

COMM CONNECTION

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

What's inside this issue:

**CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE FALL CLASS OF 2020**
P. 1

**GREETINGS FROM THE
CHAIR**
P. 2

**STUDENT NEWS: 2020
FIND YOUR FUTURE FORUM**
P. 4

**FACULTY AND STAFF
NEWS: CONGRATS TO
BRITTANY SANDERS!**
P. 5

**WELCOME NEW
FACULTY/STAFF**
P. 5

UPCOMING EVENTS
P. 6

THIS IS

MASON COMM

COLLABORATE. CREATE. COMMUNICATE

CONGRATULATIONS FALL 2020 GRADUATES

Dear December 2020 Graduates,

Congratulations on earning your BA in COMM! This year has certainly been unlike any other in our lifetime and we realize that this is not how you ever imagined you'd be celebrating graduation. We hope you all do not let the virtual ceremony diminish your enthusiasm and pride for this very important accomplishment! Even though we cannot all come together to celebrate in person, we share in your accomplishments and celebrate this time with you!

We are proud of what you have done here at Mason and are thrilled that you are going forth with one of the most valuable degrees you can earn! Please use Career Services for help in finding employment, keep in touch with your professors (we love to hear what you're doing), and please join us on LinkedIn as you progress in your careers!

We wish you the very best for a prosperous New Year and future accomplishments!

Sincerely,

Dr. Nicotera, Chair
Dr. Wright, BA Program Director
Dr. Tucker, Advising Director
Ms. Shaskan, Advisor
Ms. Edmondson, Undergraduate Coordinator

Mask Up COMM!

#ThisIsMasonCOMM and we wear masks!



Congratulations!
December 2020
Graduates!

WELCOME TO SPRING 2021: GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Mason Communication Community,

Greetings friends and colleagues! The long anticipated 2021 is here. Ordinarily, I'd begin with greetings of "Happy New Year!" – but we all know how hollow that sounds this year. I do, indeed, wish you all to have the happiest of years. Yet, the curse, "may you live in interesting times," is upon us. What does that mean for MasonCOMM? How are we meeting these "interesting" times? This will be a year of changes and the establishment of multiple "new normals" in our lives.

Through it all, what we do is more central than ever. In times like this, what do we need most? Communication. The need for strong communication and skilled professional communicators becomes more vital every day.

- Good communication keeps us attached. It keeps us embedded the lives of our loved ones. We've used communication platforms in unprecedented ways to share art, learn and teach, care for one another, and nurture our personal relationships.
- Good communication deters disinformation and misinformation. Reputable media and journalistic outlets keep us informed of daily developments in our national politics, public health, and world events.
- Good communication provides tools to analyze those developments, identify facts, and strategize how to act on them.
- Good communication provides guidance to employees and consumers, as organizations large and small work through challenges with their workers and customers to keep everyone safe.
- Good communication helps us disagree productively, find common ground, and work together toward a better future.

Our local, state, federal, and global leaders need us now more than ever. I am deeply proud of our students – the next group of communication professionals who approach our ever-changing workforce and forever-altered lives.

Congratulations to those who have graduated during these tumultuous times, and to those looking forward to graduating in May 2021! Your experience here will serve you well as you move on to your next venture. Every organization and every community needs you now. You are graduating into a community of distinguished and accomplished MasonCOMM alumni. I have seen your work with us here as students, and I expect great things from our new alumni.

I am deeply proud of our faculty and staff, who perform daily miracles to provide a quality educational experience to our students regardless of the operational challenges we face in our remote-instructional world. Their ability to "remain COMM and carry on" has allowed us to provide continuity and build community in our virtual environment. We are all looking forward to returning to campus in-person in the coming months as vaccination programs roll out across the region.

When we do return, we will have a new home! As we "Zoom" through the mostly-virtual Spring semester, our offices will be relocated to the new Horizon Hall in the center of the Fairfax campus. Our next newsletter will introduce you to our new, shiny home with soaring atrium and abundant natural light.

I hope you enjoy reading about the happenings in MasonCOMM over the past semester. I remain proud of our staff, faculty, and students and honored to serve this vital and talented community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Anne Nicotera



Stay Up to Date by Following Us!

