoyed developing her version of the controversies in communication class and a new version of the capstone course.

Loren Olson and her husband Mark Fine began the 2006–07 school year with the birth of their twins, Kenyon (boy) and Keaton (girl) on August 2, 2006. Both babies entered the world healthy and feminists-in-the-making! After taking the fall semester off from teaching, Olson returned to the classroom in January. Despite sleepless nights, Olson continued her scholarship by getting out for review several new manuscripts exploring such issues as intimate violence, dating aggression, feminist identity and the communication of deviance. These efforts are due, in large part, to the fabulous teams of graduate students she is working with. One such team, composed of Olson, Barbara Ellevold, Joy Daggs and Teddy Kurth, will have a study on the luring communication used by child sexual predators published in the August 2007 issue of *Communication Theory*.

After seven years as director of Special Degree Programs for the College of Arts and Science, **Michael**

Porter will come back to the department full time in August 2007. Although he enjoyed advising the students in the program, after spending 75 percent of his time away from the department for those responsibilities, he's looking forward to teaching classes again. He will have more time to interact with the undergraduate majors and graduate students in the department.

Scholars are delighted when they encounter someone who has read and admired their work. **M.J. Smythe** recently learned, however, that such events can unfold in unanticipated ways and in unexpected contexts. While participating in a photo shoot for a magazine article on heart-healthy life choices, Smythe quickly discovered that managing the footwork while maintaining a happy,

animated expression for the photographers roaming the room put new levels of complexity on the concept of multi-tasking. Just above the music, she heard the interviewer describing an article she had read about the ways women bond and self-actualize through fitness classes. Face flushed as much by pleasure as by exertion, Smythe prepared to acknowledge her work when the reporter blithely chirped, "and this was written by somebody at Mizzou, named Mary Smith." After years of dire threats to students about mispronouncing her name, Smythe could only conclude that this was indeed an irony richly earned.

Suited for International Communication

Bill Benoit visits Hong Kong and Taiwan as a university fellow

By Melody Galen

When he arrived in Hong Kong, Professor Bill Benoit asked a friend to write in Chinese where Benoit lived and worked. Benoit had those laminated, so that if his pronunciation was less than perfect he could always show the address cards. Perhaps international communication isn't so difficult after all.

He was certain there was one English word every taxi driver would know, so when he left to pick up his wife for spring break, he said simply, "Airport," to the driver. Nothing. After a couple more attempts, he resorted to drawing a picture of an airplane and communicated his message that way. The second-most published communicator in the U.S. was reduced to drawing pictures — it just goes to show communication can work on so many levels.

Benoit spent three months in Hong Kong and one week in Taiwan beginning January 2006. He was invited to Hong Kong Baptist University as a university fellow in recognition of his standing as a communication scholar. Benoit has studied political communication in the U.S., Israel, South Korea and Ukraine. While in Hong Kong he gave public lectures and worked with faculty on their research projects. It was rewarding to see suggestions that he had made incorporated in subsequent drafts of a paper. He thought he had something of value to contribute and that he was able to get it across to them.

Shortly before he returned to the States, he was asked to lecture in Taiwan on political crisis communication. While there he was tapped to consult with the foreign

ministry on a subject in which he's well versed: image repair. A special assistant to the president asked for advice on how the president could repair damage to his image from a recent scandal.

A personal aspect of the trip had to do with fashion, of all things. "I told someone I had two suits made there, and he asked, 'Why?' This is sort of my casual decade," Benoit says by way of explanation — shorts are usual attire for him. Custom-tailored, inexpensive suits could be hard to resist. When his wife, Pam Benoit, who is dean of the Graduate School, visited, she had four suits made.

Not to give the impression that he struggled to communicate every time he left his apartment — a friend wrote down the name of a mall Benoit wanted to go to. He learned to pronounce it, and several times when he gave taxi drivers his destination they responded in Chinese. "Sorry. That's all I've got," he says now. He felt he must

have spoken well enough that the drivers assumed he spoke Chinese much better than he did. Communicating just comes naturally to him.

Benoit was impressed by the variety of architectural styles in Hong Kong. This building appears to be straight out of Gotham City, and he nicknamed it the "Batman" building.



Bill Benoit, in his new duds, and Ambassador Liu of the Foreign Ministry in Taiwan.



Alumni Achievements

Steven Bacon, BA '84, is an architect at Bacon Commercial Design, LLC. He is located in Crystal City, Mo.

