

Department of Speech and Dramatic Art
Founded by Action of the Board of Curators, May 15, 1940

Wilbur Gilman, Bower Aly and Don Rhynsburger were members of the Department of English when the Department of Speech and Dramatic Art was established. Loren Reid joined them in 1935 as instructor in English, teaching courses in speech. At the time the department was organized, 1940, about ten courses in public speaking, theatre, speech improvement were taught in the Department of English. The fall schedule for 1940 listed the new department as teaching 12 courses plus research seminars. The 1941 catalog indicated that the new department was starting with 27 courses. The new department included speech pathology, drama, rhetoric and public speaking, interpretation and radio. Later audiology, film and TV were added. Reid founded the speech clinic, 1937. He was at Syracuse University, 1939-1944, but returned to Missouri in 1944 as Professor of Speech.

Chairpersons, Department of Speech and Dramatic Art

Wilbur E. Gilman	1940-1943	(then to Queens College)
Bower Aly	1943-1947	
Loren Reid	1947-1952	(then to University of Oregon)
Bower Aly	1952-1956	
Donovan Rhynsburger	1956-1960	
Charlotte G. Wells	1960-1966	
Loren Reid	1966-1967	
Clifton Cornwell	1967-1968	
Frances McCurdy	1968-1970	
Larry D. Clark	1970-1972	
James W. Gibson	1972-1979	
Stephen Archer	1979-1982	
Carla Waal	1982-1985	
James W. Gibson	1985-1986	

Department of Communication

Chairs:

James W. Gibson	1986-1993
Mary-Jeanette Smythe	1993-1999
Pamela J. Benoit	1999-2003
Michael W. Kramer	2003-2010

Director of Graduate Studies:

Michael J. Porter	1986-1996
Michael W. Kramer	1996-2003
Jon A. Hess	2003-2008
Debbie S. Dougherty	2008-

Larry Clark served as Director of Instructional Sessions, title later changed to Assistant Provost, still later Associate Provost, his responsibility to be in charge of Summer Sessions. The summer session had become a fiefdom of the School of Education, which meant special perquisites not readily available to others for professors of education. Clark changed all this. He was in the Provost office 1973-1982, then becoming successively Director of Theatre, Chair of the newly formed Department of Theatre and Dean

of the College of Arts and Science. He asked to retire as Dean in 1997 but agreed to stay on until a successor could be named.

Length of service: Gibson, 15 years; AIy, 8 years; Reid, Wells, 6 years; Smythe, 5 years (through 1997-1998) (currently [1997] in office); Rhynsburger, 4 years; Gilman, Archer, Waal, 3 years; McCurdy, Clark, 2 years; Cornwell, 1 year.

A note on the chairperson's office: For many years it was a two-room suite on the third floor of Switzler, that being where the action was, the entire faculty being housed there. Distinguished visiting professors who officed on the third floor: J.P. Ryan of Grinnell College, Frank M. Rarig of the University of Minnesota, Delyte Morris of Southern Illinois University, Howard Hill of Kansas State University.

When the office of the National Association of Teachers of Speech, later Speech Association of America, later Speech Communication Association, currently National Communication Association, moved to Columbia (1945-1951), it took over the 115 Switzler suite plus a shipping area in the large area down the hall, which became a complex of offices and the graduate seminar room.

The University built the large storage cabinets in the hallway for the use of the Association. These remained in the hallway until 2007 when they were moved to the basement to create a more open look and a seating area for students. (For a month when the campus was gripped by a severe influenza epidemic, the Association's furniture was moved out and the whole first floor of Switzler, being convenient to the Parker Hall, student clinic, was filled with hospital beds to take care of the overflow.)

When the Association moved to Iowa City, the Department remodeled what became the chair's office, making three small offices so the chair and two other professors could be officed on the main floor. In 1967 Cornwell removed the partitions and also secured funds to furnish handsomely the large office that resulted.

The elevator was installed in 1996 during the Smythe administration.

The Department won the campus's Outstanding Graduate Program Award in 2004.

Four members of the faculty have won the prestigious Kemper Teaching Fellowship over the years: Pam Benoit (1995), Michael Porter (1997), Michael Kramer (1999), and Mitchell McKinney (2009).

After some delay, the Department gained control of the entire third floor in the Winter of 2007 as a result of efforts by the Chair Michael Kramer. This allow for the development of the first lab space for the department in many years.

During the Summer of 2009, the University announced that it would spend \$4 million renovating Switzler Hall over the next two years. The building will be gutted and renovated from the basement to the roof while faculty and graduate students are housed in temporary locations on campus. A new state of the art facility will exist inside the 1871 shell, the oldest classroom building on campus.

Compiled by Loren Reid, November 1997 from department records and with thanks for additional information from Larry D. Clark (former Department Chair and Dean of the College of Arts and Science) and Clifton Cornwell and James W. Gibson
Update August 2009 by Michael Kramer