What makes Communication Studies an extraordinary place for graduate studies?

High quality graduate education

*Faculty in Communication Studies are renowned for their commitment to teaching and student advising. The department has won major university awards in both areas! Individual faculty members have won many awards within the university and the discipline. Below is a partial list of faculty teaching awards.*

**AWARDS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS**

Byron Alexander Graduate Mentor Award—College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:
- 2007 Robert C. Rowland
- 2003 Mary Lee Hummert

Center for Teaching Excellence Award for Communication Studies
- 2002 Dorothy Pennington
- 2002 Adrianne Kunkel
- 2000 Robert C. Rowland

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Career Teaching Award
- 2014 Donn W. Parson

H. Bernard Fink Award for Outstanding Classroom Teaching:
- 1994 Robert C. Rowland

HOPE Award Finalist presented by the Senior Class
- 2000 Tracy A. Russo
- 1994 Robert C. Rowland
- 1990 Robert C. Rowland

J. Michael Young Advisor Award—College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:
- 2008 Robert C. Rowland
- 2002 Robert C. Rowland

JHAWK Faculty Appreciation Award, University of Kansas Medical Center
- 2013 David Cook

Kansas Statewide Transgender Project Education Award
- 2012 Adrianne Kunkel

KU Women's Hall of Fame:
- 2005 Dorothy Pennington
- 2003 Mary Lee Hummert

Louise E. Byrd Graduate Educator Award:
- 2000 Robert C. Rowland
Ned N. Fleming Trust Award
   2012  Dave Tell
Outstanding Woman Faculty Member—The Commission on the Status of Women and the
Emily Taylor Women’s Resource Center:
   2003  Adrianne Kunkel
Silver Anniversary Award for Excellence in Teaching:
   2004  Adrianne Kunkel
Steeple Award for Service to the People of Kansas:
   1999  Dorthy Pennington
W. T. Kemper Fellowship Teaching Excellence:
   2008  Mary Banwart
   2007  Yan Bing Zhang
   2006  Beth Manolescu
   2003  Tracy Russo
   2000  Mary Lee Hummert
   1997  Donn Parson
   1996  Robert C. Rowland
John C. Wright Mentor Award
   2011  Adrianne Kunkel

Awards within the Discipline and Community

Central States Communication Association Young Teacher Award:
   2004  Adrianne Kunkel
   1968  Donn W. Parson
Donald H. Ecroyd Award for Outstanding Teaching in Higher Education—National
Communication Association:
   2005  Robert C. Rowland
George Ziegelmueller Award—National Debate Tournament:
   2006  Scott Harris
   2003  Donn W. Parson
IARR (International Association for Relationship Research) Mentoring Award
   2014  Adrianne Kunkel
National Communication Association Teacher on Teaching Program
   2014  Tracy Russo
   2005  Tracy Russo
   1999  Robert C. Rowland
   1997  Dorthy Pennington
National Communication Association Wallace Bacon Lifetime Teaching Award
   2014  Donn W. Parson
Kansas Bar Association—Outstanding Service Award:
   2003  Robert C. Rowland
National Debate Coach of the Decade:
   1970s  Donn W. Parson
National Debate Coach of the Year:
   2006  Scott Harris
   1986  Robert C. Rowland
   1981  Donn W. Parson
   1980  Donn W. Parson
   1972  Donn W. Parson
The OSCLG (the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender)
Feminist-Teacher Mentor Award
2014 Adrianne Kunkel

**MAJOR AWARDS WON AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES**

Baylor University Student Congress, Outstanding Faculty Member:
1987 Robert C. Rowland

**BREADTH AND DEPTH OF PROGRAM OFFERINGS**

*Communication Studies has a strong core of faculty who teach, advise, and research in the areas of rhetorical and argumentation studies, political communication, and interpersonal and group communication.*

**Rhetorical Studies and Argumentation Faculty**

Brett Bricker, Ph.D., University of Kansas—argumentation and the public sphere
Jay Childers, Ph.D., University of Texas—public sphere and contemporary rhetoric
Scott Harris, Ph.D., Northwestern University—argumentation studies and contemporary rhetoric
Beth Innocenti, Ph.D., University of Illinois—argumentation studies and public address
Donn Parson, emeritus, Ph.D., University of Minnesota—rhetorical theory and argumentation studies
Dorthy Pennington, Ph.D., University of Kansas—African-American rhetoric
Robert C. Rowland, Ph.D., University of Kansas—rhetorical criticism, narrative and mythic studies, argumentation, and contemporary rhetorical practice
Dave Tell, Ph.D., Penn State—rhetorical criticism and critical/cultural analysis

