

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

Annual Report
2019-2020



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New Leadership

Long-time Department Head steps down

Mississippi State's Department of Communication is thankful for **John Forde's** years of leadership and service. Forde stepped down as Department Head July 1, 2019 after fifteen years and thirty-two as faculty. After a sabbatical in fall 2019, Forde returned to full-time teaching in spring 2020.

Forde was named coordinator of the public relations concentration and departmental internship program for 17 years before transitioning to department head in 2004. As department head, Forde continued to teach the large Principles of Public Relations class every fall and spring. He's proud of many accomplishments including recruiting and retaining faculty, adding scholarships and improving facilities. "First, I'm very pleased that the Department of Communication has grown over the years in numbers of majors in all five concentrations from 464 in the fall of 2004 to 574 currently," said Forde. "Another accomplishment was reinstating our Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter in 2000. I served as an advisor for PRSSA and also worked to link our students with PRAM/SPRF."



Forde did significant work to raise the profile of the department on and off campus. "We award over \$30,000 each year to Communication majors. Our scholarships allow us to better recruit and retain top students since these are awarded to incoming and returning majors," said Forde.

Forde will continue to work with the Universal Accreditation Board as a Public Relations Society of America representative, along with NSPARC as a Faculty Fellow in multiple research projects. "It's been an honor to serve as department head. I look forward again to my professor role and working with the faculty," said Forde.

In fall 2019, MSU established the John Forde "Fund for Excellence" to recognize his service and commitment to MSU and the Department of Communication. If you would like to make a contribution, please click [HERE](#).



Thank you for your service, Dr. Forde!



New Leadership

MSU's Department of Communication welcomes new leader



An award-winning educator and journalist is the new head of Mississippi State's Department of Communication.

Terry Likes joins the university after serving as department chair for eight years and tenured professor at Tennessee State University. Prior to TSU, Likes taught at Western Kentucky University from 1988-2008. He began his new role at MSU on Aug. 1, 2019.

"Dr. Likes brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in communication, which will be beneficial to his students and the faculty he will lead. We all will benefit from his leadership and are pleased to welcome him to campus," said College of Arts and Sciences Dean Rick Travis.

He said his goals include implementing a graduate program, creating an online degree in public relations, increasing research output and continuing to offer outstanding theatrical productions.

His media background includes working as a radio and television news reporter, sports reporter and play-by-play announcer. Likes has amassed 100 professional media awards for his communication work and has published articles in the Journal of Electronic News and the Journal of Media Education, among others.

Likes developed award-winning programs prior to joining MSU, leading his TSU students to dozens awards from the Tennessee Associated Press, Society of Professional Journalists, National Broadcasting Society and Southeast Journalism Conference. At WKU, his students won over 250 national, regional and state awards.

Likes received his Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of Kentucky in 1996, his master's degree in organizational communication from WKU in 1988, and his bachelor's in mass communication from Maryville University-St. Louis in 1985.

Welcome Dr. Likes!

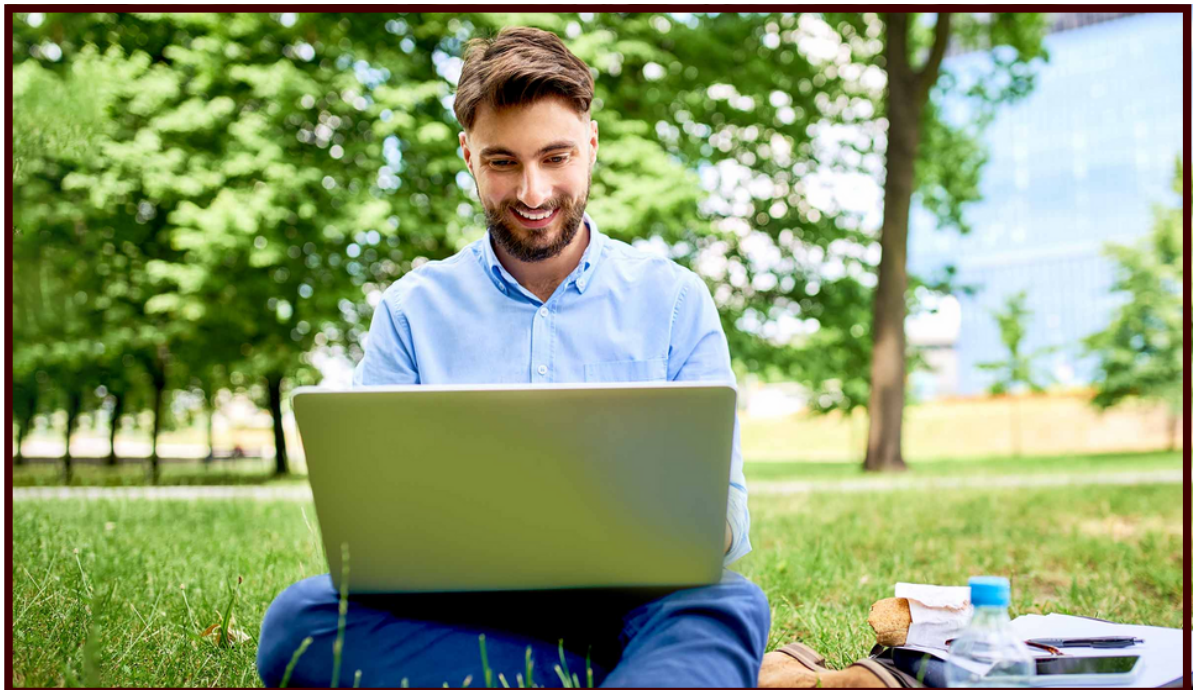
Initiatives

Faculty navigate the move to online classes

The outbreak of COVID-19 led Mississippi State University to switch, in the middle of the spring 2020 semester, to classes being completely online. While many Communication faculty have taught online before, the sudden shift meant a herculean effort for which students and faculty embraced with few, if any, issues.

The halt of many functions on campus led to the cancellation of several departmental initiatives already in progress. This included the new Story State event, a half day conference highlighting storytelling in many forms. Story State replaced the previously named New Narrative Festival. Story State was scheduled for mid-March. Also canceled were on campus advisory board meetings and several professional conferences students and faculty had planned to attend in March and April.

The summer 2020 schedule was also shifted to an online format.



Initiatives

Graduate Program

Faculty members in the Department of Communication are leading an initiative to add a Master of Arts degree in Communication. This is something that has been discussed for many years but has taken a giant leap forward in 2019-2020.