Anna Barton Thomas, BA '00, lives in the St. Louis area and is married to **Gary Thomas**, BA '00. She enjoys her career as an account executive with Emmis Communications working at KFTK 97.1 FM Talk.

M. Eugene Bierbaum, PhD '65, is a professional registered parliamentarian in the National Association of Parliamentarians. He lives in Gainesville, Fla.

Susan Brinson, PhD '90, continues as professor at Auburn. She was recently selected to be editor of *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*.

Susan Burchfield, BA '81, MA '82, is the director of research for Fox 2 in St. Louis. As guest professor for three days, she shared her experiences with undergraduate and graduate classes last fall.

Margaret Miller Butcher, PhD '02, holds the title of international lecturer and assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Fort Hays State University in Kansas. As lecturer she travels regularly to places such as China and Istanbul.

Lara Espinoza, BA '96, works as a video producer for American Century Investments out of Kansas City, Mo.

Laura Forbes, BA '04, works at MU as an admissions representative for the College of Engineering.

Erik Foust, BA '02, resides in Cape Coral, Fla. He is a producer for the local TV station, Fox 4.

Stephen Given, BA '05, received training from the Executive Academy of Game Face, Inc. That training took him to Connecticut where he does sales and promotion for the New Haven County Cutters, a minor league baseball team.

Shannon Justice, BA '06, resides in the Kansas City area. She will begin working on a master's in public administration at the Henry W. Bloch School of Public Administration at UMKC.

Julie Lena Lally, BA '97, lives in Ballwin, Mo. She continues to work at the Fox Theater in St. Louis where she does the public relations and publicity for the Broadway touring productions.

Kris Labuda, BA '06, lives in Las Vegas. In addition to her job as chapel manager at the Flamingo, she is seeking an MBA at University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a dual major in hospitality.

Elisa Longo Robinson, BA '88, is an assistant prosecuting attorney in Clayton, Mo. She works out of the St. Louis County Justice Center for the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney.

John McGuire, PhD '04, continues as an assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

Tony Michalak, BA '80, lives in St. Louis and works at the St. Louis Science Center. He specializes in space sciences at the James S. McDonnell Planetarium.

Brad Pennington, BA '01, continues his acting career. He appeared in a January episode of *CSI NY*. Did you see all those tattoos, (temporary, we hope)?

Joey Pogue, PhD '05, received the Outstanding Teacher Award in the Department of Communication at Pittsburgh State University in Kansas.

Tonya Poth, BA '95, is an attorney in Chicago. She works at the Citicorp Center for Bollinger, Ruberry & Garvey.

Damon Romine, BA '88, is the entertainment media director for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), the nation's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender media advocacy group. He is based in Los Angeles.

Marissa Rosen, BA '04, resides in St. Louis but travels extensively as a flight attendant for U.S. Airways Express.

Travis Sumner, BA '97, is the sales manager for the western region of Cass Information Systems, Inc. He lives in St. Charles, Mo.

Marty Tade Wynn, BA '91, lives in Nixa, Mo., where she is an independent sales director for Mary Kay Cosmetics.

Amber Thompson McClain, BA '80, is the director of Professional Therapy Solutions, located in Independence, Mo. She lives nearby in Odessa.

Gannet Tsegai, BA '04, is on leave from her position as deputy press secretary for Sen. Edward Kennedy in Washington D.C., while she works on the presidential campaign for Senator Barack Obama.

Sarah Wilcox, BA '01, earned an MA in education at Arizona State University. She is the assistant dean in the Office of Student Life at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Va.

Sarah Winkelmann, BA '04, lives in Columbia, Mo., but works as a pharmaceutical sales representative for PriCara out of Raritan, N.J., a division of Johnson and Johnson.

New Faculty Member



Lissa Behm-Morawitz joins the faculty after recently completing her doctorate at the University of Arizona in Tuscon, another one of the nation's top-10 communication programs. Her dissertation examined the sexual objectification of female characters in video games. More specifically, she studied how men

and women respond to the presentation of sexualized characters in a video game. Behm-Morawitz adds breadth to the faculty with her teaching and research interests in mass communication.

Research Lab Opens

Psychology has them. Journalism has them. The same goes for biology, engineering and a host of other departments. Until recently, the communication department didn't have one. When professors and graduate students in the department wanted to collect data for research, they had to scrounge around for a suitable room somewhere on campus. Now, for the first time since its founding in 1986, the Department of Communication has a dedicated research lab space on the third floor of Switzler Hall.