**Political Communication Faculty**

Mary Banwart, Ph.D., University of Oklahoma—campaign communication and gender issues in political communication
Brett Bricker, Ph.D., University of Kansas—environmental rhetoric
Jay Childers, Ph.D., University of Texas—political communication and citizen engagement
Andrea Quenette, Ph.D., Ohio State University—social scientific study of the effects of political news and political affect, attitudes, and engagement
Robert C. Rowland, Ph.D., University of Kansas—campaign communication, contemporary presidential rhetoric, and political debates

**Interpersonal and Group Faculty**

Tom Beisecker, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin—legal communication and persuasion
Dave Cook, Ph.D., University of Kansas—health and organizational communication
Angela N. Gist, Ph.D., University of Missouri—organizational communication
Jeff Hall, Ph.D., University of Southern California—interpersonal communication
Mary Lee Hummert, Ph.D., University of Kansas—interpersonal communication and aging
Adrianne Kunkel, Ph.D., Purdue University—interpersonal communication
Dorthy Pennington, Ph.D., University of Kansas—intercultural communication
Tracy Russo, Ph.D., University of Kansas—organizational communication
Alesia Woszidlo, Ph.D., University of Arizona—interpersonal communication
Yan Bing Zhang, Ph.D., University of Kansas—interpersonal and intergroup communication
Communication Studies faculty excel at research and a number of faculty members are recognized as national and international scholars of renown. Below is a partial list of faculty accomplishments:

**Mary Banwart**
- Recipient of the Central States Communication Association Service Award and a participant selected for the Harvard Kennedy School Art and Practice of Leadership Development program.
- Principal Investigator and Academic Director of a nearly $1.7 million grant from the U.S. State Department focused on the creation of a Women’s Leadership Institute for women from the Middle East and North Africa.
- Well-known political communication scholar using multiple social science and qualitative methods to produce research that has been published in books and journal articles focused on gender in political communication.

**Tom Beisecker**
- Recognized leading scholar in legal communication and former president of the American Society of Trial Consultants.
- Inaugural Visiting Fellow in Legal Advocacy, University of Kansas Law School, 2011-2012.

**Brett Bricker**
- Has a developed research program focused on environmental rhetoric that includes publications in *Argumentation and Advocacy*, the *Western Journal of Communication*, and *Communication Studies*, among other journals.
- Has linked environmental communication to study of the public sphere, multiple publics, and counterpublics in a number of essays.

**Jay Childers**
- Has developed an important research program focused on rhetoric, politics, and democracy in a number of journal essays, including “The Democratic Balance: President McKinley’s Assassination as Domestic Trauma,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (2013), 156-179, an essay which is being developed into a book.

**Dave Cook**
- A leading scholar focused on communication, technology, and health care.
- Oversaw KU Med Center's continuing education activities.
- Led three major mass casualty simulation drills to educate and train communities in disaster response.

**Angela N. Gist**
- Organizational communication scholar with expertise in social mobility and power
- Participates in engaged scholarship with community-based organizations
- Developing a program of critical interpretive research that emerges out of the intersection of three areas of interest: social class, social identity, and organizational culture
Jeff Hall
- Has developed a broad program of research on identity and impression management, humor in relationships, Facebook, friendship, and flirting.
- His work continues to appear in top journals including *Journal of Social and Personal Research, Communication Quarterly,* and *New Media & Society.*
- His trade press book *The Five Flirting Styles* landed him on *The Steve Harvey Show* and magazines, newspapers, radio, and television programs nation-wide.

Scott Harris
- Inaugural Gene A. Budig Professor at the University of Kansas in honor of his work with argumentation and debate.
- A leading proponent of using academic debate as a vehicle for studying argument in the public sphere.

Mary Lee Hummert
- Fellow, Gerontological Association of America and Giles-Nussbaum Distinguished Scholar Award from the National Communication Association.
- A leading scholar studying aging and communication with numerous articles in leading journals and book chapters.
- Three-time recipient of major grants from the National Institute on Aging/National Institutes of Health.

Beth Innocenti
- Has developed normative pragmatic theories of argument with a focus on emotion and style in essays published in *Philosophy and Rhetoric, Argumentation, and Advocacy.*
- Has provided humanistic accounts of persuasive force that supplement social scientific theories such as the EPPM and ELM.