Spearheaded by **John Nicholson**, faculty input has come from many including John Forde, Melanie Loehwing, Philip Poe, Wendy Roussin, Pete Smith, Larry Strout, Kevin Williams, Terri Hernandez, Tyler Page, Holli Seitz, Melody Fisher, Heesook Choi and more. Earlier in the year, Tyler Page and his students conducted a survey of interested parties. They distributed the survey to current Mississippi State Communication majors, alumni of the Communication Department, and local community colleges whose students might be interested in attending Mississippi State. Nearly three hundred participated in the survey, which found support for such a degree.



The Master of Arts in Communication is designed to meet the educational and preparatory needs for professionals looking to advance their careers, people preparing to become professional educators of speech and communication; and those continuing to the Ph.D. in Communication or a related field of study. The faculty voted with more than 80% in favor of moving the proposal forward.

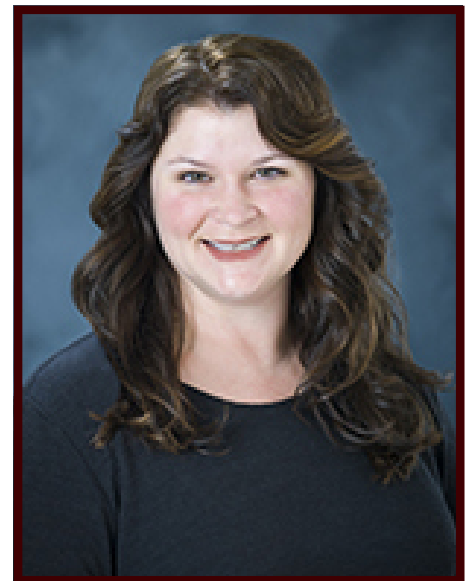
The proposal will soon go to the College of Arts and Sciences Dean for his review.

Public Relations Online Degree Program

The Public Relations faculty agreed during the Fall 2019 semester to move forward with the process of adding our public relations concentration as an online concentration through MSU's Center for Distance Education.

Kelli Anthony, an online instructor in our department, led the process by working with other faculty members to complete the needed curriculum forms and proposals for the approval process. The necessary proposals were submitted to the departmental curriculum committee in December & approved to move on to the Arts & Sciences curriculum committee for its February meeting. After minor revisions, the A&S curriculum committee approved the proposals moving them on to the University Committee on Courses & Curricula where we are awaiting final approval.

The goal for the online concentration is to have the program available to students starting Fall 2021.



Initiatives



Public Relations Certification



The departmental public relations faculty plan to pursue the Certification in Education for Public Relations beginning in the fall. This voluntary worldwide program provides a quality-assurance endorsement for academic areas. There are currently over 40 undergraduate programs recognized with the CEPR. Faculty will present an in-depth application that covers public relations curriculum; faculty; resources, equipment, and facilities; students; assessment; professional affiliations; relationships with total unit and university; and diversity and global perspectives. The application process includes a site visit from two outside reviewers after the application is submitted.

“I think earning the CEPR would further demonstrate to those not familiar with our program that we are meeting excellent standards in our public relations concentration,” said Dr. **Melody Fisher**, associate professor and public relations concentration coordinator.

Certificate in Principles of Public Relations Course Offered

For the first time in several years, the department offered a one-hour preparation course for the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations this spring with 17 graduating seniors enrolled. Plans are under way to offer the course each fall and spring.

This national program was implemented by the Universal Accreditation Board in 2014 and is based on knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in entry-level public relations positions. The UAB also administers the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) credential for practitioners. “Stand Out When You Start Out” is a slogan currently used to promote the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations, and the overall purpose is to help students compete more favorably in the job market.

In order to complete the Certificate in Principles of Public Relations, students must be in a public relations degree program (or very similar area), within six months either direction of their graduation dates, and be members of one of the UAB participating organizations. Students also must complete a university-sanctioned course or take an online course offered by the UAB, and they must pass the



corresponding computer-based Examination. “I’m excited that we are offering this course again for our students. As a member of the UAB for many years, I believe having this opportunity elevates our program and will help our graduates build more confidence,” said Dr. **John Forde**, APR, Fellow PRSA, and professor for the course.

Initiatives

Multiple emphasis areas (including Communication) within MSU's Bachelor of Applied Science program give options for students with technical, military backgrounds

Mississippi State is announcing emphasis areas for the university's celebrated new Bachelor of Applied Science degree program, designed to help more Mississippians finish a college degree and advance their careers.

MSU announced this new degree program last year to serve the needs of adults who have completed a technical associate's degree program through a community college or the military and need additional education to advance toward their career goals. The degree program offers a variety of online and in-person courses, with many

on MSU's main campus in Starkville and others offered at MSU-Meridian. MSU has signed BAS partnership agreements with the majority of Mississippi's community colleges, providing a clear pathway for two-year college students to make a seamless transition to the university and complete the BAS degree.



"To compete globally, nationally and here in Mississippi for the next generation of high-quality jobs, Mississippi needs an educated workforce with a myriad of technical skills that complement and enhance the intrinsic value of a four-year college degree," said MSU President Mark E. Keenum, upon announcing the program. "The Bachelor of Applied Science program is an enterprise in which Mississippi State can be a change agent for Mississippians seeking to be a part of that emerging workforce. We are hitting the ground running on the main campus, at MSU-Meridian and through the MSU Online campus."

The university now is sharing expanded emphasis areas in each of its eight academic colleges. Within the College of Arts and Sciences, these include: Communication/Broadcast; Communication/Theatre; Criminology/Sociology; Geoscience; History; and Psychology.

This degree program allows community college graduates to transfer up to 60 credit hours toward MSU's new bachelor's degree program. With online courses available, today's adult learners will have access to a flexible program that will prepare them for leadership roles and greater workforce contributions.

Publications

MSU faculty member uncovering the "Hidden History" of Mississippi

A new faculty member at Mississippi State University is unearthing secrets of the Deep South in his newest book in his "Hidden History" trilogy, a series published by The History Press.

Published this summer, "The Hidden History of the Mississippi Sound" is the second book by **Joshua K. Foreman**, an instructor in the Department of Communication and faculty adviser to The Reflector. Foreman co-authored the publication with Ryan Starrett, a fellow Jackson native and childhood friend. Together, Foreman and Starrett first authored "The Hidden History of Jackson" in 2018, and expect their third book, "The Hidden History of New Orleans," to be released in conjunction with Mardi Gras in 2020.