-  @MasonCOMMdep
-  @Masoncomm
-  @MasonCOMMdept
-  Dept. of Communication

STUDENT NEWS

Find Your Future 2020

COMM Forum:

COMM students Zoom in and Connect to Professional Communication Mentors



Fairfax, VA – October 2, 2020 – George Mason University’s Department of Communication and the Insight Committee kicked off their virtual Find your Future mentoring sessions with a full house, starting with organizational communication professionals – Diana Gulotta and Craig Fifer. The first session exemplified what the Find Your Future series is all about: soon-to-be communication professionals getting first-hand advice from industry professionals on how to prepare for interviews and the workforce. “I was so impressed with the smart and engaged GMU communications students during our inaugural mentor session,” said Julie Murphy, partner and senior vice president at Sage Communications. “Our collective goal on the Insight Committee is to inspire and mentor students as they enter the workforce. Diana and Craig gave valuable and action-packed advice that students can use immediately as they begin their workforce journey.”

As the Director of Communication Services at Prince William County Public Schools, Gulotta offered valuable insight into the communication climate in the public education field. She emphasized the importance of having a strong writing foundation and how those skills can be achieved. “I was honored to be invited back to participate in the career mentoring session because I enjoy helping future communications graduates best prepare for success,” said Gulotta, “The GMU students are always so engaging, and it is such a pleasure to share my experiences and answer questions. The career mentoring sessions are a great way for students to connect with professionals in the field, and I am always impressed with how GMU executes the sessions.” Craig Fifer, Director of Communications and Public Information for the City of Alexandria, encouraged students to go after their true passion. He also shared insightful tips on virtual networking and authentic relationship building. “I really enjoyed spending time with students who are eager to take what they’ve learned at Mason and apply their skills to real-world challenges,” said Fifer, “The annual mentoring forum is a great opportunity for interaction between experts in their fields and our next generation of professionals. “The organizational communication mentors also took the time to discuss industry trends prior to and during COVID-19”

Read more about the Insight Committee and the annual COMM Forum here:

<https://communication.gmu.edu/articles/15009>

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Study Abroad in Summer 2021:

Here are a few programs that help fulfill requirements for COMM Majors!

Milan, Italy: Summer 2021

The Milan Summer program is back for June 2021! Led by Dr. Cathy Wright, students will have the opportunity to immerse themselves within Italian culture and receive COMM credits while doing so! The application deadline is February 10th, 2021.

For more information please email Dr. Wright (cwright5@gmu.edu) or visit the [Mason GEO website](http://MasonGEOwebsite).

STUDY ABROAD • MASON-LED • SUMMER 2021

France

Intercultural Communication for Organizational Contexts



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- This experiential course will introduce theories of intercultural and organizational communication within the context of French culture.
- Understand and analyze aspects of culture shock and cultural adaptation through journal analyses.
- Learn how to utilize ethnographic research in the field.
- Discover the Parisian culture and lifestyle through a unique lens.

FACULTY

Eunkyong (Esther) Yook, PhD

CONTACT
Jess Ostrowski-Wright
MasonLed@gmu.edu

DATES
May 30 - June 13, 2021

CREDITS AND COURSES
COMM 307: Field Study
SOCI 395: Special Topics
INTS 399: Study Abroad
COMM 696: Directed Readings and Research



APPLY ONLINE BY

MARCH 10, 2021



The Department of Communication is Virtual!

FYI! If you are a COMM student and need to make a virtual advising appointment, please visit

<https://app.acuityscheduling.com/schedule>

If you have any questions regarding the COMM Undergrad program please email cdprint@gmu.edu

If you have any questions about the COMM Grad program email commgrad@gmu.edu

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

JOIN THE COMMUNICATION AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors represent the Communication Department during campus-wide events, communication-sponsored programming, as well as help create social media messages, and recruiting potential students! Perfect for Comm majors of every concentration!

Contact: Dr. Megan Tucker (mtucker6@gmu.edu) for more information

FACULTY/STAFF NEWS

Congratulations!

BRITTANY SANDERS

2020 Mary Roper Award Recipient



Brittany Sanders is the 2020 Mary Roper Award Winner

Brittany Sanders, the Graduate Programs Coordinator for the Department of Communication, is the 2020 recipient of the CHSS Mary Roper Award! The Mary Roper Award honors a classified staff member who has shown outstanding service in support of the core goals of the college – improving the quality of the liberal arts experience for all students, increasing the capacity for noteworthy and innovative scholarship and creating and strengthening external relationships. The recipient directly supports the mission of the department or college through his or her work with faculty, students, staff or the greater university community. The department is so proud of Brittany! She is the second COMM staff member who has won the award. Maria Carabelli, the Office Manager of the Department of Communication, was the recipient in 2017. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ceremony will be held in Fall 2021.