Adrienne Kunkel
- Has recently published two books—*Researching Interpersonal Relationships* (with Dr. Jimmie Manning, 2014) and co-edited *Relationship Science: Integrating Evolutionary, Neuroscience, and Sociocultural Approaches* (with Dr. Omri Gillath and Dr. Glenn Adams, 2012).
- Has developed a research program reflected in multiple articles in journals inside and outside the discipline focused on individual and group identity and how they are influenced by social support processes.

Andrea M. Quenette
- Although she completed her Ph.D. in 2013 already has published in leading journals focused on social scientific approaches to political communication.
- Has developed a research program focused on media effects and political communication.

Donn W. Parson
- Honored by the American Forensic Association for his lifetime of work with argumentation and debate.
- Former director of the Alta National Communication Association/American Forensic Association Conference on Argumentation.
- A founding member of the Burke Society with influential work on Kenneth Burke.
Dorthy Pennington
- Author of two books exploring rhetorical practices and cultural diversity.
- Has developed a significant research program in journal articles and book chapters focused on African-American rhetorical practice and intercultural communication.
- A leading proponent of integrating performance into rhetorical scholarship; she is especially well-known for her critical performances on Sojourner Truth.
- Honored by the NCA Feminist and Women's Studies Division as a noted intercultural scholar and mentor.

Robert C. Rowland
- Has published three university press books, one of which (Shared Land/Conflicting Identity, with co-author David Frank) won the inaugural Kohrs/Campbell Prize in Rhetorical Criticism.
- Recipient of the Douglas W. Ehninger Distinguished Rhetorical Scholar Award from the National Communication Association and primary speaker on rhetoric at the Reagan Centennial held at USC and the Reagan Library.
- Has published 50 journal articles and book chapters and more than 90 total publications including articles in Communication Monographs, Philosophy and Rhetoric, Rhetoric & Public Affairs, Communication Theory, the Quarterly Journal of Speech, and all of the regional journals and main journals in argumentation.

Tracy Russo
- Has developed a research program focused on educational outcomes of online education in a number of journal essays.
- Applied her own experience in the business world to develop an approach to organizational identification that was published in a well-regarded Management Communication Quarterly essay.
- Currently is developing a research trajectory investigating expectations about work of members of the Millennial generation. Accounts in the popular press, anecdotal accounts and some scholarly work reflect frustration and fear by organizations and their managers that young people have unreasonable expectations of work and are unprepared to meet the expectations of them. Dr. Russo is applying key concepts in organizational communication and communication pedagogy to this topic.

Dave Tell
- Recipient of National Communication Association and Rhetoric Society of America dissertation awards.
- Recipient of both the Golden Anniversary Monograph Award and the Karl R. Wallace Award from the National Communication Association.
- A leading scholar in rhetorical theory with articles in Philosophy & Rhetoric, Rhetorica, Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Quarterly Journal of Speech, and other important journals.

Alesia Woszidlo
- Has developed a research program focused on family communication with number of publications in regional, national and international journals.
- Fulbright Scholar, Institute of Psychology, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany (2012-2013).
Yan Bing Zhang

- Has developed an extensive research program with thirty-five published journal articles focused on intergroup communication with a particular focus on age and cultural groups. She is interested in the ways in which cognitive (e.g., stereotypes), societal norms (e.g., filial piety), and institutional (e.g., mass media) representations of groups relate to communication processes.

**A commitment to student development and a student-friendly culture**

Communication Studies has a strong commitment to help graduate students develop as scholars, teachers, and professionals. The department’s commitment to students is evidenced in assessment data reporting very high student satisfaction. Alumni surveys reflect a similar finding. Additional evidence of the student-centered nature of the program can be found in the extensive development effort the department has developed for graduate students. Highlights of the development effort include:

**Nurturing Teaching**

Teaching Workshop—New GTAs participate in an intensive teaching workshop in August before they begin teaching and taking classes at KU. The workshop helps prepare them to teach the required public speaking class, but also more broadly gives them pedagogical skills that they can apply in a variety of contexts. The training workshop is so strong that when the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at the University of Kansas initiated efforts to improve GTA training across the university, the COMS program was used as a model for other departments.

Instruction in Pedagogy—New GTAs take a 2-credit class in the Fall semester of their first year at KU focused on pedagogy in Communication Studies. The class is focused on the basic public speaking class, but the topics covered apply across the curriculum. As with the teaching workshop, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at KU has cited this class as a model for other departments.