"William Faulkner once wrote, 'to understand the world, you must first understand a place like Mississippi.' Ryan and I both grew up in Mississippi and think there is enormous value in studying Mississippi's history, though it is not always pretty," Foreman said.



Congrats **Dr. Holli Seitz**
for the following publications



- "Correcting misinformation about neuroscience via social media"
- "A formative research approach to developing prescription opioid misuse prevention messages."
- "Increasing uptake of prescription drug take-back boxes:"
- "Eliciting preferences and applying the theory of planned behavior to predict use."
- "Applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to predict intention to talk about opioids with family members"
- "Perceived costs associated with protective actions across multiple threats."
- "Addressing the opioid epidemic: Defining Cooperative Extension's Role."

Dr. Melanie Loehwing



Amazon's Camperforce: Selling housing insecurity as a retirement lifestyle. (Nov. 2019)

Publications & Presentations

Dr. Melanie Loehwing to facilitate series of community dialogues

Melanie Loehwing and her colleagues at the Civic Life Laboratory have begun a collaboration with the Emmett Till Memorial Commission to facilitate a series of community dialogues in 2020. This project will capture community views in order to contribute to the research on which the new commemorative sites may be designed.

They hosted a community forum on bullying on January 24 and another on February 7 regarding poverty.



Grants

Associate Professor **Dr. Melanie Loehwing** recently received a \$10,000 Arts & Sciences Strategic Research Initiative seed grant for a project examining rural consciousness in Mississippi and its implications for rural-urban political polarization. The grant will fund a series of focus groups and data collection in a number of Mississippi communities.

Lecturer **Khristi Edmonds**, communication lecturer, received a stipend from the University of Mississippi for Open Educational Resources.

Congrats

Dr. Heesook Choi

for the following publications



- "Fox News vs political satire: Discrete partisan pathways to participation."
- "Satire type matters: Differential effects of Juvenalian and Horatian satire viewing on political participation."

For a complete list of publications, see page 31

Presentations



Dr. Holli Seitz *presented*

"Effects of body positive marketing on brand success" at the Mississippi State University Undergraduate Research Symposium in Mississippi State, MS.

Mental Health First Aid training for MSU extension agents, MSU Student Affairs personnel, faculty and staff at East Mississippi Community College as well as a youth Mental Health First Aid training session with staff at Sally Kate Winters Family Services.

Breakout session at "Tips and Tricks to Successfully Convey a Scientific Method" by Dr. Jason Organ.

Invited speaker on a panel called "Facilitating Undergraduate Engagement in Research" at the Mississippi Communication Association annual meeting.



Dr. Terry Likes

was accepted to present

"Tenure: Building and Evaluating Dossiers in Professional and/or Creative Fields" as part of a panel at the Broadcast Education Association Conference in April 2020 in Las Vegas, Nevada.



Dr. Melody Fisher *presented*

"Researching the special public: A quantitative assessment of readiness for barbershop-based HIV prevention programs among rural African American barbershop patrons" at the 2019 PRSA conference in San Diego, CA.

Mrs. Christie Lawrence

presented

"Behavioral Health Integration : Dual Perspectives" at the Mississippi Psychological Association on Sept. 26 in Biloxi, MS.

"Tackling the Challenges of Behavioral Health Integration" at the Health Information Management Systems Society GC3 Conference on Nov. 14 in Biloxi, MS.

"Data Driven , Clinic-Based Population Health Management" at the Mississippi Rural Health Association Conference on Nov. 21 in Jackson, MS.



Nicole Harmon

was appointed

to one of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) Committees.

While not directly related to work within our Communication Department, NPC is the premier advocacy and support organization for the advancement of the sorority experience among all sororities. Harmon credits MSU for helping her achieve this current goal as she was Panhellenic President during her MSU college experience.

Presentations



Dr. John E. Forde

served as

moderator and panelist
for the PRSA Southwest
District's virtual APR
month panel on April 1.



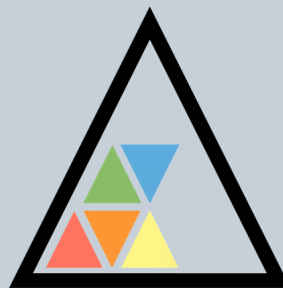
The goal of the virtual program was to promote APR for April APR month, talk about the APR process, explain APR benefits, and discuss APR preparation methods.

Dr. Terri Hernandez & Dr. Melody Fisher

presented their paper

*"Student-led PR firms:
Students' reported learning
outcomes in newly launched
agency as compared to entry
level job preferences"*

at the 2020 annual
International Public
Relations Research
Conference in Orlando, FL.



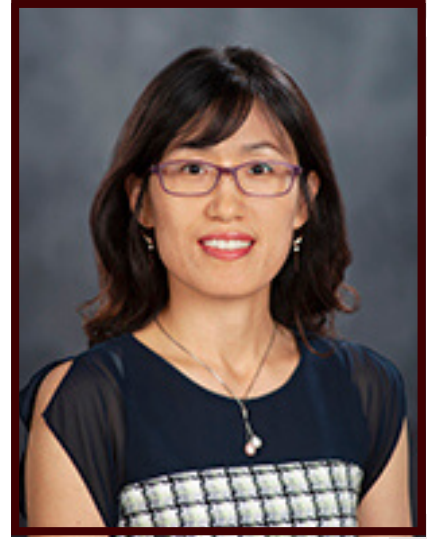
Faculty News

New Hires (August 2019)

Assistant Professor

Heesok Choi

Dr. Heesok Choi received her Bachelor's Degree in English Language and Literature at Gangneung-Wonju National University in South Korea. She received her Master's in journalism at the University of Texas Austin, and her PhD in journalism at the Missouri School of Journalism.



Instructor

Josh Foreman

Josh Foreman graduated from MSU in 2005 with a degree in Communication. He received his MFA from the University of New Hampshire in 2017 in Nonfiction Writing. He currently teaches courses such as Introduction to Photography and Editing and Typography and is also the faculty advisor to The Reflector.



Instructor

Chris Misun

Chris Misun is an Emmy Award-winning producer with nearly 15 years of industry experience in broadcast television, marketing and creative services work. Chris began his career in broadcasting as part of two start-up news stations in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Both situations allowed him to work with seasoned professionals and glean valuable skills and knowledge that he looks forward to sharing with students at Mississippi State University. Chris also worked with the University Television Center on campus as a Creative Services Senior Producer.