What exactly do communication scholars do in a research lab? The answer is as varied as the research that makes up the field. In some cases, researchers present stimuli on a computer screen (perhaps a computer game) and have research subjects respond to the experience electronically. In other instances, research subjects watch a media message (public service announcement or video clip) and then respond to a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. In other cases a group of people will be recorded as the subjects participate in a focus-group discussion of some topic (politics or sexual harassment, for example), while other researchers record interviews (work experiences) for later analysis.

The new lab already has helped improve the department. Professors such as Jennifer Aubrey can now more easily conduct their research on how media messages influence perceptions of body image. The promise of the lab made it easier to recruit the department's new faculty member, Lissa Behm-Morawitz (see story above). Graduate students already take into account the use of the lab as they design their dissertation studies.

All of this was made possible in part by the money the department received two years ago for its Outstanding Contribution to Graduate Studies Award. The money from that award provided funding for the computers, projector and recording equipment. "We expect even greater research productivity in the future as a result," says Department Chair Michael Kramer.

Stories of Switzler Hall

In the last newsletter the editor asked for stories about experiences at Switzler Hall. Here are parts of two favorites:

"I remember cavernous ceilings and looking out my GA office window upon Jesse Commons. I recall what seemed to be an inordinately large number of stairs one had to climb to get to the offices of Doctors Wolfe, Small and Banks. I was always out of breath by the time I hit class." — *J. Robert Craig, PhD '81*

"First day of freshman year, I made sure to tour campus a few days before and arrived early to class to begin on a positive foot. But I mixed up the building names and arrived at Schweitzer. Once I entered the wrong room, it became apparent I had made a mistake. I had to find a map and make my way from White Campus to the Quad, getting to Room 125 and making a grand entrance 20 minutes late! Talk about a good first impression on the first day of class as a nervous freshman." — *Marissa Rosen, BA '04*



Top Rating Again!

The Department of Communication ranks in the top 10 programs nationally, according to a study reported in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in January.

The study, conducted by Academics Analytics of New York, primarily examined the number of publications by faculty from 2001 to 2005 in a specific set of journals. Other factors included the percentage of faculty who published and how often those publications were cited by other scholars.

Only one other communication department from the Big 12 made the list (Colorado), and MU's department was the second smallest in the top 10 — indicating the high quality of MU's communication faculty, despite the small number.

This continues a trend in which the department regularly was rated as a top program over the last several years in a variety of studies using different techniques.

- A 1999 survey of department chairs ranked MU 16th in the nation among doctoral-granting communication programs.
- A 2000 study placed MU among the top 12 doctoral-granting institutions based on top convention paper awards in five different divisions at the National Communication Association (NCA) and International Communication Association (ICA) conventions.
- A 2003 study placed MU fourth in research productivity for publications in the communication journals over a five-year period, 1996 to 2001.
- A 2005 study placed MU fourth for most productive faculty in the nation in the eight major journals of NCA and ICA from 1999 to 2004.



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McKinney's Work with NCA Benefits Department

By Melody Galen

Associate Professor Mitchell McKinney will return this summer from a year-long leave as the director of academic affairs for the National Communication Association (NCA) in Washington, D.C. The oldest, largest professional association for communication teachers, NCA draws from its membership to lead academic activities for the association.

McKinney had many duties with NCA: he worked with the approximately 90 doctoral communication programs across the nation, acted as liaison to the Council of Graduate Schools and helped the NCA's research board gather information about grant funding opportunities and disseminate that information to scholars.

Finding funding sources is an issue for all departments, and McKinney was thoroughly immersed in federal and grant funding of communication research in his time at NCA. He says that knowing the expectations for successful grantees and grant proposals will help him advise the department.

He learned what factors into building a successful graduate program. McKinney also advised communication programs engaged in program review. Knowing what to expect from a review team and the criteria used to evaluate communication programs will benefit the department.

He worked with the NCA publications board to find editors for its 10 journals and devise strategies to improve the ranking of those publications. The ranking of NCA journals is important for tenure candidates — it is preferable to have articles in ranked publications. Seeing first-hand the production and editing process “has helped me understand the process of research itself,” McKinney says.

McKinney discovered he missed his students. Working in D.C., surrounded by political communication in action, he didn't have students around to share all that information with. He will be happy to

begin teaching and working with his students again.



Mitchell McKinney at his NCA office in Washington, D.C.