**Professional Development**

On an annual basis, COMS offers eight 90-minute professional development workshops. At the workshops, faculty and senior graduate students help graduate students develop key professional skills. The professional development workshop includes:

- Basics of convention submission—this workshop covers the basics of submitting papers and panels to conventions in Communication Studies and related disciplines.
- CV development—this workshop covers the basics of constructing an academic CV. Faculty and senior graduate students will provide models and tips for CV construction.
- Library research skills—this workshop introduces students to available databases and search strategies for finding material to use in their teaching and research.
Job search process—this workshop outlines the job search process. The focus is on informing second- and third-year doctoral students on the process so that they can be prepared to search for an academic position in their final year in the doctoral program.

Convention presentations—this workshop provides practical tips for making an effective convention presentation. This workshop provides models for how to make a presentation stand out.

Job talks—this workshop provides guidance on how to make an effective job talk either in a phone or an on-campus interview. Job candidates are encouraged to practice their job talks with their advisor prior to the interview.

Nuts and bolts of research—this workshop covers the basic principles of how to submit an article and how to pick a journal for submission, as well as tips for how to develop a research program.

Work life balance—this workshop focuses on the challenges faced by young faculty members and provides strategies for addressing those challenges and building a successful and fulfilling career.

Research Development

Communication Studies works very hard to nurture the research programs of graduate students. Many faculty members focus assignments in graduate classes on helping students develop a research record. In addition, the department has three other research development initiatives:

Colloquium Series

Each year, the department hosts an active colloquium series in which faculty, major scholars from other departments at KU and other universities, and senior graduate students present research to the department. The series for the most recent semester is included elsewhere on the website.

This series provides an opportunity for senior graduate students to present their work, for faculty in the department to talk about important new research projects and for distinguished guests from across the discipline to present research. In the last category among the distinguished scholars to present research in the colloquium series in recent years are David Zarefsky of Northwestern, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell of the University of Minnesota, J. Michael Hogan of Penn State, Chris Segrin of the University of Arizona, and Martin J. Medhurst of Baylor University.

Research Mentoring, Workshops, and Classes

COMS faculty have active programs to mentor graduate students to help them develop papers for presentation at the colloquium, as well as submission to conventions and journals. For example, the department offers a writing workshop series in which students present revised versions of a class paper in order to get feedback to assist in revising for submission
to a journal or convention. In addition, faculty members provide feedback to students developing papers from faculty experts in an area of study, as well as the student’s faculty advisor. This takes several different forms. First, it takes the form of intensive mentoring. Second, it takes the form of participation in research teams. Third, it takes the form of coursework. The courses include Directed Study projects as well as a tutorial in which the students work intensively with the faculty member through multiple drafts in order to revise two essays for submission to journals in the field.

GRADUATE STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Communication Studies is very proud of the accomplishments of current graduate students. Current students have received college and university wide teaching awards, published essays in regional and national journals, and otherwise been honored for their work. Additionally, there are opportunities for graduate students to be recognized for their outstanding teaching, research, and service, through numerous fellowships and scholarships given at the department level. These awards total ~$20,000 and are given during the spring semester at the end of the year department party.

Natalie Pennington will be representing the department at the Doctoral Colloquium for the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) and has received a travel grant from Aarhus University (Denmark) to travel to Copenhagen for the first meeting of an international research network focused on the study of grief and new media. In addition to her travels, Natalie presented on the Top Paper Panel at CSCA 2012 for the Interpersonal division and was a HASTAC Scholar (2011-2012) which is sponsored by the Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities at KU. Her research has been published in multiple journals including New Media & Society and Computers in Human Behavior.

Terri Easley, whose research is focused on increasing understanding of Chinese culture, participated in a two-week guided trip of the Silk Road in May 2013, and was competitively selected to attend the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii for a three week institute on Infusing Chinese and Japanese Religion, Literature and Art into the Undergraduate curriculum. Additionally, her paper “Shifting the Focus of the Abortion Debate: An Analysis of Rhetorical Force in the Genocide Awareness Project” was selected as a Top Student Paper in the Argumentation and Forensics Division at the 2013 National Communication Association to be held in Washington D.C. Not only is Terri an outstanding researcher, she also received the 2012-2013 Distinguished Service Award at Johnson County Community College for excellence in job performance.

In addition to winning the departmental E. C. Buehler Teaching Award, Kris Knutson ('13) won the university-wide Carlin Graduate Teaching Award named after former Communication Studies professor Diana Carlin.

Phil Wagner, a 2nd year Ph.D. student, was a featured speaker at the 2013 Men and Masculinities Symposium, sponsored by KU’s Emily Taylor Center for Women and Gender Equity. Based on his research, Phil had the privilege of presenting on “Musclinity” and the social consequences of male body culture. Additionally, Phil has recently been asked to serve as an editing consultant and technical writer for a $21 million Department of Education-sponsored project through KU’s Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation.
Chuck Russell has been awarded a $40,000 John Wesley Fellowship by A Foundation for Theological Education. Chuck’s interests revolve around the renewal of non-profit organization, with a particular focus on leadership and capacity development. Chuck is working in the department’s Leadership Studies Minor and the Organizational Communication area.