Faculty News

Welcome to our new Academic Advising Coordinator, Haylee Crouch

Haylee Crouch joined the Department of Communication in October of 2019 as the new Academic Advising Coordinator, taking over for previous advisor, Emily Cain.

Crouch graduated from the University of Illinois in 2018 with a degree in communication. She received her Master's degree from Kansas State University in 2019.

As Academic Advising Coordinator, Crouch is responsible for advising all freshman and transfer communication students. Her duties include assisting in recruiting students to join the Department of Communication at MSU events as well as handling all paperwork for students such as major change forms. She also helps other acts as a point of reference for other faculty members who have questions regarding advising.



New Hires

Department hires two new full-time instructors and theatre practitioners

The department is fortunate to be able to hire two new instructors, who will join us in August 2020.

Anna Blount, an MSU graduate, has worked as a lecturer for several years teaching a variety of courses from Intro to Communication to PR Production.

Logan Copeland has his MA from Murray State, and will teach Public Speaking as well as Intro to Communication.

We look forward to having Anna and Logan join us full-time.

Tonya Hays, an award-winning, Tony nominated, theatre practitioner who has previously taught with MSU as a lecturer will take over for Tim Matheny.

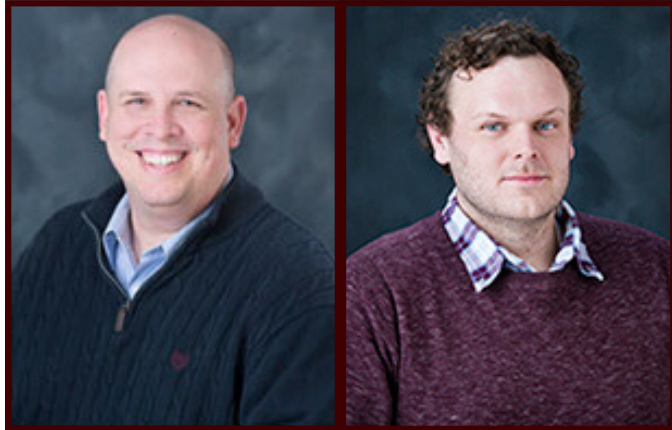
In the place of Cody Stockstill, **Matt Webb** will join the department. Matt currently works in New York as a theatre practitioner. Matt is a 2005 MSU graduate of our program.

Tonya and Matt will join us in mid-August.

Faculty News

Departing Communication faculty

Tim Matheny and Cody Stockstill



The MSU Department of Communication thanks **Tim Matheny** and **Cody Stockstill** for their many years of service in the theatre department.

Matheny has been offered the position of Associate Dean at William Carey University.

Cody Stockstill has been a tremendous asset coordinating the theatre program for many years. Cody has decided to move on.

We wish Cody and Tim well and thank them for all of the award-winning productions and the countless hours spent working with our students.

Jason Hibbs

Jason Hibbs has taken a similar job at the University of Toledo. Jason is to be commended for his work with Take 30 News, its conversion to the Digital Media Center and for creating award-winning student content



Tyler Page

Tyler Page is moving to the University of Connecticut. Tyler's work with students has been tremendous and his research agenda is off to a fine start as he won a major award from the National Communication Association for Top Paper in Public Relations.

Thank you for your years of service!

Faculty Honors



Communication Professor receives Teaching Excellence Honor

Congratulations to **Holli Seitz** on receiving the 2020 MSU Alumni Association Early Career Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award. This award is designed to recognize faculty teaching excellence at Mississippi State University based on outstanding teaching. Seitz will be recognized for this outstanding achievement at a luncheon, hosted by the Provost, during fall 2020.

College of Arts and Sciences recognizes faculty award winners

The College of Arts and Sciences, on May 1, 2020, recognized eight faculty members for their research and scholarly commitments to the university.

Usually held in conjunction with the spring general faculty meeting, this year the College of Arts and Sciences presented the awards through a virtual platform.

Given to faculty whose work contributes significantly to increasing awareness of the university's research programs and capabilities, the annual research awardees include one of our own Communication faculty:

Melanie E. Loehwing, an associate professor in the Department of Communication, received the Arts and Sciences Research Award in the Humanities



Communication professor elected to serve on teaching committee

Dr. **Kevin Williams** was elected to serve a three-year term with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's (AEJMC) Standing Committee on Teaching.

The Committee on Teaching is concerned with: standards of academic and professional preparation for teachers in the field; standards of appointment, tenure, promotion, compensation, research and retirement for teachers; minimum standards of equipment and facilities for instruction and research; and standards of faculty-administration relationships.



Faculty Honors

Communication professor wins award at National Communication Association

For his work on post-crisis communication, a Mississippi State faculty member received the Top Paper Award in Public Relations from the National Communication Association. **Tyler Page**, an assistant professor in the Department of Communication, was formally recognized with a certificate of achievement during the NCA's annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland. He also presented two papers and served as a session respondent.



"The paper is about how pre-existing relationships influence reputation following a crisis. Specifically, my team was able to look at how positive,

pre-existing relationships influence perceptions of a crisis—how offensive an organization's actions are, how its response is perceived, and how those things influence post-crisis reputation," Page said.

Using a fictional scandal as the basis of his research, Page asked participants to read about accusations of cheating involving participants' favorite organizations as well as organizations they did not like. He found that "pre-existing relationships influence perceptions of crisis but also perceptions of crisis responses such as denial or apology."

An MSU faculty member since 2018, Page said he believes "relationships matter," noting his interest in how "pre-existing relationships and attitudes blur perceptions of reality" led to his research topic.

MSU instructor's screenplay to be featured at broadcasting society's national convention

The LGBTQ dramatic screenplay "The Reverend," written by MSU Communication Instructor **Jason Hibbs** was featured during the Professional and Alumni Competition presentations at the National Broadcasting Society's Annual Convention in Burbank, California in March.

Hibbs, who is a former television news reporter and newsroom manager, teaches broadcast news and media writing at Mississippi State. He said he is flattered that his first major creative endeavor outside of broadcast journalism was so well received. He hopes to eventually see the screenplay made into a movie, and looks forward to sharing his writing experience with students. He hopes the screenplay and writing process behind the screenplay inspires others.