Congratulations, Brittany!

Article: <https://communication.gmu.edu/articles/15299>

Dr. Ed Maibach Receives 2020 Schneider Award: *Presented by Climate One*

Dr. Ed Maibach will receive the 2020 Schneider Award, presented by Climate One alongside Anthony Leiserowitz for their hard work in Climate Change Communication.

Congratulations, Dr. Maibach!

Article:

<https://chss.gmu.edu/events/11652>



COMM Faculty Nominated for 2021 Stearns Center Teaching Excellence Awards:

Congratulations to Dr. Chris Clarke, Dr. Cathy Wright, Professor Kate Sweeney, and Dr. Kevin Wright!

The Teaching Excellence Awards are both institutional recognition of the significant work that faculty members devote to course planning and preparation; curriculum development; and innovative teaching, advising, and undergraduate and graduate mentoring.

List of 2021 Nominees:

<https://chss.gmu.edu/articles/15266>

Teaching Excellence Award Information:

<https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/awards/teaching-excellence/>

WELCOME OUR NEW FACULTY/STAFF!

George Mason Communication Center Hires New Director to Assist Students and Steer Growth

The Communication Center at George Mason University has hired **Dr. Nick Tatum** as its new director to bring fresh ideas and focus, and to explore new ways it can benefit students. Tatum will start full-time in January. The Communication Center has grown since it was established in fall 2018. The center assists an average of 1,000 students in the Communication 101 course per semester and over 400 students over the summer with various outlines, research, delivery of speeches and more. "One of the things I'm really excited about having Nick join us is that he is a tremendous scholar with an outstanding publication record. He has done a lot of administrative work with basic courses, with communication centers, with media centers, which will also be valuable as we partner with the STAR [Student Technology Assistance & Resource] Lab," said Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Associate Professor and Basic Course Director in the Mason's Department of Communication. Broeckelman-Post said the department decided they needed someone who could devote their full-time efforts to the communication center. She noted the organization's success and continuous potential, adding the new position was established to focus on the future and ways the center could further benefit students not just in the communication course but in non-communication departments as well. "Tatum also is a fantastic teacher who is really enthusiastic and really able to work with other people well to build some of those connections and is excited about and already thinking about some of the great opportunities." Tatum received his undergraduate degree in family studies at Abilene Christian University (ACU) in Abilene, Texas and went on to get his master's in communication. He was a teaching assistant and conducted research in leadership and instructional communication. Tatum says this led him to apply and be accepted in the Ph.D. program of instructional communication at the University of Kentucky. Halfway through that Ph.D. program, Tatum accepted a full-time faculty position and continued his Ph.D. program at ACU. "This is my first year where I'm not teaching and being a Ph.D. student," said Tatum, "but I'm ready and excited to move to a bigger city and have more opportunity, which kind of is the thing that led me to apply to the Mason job."

Article by Emma Haus: <https://communication.gmu.edu/articles/15127>



UPCOMING EVENTS

- GMU Arts, Media, and Design Internship and Career Fair
 - March 18, 2021 (VIRTUAL)
- DCHC 2021 (VIRTUAL)
 - April 22-24, 2021
 - [Registration and Conference Information](#)
- Undergrad and Grad Awards Ceremonies
 - TBA

PRECONFERENCE
22 APRIL

DCHC M
D.C. Health
Communication Conference

23-24
APRIL

SAVE THE DATE

2021

M DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

PROMOTING EQUITY IN HEALTH
COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

George Mason Career Services

- ▼ Make an appointment with an industry advisor to discuss: job searching, interview preparation, salary negotiation and more..
- ▼ Career Readiness Guide
- ▼ Career Readiness Interactive Exercises
- ▼ Practice Interviews via livestream
- ▼ Learn how to market yourself to potential employers



Links and Information:

Faculty Directory:

https://communication.gmu.edu/people/full_time_faculty

COMM Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/gmucommadvising?ref=hl>

COMM Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/MasonCommDept>

COMM Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/masoncomm/>

Connect with us on LinkedIn:

Dept. of Communication, George Mason University

Donate Button "Give button" on our main website:

<https://communication.gmu.edu/>

Join the Society/Update us:

Email medmond3@gmu.edu



LinkedIn: @MasonCOMM | Instagram: @MasonCOMM
Facebook: @MasonCOMMDept | Twitter: @MasonCOMMDept