Jennifer Guthrie was named one of KU’s 2011-2012 Women of Distinction for her social advocacy work within the community. Jennifer recently published an article in Communication Studies with Dr. Adrianne Kunkel and a chapter in the book Queer Media Images: LGBT perspectives with Dr. Kunkel and Kristel Hladky. Jennifer defended her dissertation (with honors) in the summer of 2013 and began her new position as an Assistant Professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in August 2013.

Graduate students Evan Center and Chelsea Graham, on behalf of KU Ars Rhetorica, received a grant from the Rhetoric Society of America which was used to sponsor a visit from University of Iowa professor Dr. Jeffery Bennett.

ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND STUDENT PLACEMENT

ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Departmental alumni have developed distinguished careers in and out of the discipline of communication studies. Former students have served in major leadership roles in national and regional organizations. For example, Dr. Bill Balthrop of the University of North Carolina served as president first of the American Forensic Association and later of the National Communication Association. Dr. Kevin Barger of Texas A&M served as president of the Central States Communication Association, while Dr. Shelly Hinck served as executive secretary. Many other examples of professional accomplishment could be cited.

In addition to professional leadership, department alumni have been recognized for their strong scholarly and teaching records. Below are listed a few examples drawn from the large category of distinguished alumni of the Ph.D. program in Communication Studies at the University of Kansas.

Bill Balthrop, Professor—University of North Carolina
Kevin Barge, Professor—Texas A & M University
Ryan Bisel, Associate Professor—University of Oklahoma
Ulla Bunz, Associate Professor—Florida State University
Tom Burkholder, Professor—University of Nevada Las Vegas
Scott Campbell, Associate Professor—Michigan State
Scott Chadwick, Professor and Provost—Xavier University
Phillip Clampett, Professor—University of Wisconsin, Green Bay
Erik Doxtader, Professor—University of South Carolina
Gus Friedrich, Professor Emeritus—Rutgers University
John Fritch, Professor—University of Northern Iowa
Tom Goodnight, Professor—University of Southern California
Michael Hazen, Professor—Wake Forest University
Ed Hinck, Professor—Central Michigan University
Shelly Hinck, Professor and Associate Dean—Central Michigan University
Mary Hoffman, Professor—University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
The very partial list of KU alumni included above is one indication of the quality of the program. Another can be found in recent student placement data. The department has tracked student placement of every completed Ph.D. since 2000 and their initial or current academic or professional position. The list indicates to date 100 percent placement in either academic jobs or positions related to their degree in business, politics, the law, or other relevant fields. Many Communication Studies Ph.D. graduates pursue and achieve an academic career in research universities, teaching institutions and liberal arts colleges. They have gone on to careers in academic administration, the law, and the business world. The one constant among graduates with very different goals is that their coursework and other doctoral study at KU prepared them for great success in their chosen field or sub-field. A representative list of where doctoral graduates have been placed since 2008 is listed below.

Stephenson Beck—North Dakota State University
Ryan Bisel—University of Oklahoma
Kundai Chirindo—Lewis and Clark College
Brett Craig, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan
Makiko Imamura—St. Mary’s College
Pam Kennedy—H & R Block, Kansas City
Sarah Partlow Lefevre—Idaho State University
Amber Messersmith—University of Nebraska, Kearney
Sue Novak—State University of New York, Potsdam
Kyle Richards, Kearney & Company, Washington, D.C.
Ryan Neville Shepard, Indiana University—Purdue University, Columbus
Yi Song—Beijing Foreign Studies University
Kirsten Theye—Concordia College
Sarah Topp—Trinity University
Astrid Villamil—University of Missouri
Ben Warner—University of Missouri

COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT KU—GREAT TRAINING FOR A ROLE IN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

Doctoral education in Communication Studies at KU not only trains students for success in their chosen career, but also for leadership positions in academia, the law and business. Many departmental alumni have served as department chairs, associate deans, and deans. The list is a very long one. Below we list only Ph.D. alumni who have gone on to academic leadership at the level of the Provost, Vice-President, or President in academia or a similar level in business or the law.
For further information on graduate education in Communication Studies at the University of Kansas please contact Dr. Robert C. Rowland, the Director of Graduate Studies for the department at rrowland@ku.edu or call him at 785-864-3633.

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