In "The Reverend," months before his death, a closeted bigoted southern minister is unexpectedly reunited with his childhood friend and crush. The now openly gay friend indirectly forces the minister to confront his own sexuality, mortality, and legacy. Knowing time is running out, the minister suddenly leaves his conservative family and church to experience the life he never had. This turns an already dysfunctional family on its head. While most family members doubled down on their homophobic ways, one grandchild is emboldened by what happens.

Faculty Honors

Communication professor inducted as SSRC fellow

Assistant Professor Dr. **Terri Hernandez** was installed as one of five new research fellows at the Social Science Research Center. Dr. Hernandez teaches Research in PR & Advertising and Special Topics in Communication – Integrated Media Agency through the communication department. Her research interests include strategic communication, branding, consumer behavior, crisis communication, social media & digital media, and gender studies.



MSU faculty member's research on homelessness wins national book award

Mississippi State University communication faculty member **Melanie E. Loehwing** is the winner of the 2019 National Communication Association. Diamond Anniversary Book Award for her publication on homelessness and the relationship between public policy and ideas and practices of democracy.



An associate professor in the Department of Communication, Loehwing's 2018 book, "Homeless Advocacy and the Rhetorical Construction of the Civic Home," was published in 2018 as part of Penn State University Press's Rhetoric and Democratic Deliberation series.

Loehwing received a plaque and monetary award, provided by the Life Member Fund, at the 105th annual NCA convention in Baltimore, Maryland, this November. Founded in 1914, the NCA is a scholarly society designed to investigate "all forms, modes, media and consequences of communication through humanistic, social scientific and aesthetic inquiry."

Communication professor wins international recognition for photography

Associate Professor **Wendy Roussin**, MFA, had three individual images selected from the Badlands series for the 13th Julia Margaret Cameron Award Exhibition. The images were showcased October 7-26, 2019, at the Fotonostrum Gallery in Barcelona, Spain. Roussin was awarded Honorable Mention in



he category of Landscapes & Seascapes, & Professional. The exhibition is reviewed by an international jury. Roussin's Juror was Elizabeth Biondi

Faculty Honors

Communication professor receives Arts and Sciences Teaching Award

Communication Instructor **Amy Fountain** recently received the College of Arts & Sciences Teaching Award in Social and Behavioral Sciences for her outstanding work with students over the past 20 years at MSU. She currently serves as the coordinator of the Department of Communication Internship Program and teaches fundamentals of public speaking, small group communication, and introduction to communication theory. She mentors more than 13 teachers as the coordinator of the introduction to public speaking course and helps manage an average of 35 class sections. Amy also serves as the academic advisor for more than 30 students, helping guide them during their time at MSU to ultimately achieve their desired career goals. Additionally, Amy is part of the Griffis Learning Community and serves as the faculty advisor of the Alpha Iota chapter of the Lambda Sigma Sophomore Honors Society at MSU and is the National Board Vice President.



PRISM receives top Lantern Award at SPRF Conference

Dr. Terri Hernandez, faculty director of the department's public relations integrated student media agency (PRISM), won a first-place Lantern Award from the Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF) for her creation of the student-led media agency and its operation manual. All entries were judged by senior PRSA professionals in Chicago, and Hernandez's entry as scored in the top 10 percent. Her project was submitted to the TIER 2 category, which looks at short term programs and campaigns. Hernandez's award was given based off its ability to enhance PRISM's reputation and brand and deal with issues affecting its business strategy.



Congrats **Dr. Terry Likes!**

"Awards of Excellence" from the World Journalism Education Congress, the Broadcast Education Association and the LA/MS Associated Press for his audio documentary on "Fake News"

Faculty Honors

MSU assistant professor tapped for media interview on success of coronavirus PSAs

A faculty member in Mississippi State's Department of Communication recently spotlighted her research on how to efficiently and effectively evaluate public service announcements during a Hearst Television interview.

In the interview conducted by Hearst Chief National Investigative Correspondent Mark Albert, MSU Assistant Professor of Communication

Holli H. Seitz shared insight on the effectiveness of various COVID-19 PSAs that have gone viral.

"If you can have a message that is effective in changing the desired health behavior and you can somehow get virality, then you have a larger, better chance of making a big positive effect."

The discussion aired on Hearst Television and radio stations across the country, including WAPT-TV in Jackson.

Dr. Lawrence Strout

Dr. **Larry Strout** spent his spring semester on sabbatical, working on an additional graduate degree in Media Law.

Strout is working towards his Master of Legal Studies Online Program at the University of Illinois-Springfield.



MSU faculty member earns grant to help students become better communicators of science

A Mississippi State University faculty member is helping students become better communicators of science through a teaching grant from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.



Holli H. Seitz, an assistant professor of communication and director of The Message Laboratory in MSU's Social Science Research Center, co-authored the grant proposal with Quisto Settle, an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership at Oklahoma State University. The two received an Academic Programs Section Innovative Teaching Award to assist "communicators who are curious about science, willing to pursue an understanding of scientific topics, and are dedicated to finding ways to present scientific information."

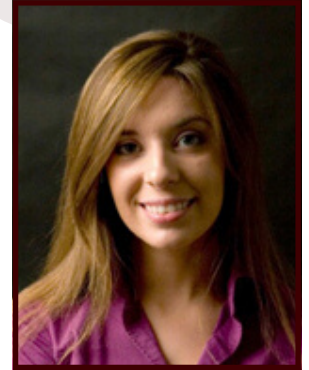
The grant helps the collaborators continue their research, designing an experiential learning activity for undergraduates.

Faculty Honors

Communication faculty member wins advising award

A faculty member of the Department of Communication has recently won an award at MSU's Student Choice Awards. **Cheryl Chambers**, the advisor for the MSU Speech and Debate team, was awarded Student Organization Advisor of the Year for her role as advisor.

"Even as she makes no extra money working with the team, she regularly works long hours and gives up her weekend to make this team successful. From handling logistics and securing donations to coaching and supporting the team as a whole, Cheryl has made an impact on every student she works with, not only on a professional level, but an individual one as well."



The Student Choice Awards was hosted virtually on April 15 by the Center for Student Activities. The categories for awards included Residence Hall of the Year, Event of the Year, and New Student Organization of the Year.

Congrats **Dr. Holli Seitz** for the following

Receiving funding from the OARU Event Sponsorship Program to develop a MS Science Communication Summit to be held in 2020



Appointed to serve on a Health Task Force to explore how MSU can best fulfill its mission of teaching, research and service in the area of health

Spotlighted health communication research on how to effectively evaluate PSAs during the COVID-19 pandemic

Congrats **Jason Hibbs** for the following awards



"Best of Competition" award at 2020 Broadcast Education Awards ceremony

"Best Video News Program" at 2020 Southeastern Journalism Conference



Congrats **Dr. Philip Poe** for being elected as President of the Mississippi Communication Association (Feb. 2020)

Faculty Honors

2019-2020 Department Faculty Award Recipients

Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Melody Fisher

In a department where the fall 2019 student evaluation score average was 4.5, well above the college and university average of 4.2, excellence in teaching was a difficult choice. Melody Fisher is this year's winner. Fisher demonstrates a commitment to innovate in the classroom to a diverse student body molding qualified job and graduate school candidates. Students rave about her teaching with comments like: "I loved your class, you are an amazing teacher that cares highly about her students. Thank you!!!" to "One of my favorite professors from my college career!" – finally, "You make this class so fun and interesting, thank you so much."



Excellence in Research

Dr. Melanie Loehwing

Melanie Loehwing has propelled her level of research output to a very high level. She won the National Communication Association's highest honor, the Diamond Anniversary Book Award. She conducted multiple presentations at a variety of organizations at the national, regional and state level. Loehwing submitted several grant proposals, was awarded three at a total of over \$12,000 and continues meaningful work at the Social Science Research Center. Her goals outline a plan for a second book. Loehwing also won the Research Award in the Humanities for the MSU College of Arts and Sciences.



Excellence in Service

Amy Fountain

Amy Fountain is excellent in service in so many ways. She coordinates CO 1003/1013 courses and instruction providing countless hours of assistance. She also coordinates the CO internship program, creates literature, social media and bulletin board materials for the intern program, visits classes to promote internships and conducts internship interest meetings. She served a vital role as we transitioned academic advisors in the fall. She provided internship lectures for PRSSA students and provided a Career Center workshop. She is a Lambda Sigma board member and student chapter advisor. Off campus she serves youth, her church and school district with committee work.



Outstanding Lecturer

Giles Lindley

Giles Lindley constantly gives of his time to the department and for his students. Despite his so-called retirement, he teaches a variety of sections, is a regular attendee of the Communication Pedagogy Roundtable and is admired and respected by colleagues and students. For his fall courses, students rated him at 4.8, 4.9 and 4.9 for his three sections. Student comments included: "Best course, best professor" to "Lindley is an amazing professor. He cares about his students and is extremely personable. This class helped me find my career paths that I did not know were available. I would highly recommend him to anyone."



Student Awards

Starkville-PRAM hosts annual Bulldog PRism Awards

Starkville's Public Relations Association of Mississippi Chapter held its annual Bulldog PRism Awards for students and professionals at Harvey's Restaurant in Starkville, Mississippi on Wednesday, Dec. 11.



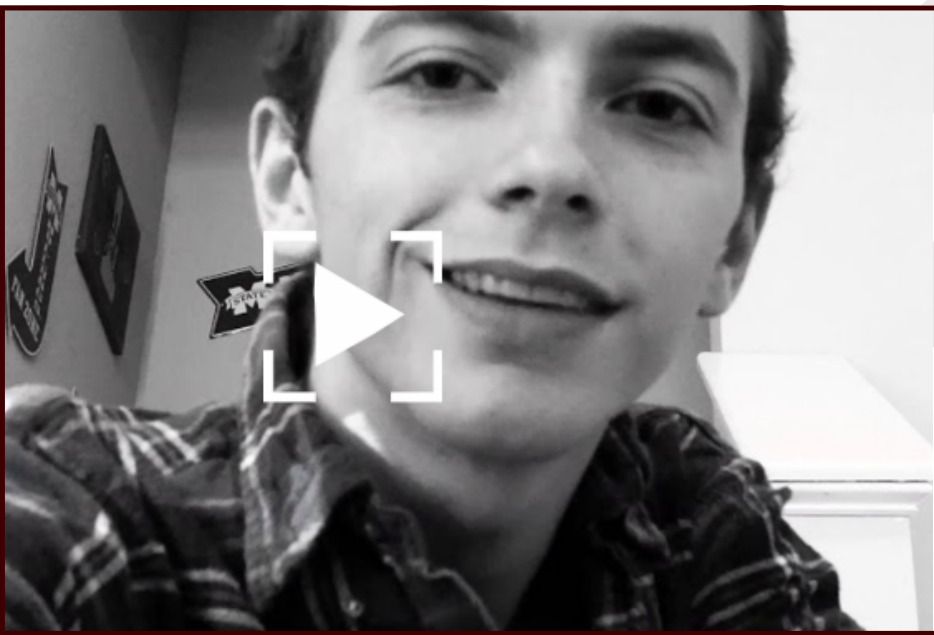
This ceremony showcases students and professionals in the area in a positive light for their strategic work in enhancing their communicational skills. Following lunch and awards at the event, Candy Crecink, the

executive director from United Way of North Central Mississippi, was the featured speaker and spoke on her various programs and gave her own professional advice to the award winners. Several students from Mississippi State University submitted work for the Student Projects category. **Annie Price** was awarded the Student Top Dawg winner for the Writing category. The Student Award of Merit was given to **Marisa Laudadio** for her project in Advertising and Public Relations. **Tori Boatner** was also awarded a Student Award of Merit for her work in the Writing group. For the Social Media Management category, three students, Annie Price, **Mariah Stevens**, and Tori Boatner, were recognized for the Student Award of Merit. Additionally, Mariah Stevens received the Student Award of Excellence for her project in Writing. Finally, the Student Bulldog PRism Winners were Annie Price for her work in the Writing category in the "Creating the Portal to Kindergarten Readiness," and **Blake Williams** for his student social media campaign for Mercedes-Benz of Tuscaloosa.

Several professional awards were also announced as well during the event. Terri Hernandez and **Madeline Burdine** were given the Award of Merit for the Tier Three Tactical Materials Projects following under the Digital section. This project featured the Children's Foundation of Mississippi. Laura McPhail, Dominique Lewis, Femi Sobayo, Tori Boatner, Annie Price, and Mariah Stevens were also awarded the Award of Excellence for the Tier Three Tactical Materials Projects for the Collateral Materials section. Nexus was their client. Lastly, **Tate Smith** and Terri Hernandez won an Award of Merit for the Tier Two Short Term Strategic Programs under the Marketing section working with the Public Relations and Integrated Student Media organization on MSU's campus.

The PRAM of Starkville-MSU chapter serves the public relations professionals and students in the area. It hosts monthly chapter meeting at Harvey's Restaurant beginning at 11:45 a.m. These meetings offer networking opportunities and keynote speakers to give professional advice and knowledge for all members wanting to further their careers in the public relations world.

Student Awards



Student film chosen as finalist of short-film competition

Every Little Thing, a short film created by communication majors **Nathan Cleveland** and **Emma Denson** was recently chosen as one of four films to move on to the next round of short-film competition in Hollywood. In hopes that they will attend the Hollywood festival, Terminus, Cleveland and Denson will have the opportunity to participate in filmmaking workshops, network with industry professionals.

Senior public relations student awarded SPRF scholarship

Mariah Stevens, president of MSU's Public Relations Student Society of America chapter, was named the 2019 Southern Public Relations Federation scholarship recipient for her extensive public relations experience and clear articulation of her future career goals.



Communication major spotlighted for business venture in The Reflector

Sarah Grace Parker is a senior communication major with an emphasis in public relations, but she is not just a full-time Mississippi State University student. Parker is also a baker and entrepreneur.

The Mississippi State University student created her own baking company called Meri Mermaid Baking Company. Many people only know her as Sarah Grace, but her family, friends and customers know her for her baked goods.

Parker grew up in Clinton, Mississippi and graduated from Clinton High School in 2016.



Student Awards

MSU represented in National Broadcasting Society competition

Mississippi State University is represented in five finalist categories in the 2020 National Broadcasting Society student media competition.

These categories include website, student academic paper, web news article and two in promotional video.

The purpose of the National Broadcasting Society is to enhance the development of college and university students and entry-level professionals involved in electronic media by promoting excellence, providing exposure to the electronic media industries and assistance in career preparation.

According to Dr. Terry Likes, Head of the Department of Communication, "The categories represent student work across a variety of disciplines including Journalism, Public Relations, Broadcasting and more. The faculty are working hard to provide students wonderful opportunities to showcase their work. We are proud that the output of faculty and students is recognized at a national level."

Entrants in the NBS competition submit work from the previous calendar year (spring 2019, fall 2019 semesters). Award winners were announced at the NBS conference in Hollywood in March.

Several communication students on The Reflector staff awarded at Mississippi Press Association conference

Reflector journalists -- past and present -- showed they are leading the state in journalism excellence at the 22nd O.C. McDavid Journalism Summit in Jackson on Feb. 7.

The Reflector staff took several top awards at the conference, including for general news reporting, sports photography, and commentary. In all, the Reflector won seven first place awards and 16 second and third place awards, the most in the senior college division.

"I just feel extremely proud of everything we've accomplished," said Mia Rodriguez, the Reflector's editor-in-chief. "It gives me a sense of pride just knowing what I've done for the paper is paying off."

Communication students awarded at this MPA conference include junior **Hannah Blankenship**, junior **Hunter Cloud** and sophomore **Jordan Smith**.

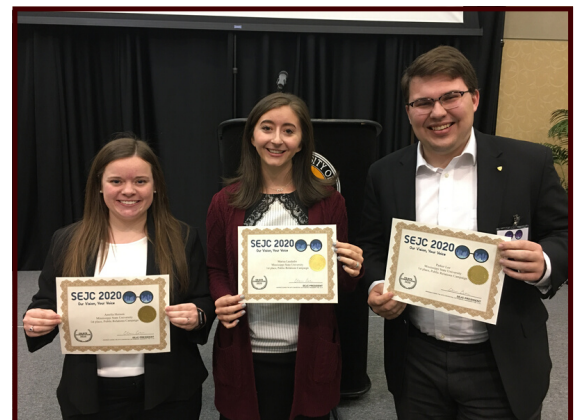


Parker Lee, a senior communication major from Southaven, is a finalist for his PRISM recruitment video.

Congrats

Seniors Parker Lee, Marisa Laudadio and Amelia Henson

Three senior public relations majors (from left to right), Amelia Henson, Marisa Laudadio and Parker Lee, won first place for their crisis plan at the Southeast Journalism Conference in Hattiesburg.



Student Awards

MSU students win numerous awards at regional journalism conference

The 2020 awards presentation for the best in broadcast, print and online journalism was held Saturday, Feb. 15, at the Southeast Journalism Conference, hosted by the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS.

MSU students from three different Communication concentrations won sixteen total awards. SEJC has two competitions. Its "Best of the South" contest features student work from throughout the past year. These awards include twenty-three individual awards along with eight school categories.

The sixteen awards represent the third highest total for MSU in the last twenty years and the most since 2005. According to Dr. Terry Likes, Head of the Department of Communication, "These phenomenal students have had a stellar year. It is nice to see their hard work pay off with this kind of recognition. I'd also like to commend the faculty, and those that oversee campus media (Reflector, WMSV, Take 30 News, PRISM) for their hard work for preparing our students for excellence."



The Southeast Journalism Conference is a vibrant learning community of journalists honing their craft through professional development and the Best of the South Collegiate Journalism Competition. An organization comprised of nearly 50 member colleges and universities in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee, SEJC was created to encourage greater interest in student journalism and to form closer ties among journalism schools in the Southeast United States.

MSU students and faculty win several Associated Press awards

While the Louisiana-Mississippi Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors' April 18 awards ceremony has been canceled, AP has released some good news. MSU students won ten awards across a variety of categories listed below.

Students won two awards in College Newspaper for The Reflector, five in College Television for features in Take 30 News, and two more for The Reflector in College Digital.

In the professional competition, Terry Likes, head of the Department of Communication, won two awards for Use of Sound and Long Feature Story for his report: "'Fake News Blues: A Credibility Crisis for Journalism.' The Impact of Fake News Allegations on Media Organizations and Audience Trust" which aired on WMSV-FM.

According to the AP, first, second and third-place winners will be announced on a date to be determined. The awards will be mailed to each organization

Speech and Debate

MSU excels in both speech and debate

In the fall of 2019, the MSU Speech and Debate Team recently opened its competitive season at the Hot and Spicy IPDA (International Public Debate Association) Tournament at Louisiana Tech University. The students combined to earn their spot as the 2nd place squad in Team Debate.

The team also competed at the Hub City Swing event at the University of Southern Mississippi where they placed third in TIPDA (a form of partner debate) and fourth in comprehensive points.

Beginning in the spring semester, the team hosted almost 200 college students for a regional speech and debate tournament January 24-26. This is the first time MSU has hosted the regional tournament, which also serves as the state championship for states such as Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi.

MSU students walked away with many awards. Tyler Melvin finished as a quarter-finalist and with a 4th place Speaker Award. Amanda Kronenberger earned the 4th place Speaker Award in the Novice Division. Alicia Brown earned the 4th place Varsity Speaker Award and was named Mississippi champion. Brown, paired with Josh



McCoy, also were semi-finalists in TIPDA. Mia Robertson earned 5th place in Extemporaneous speaking and won the Persuasive Speaking contest.

At the National American Forensics Association competition held in early April, two MSU students won.

According to Speech and Debate Director, **Cheryl Chambers**, "Both of my students, Mia Robertson and Dawn Jackson, made it to the Exhibition Finals. It was very exciting to watch."

Awards

Eddy Shell Invitational Tournament

The team placed 3rd in individual events, 4th in debate and 4th overall.

Individual:

Mia Robertson: 1st place in Persuasive Speech, 3rd place in Extemporaneous Speaking

Tyler Melvin: 4th place Speaker Award, 5th place in Extemporaneous Speaking

Debate:

Octofinalists: Josh McCoy, Amanda Kronenberger, Nirmal Bhatt, Tyler Melvin, Luke Acuff

Quarterfinalist: Alicia Brown

District IV Tournament-UA

Individual:

Dawn Jackson: 5th in Impromptu Speaking, 6th in Informative Speaking

Nate Williams: 3rd in Extemporaneous Speaking

Delaney Reed: 3rd in Poetry Interpretation

Arkansas Tech University

Individual:

Alicia Brown: Top Performer Cup, 2nd place Speaker Award Second Swing, Semi-finalist

Josh McCoy: 2nd place Speaker Award First Swing

MSU won its first ever individual national championship with the help of **Mia Robertson**. MSU ranked 8th in the country of 128 schools.

Beowulf Fall 2019

Communication students write, direct, perform Theatre MSU original adaptation of "Beowulf"

The classic theme of a protagonist overcoming the odds has taken on a more futuristic plot in Theatre MSU's production of "Beowulf," the epic Old English poem that's seeing a more modernistic interpretation at the university.

An original adaptation scripted by MSU communication department students in the summer of 2019, performances were Nov. 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 24 at 2 p.m. on the McComas Hall main stage.

Jonathan M. Tackett, junior theatre concentration major and production writer from Coldwater, said the "new twist" on the centuries-old story is "extremely exciting" and "speaks volumes" about the MSU student-group effort and its creative capabilities. Seniors Nathan R. Cleveland of Dennis and Preslie A. Cowley of Cleveland complete the writing trio responsible for bringing "Beowulf" back in a new way.

Students involved with the performance worked under the guidance of MSU assistant professor of communication Cody Stockstill who said that what excites him about the project is that "it's truly our own."

Considered by scholars worldwide to be one of the most important works of Old English, the story follows the battles and triumphs of warrior Beowulf. A medieval manuscript with no known date of origination, most scholars agree the original copy of Beowulf is approximately 1,000 years old.



Mamma Mia Spring 2020

Theatre MSU performs adaptation of Broadway musical Mamma Mia

Theatre MSU presented the smash hit musical "Mamma Mia!" from February 19 until February 22 in the McComas Hall theatre.

On the eve of her wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother's past back to the island they last visited 20 years ago. The storytelling magic of Swedish pop group ABBA's timeless songs propels this enchanting tale of love, laughter and friendship, creating an unforgettable show. Audience members were advised that this production contains some adult themes.

Students in this production were led by assistant communication professor Cody Stockstill.



Story State

MSU cancels first Story State conference but continues with student storytelling contest

The department planned to host its first ever Story State event in the Spring 2020 semester, however, due to COVID-19, the event had to be cancelled. The event was to consist of keynote speakers as well as a storytelling competition for students to submit work to be judged.

This event was designed for those interested in learning more about the power of stories. This entertaining and educational afternoon event would feature a keynote session and short talks from writers, film makers, communication practitioners, and others who could help the audience understand how to craft better stories and use stories to achieve their communication goals. The event culminated in awards in three categories (written, oral, and film) for college and university students from across the state.

Results

Jimmy Jones

Jimmy Jones, Alcorn State University student, won the Master Story Teller and also first place in the Film category for his documentary, "Can you see us?"



Daetreeonna Johnson

Daetreeonna Johnson, Mississippi State University-Meridian, won first place in the written category for her essay, "Deepest Feelings"



Student Media

MSU's student newscast moves into new space, expands reach

Take 30 News, Mississippi State's live, award-winning student television newscast has a new broadcast facility and has been added to two local station's regular programming line-up.

Broadcast students moved into the brand new, fully operational television studio and control room this fall, located in the newly named MaxxSouth Digital Media Center in the Mitchell Memorial Library. This followed six months of extensive renovation in the library, made possible by funding from MaxxSouth Broadband and Mississippi State University's Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President, the College of Arts & Sciences, the Department of Communication, and the University Libraries.

The MaxxSouth Digital Media Center is a multi-media collaborative space equipped with technology designed to propel teaching, learning, exploration and research among Mississippi State University students, faculty and staff. The newly renovated space features a television studio, an audio and video studio, a collaboration studio, a makerspace, multimedia lab and the CAVS Mixed Reality Studio.



Film minor now available for students

The minor in Film Studies provides students with a strong background in the study of film language, history, theory, and production, emphasizing varied filmmaking practices throughout the world.

Students will gain a proficiency in what filmmakers call "film language" and a working knowledge of film form. Students will be able to apply film language to the analysis of film, literature and art, and convergent media technologies. Students will learn the specificity of global film traditions through comparative study, will be introduced to the basics of film theory

and production, and will gain knowledge of the economic, social, cultural, and historical roots of cinema from diverse parts of the world. The minor is a collaboration between the departments of Art, Communication and English. For more information, contact the English department.

Student Media

Broadcast Education Association student chapter forms at MSU

A brand new student chapter for the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) has started at MSU. BEA student media chapters aims to help direct students to success through providing networking opportunities and promoting team projects and discussions.

As a part of the BEA student chapter, students will be given the benefit of taking part in competitions, meeting with industry professionals, special events and newsletters that connect students with opportunities for internships, jobs, career fairs and graduate school programs.

There are currently 29 BEA student media clubs across the United States.



Congrats

BEA student chapter

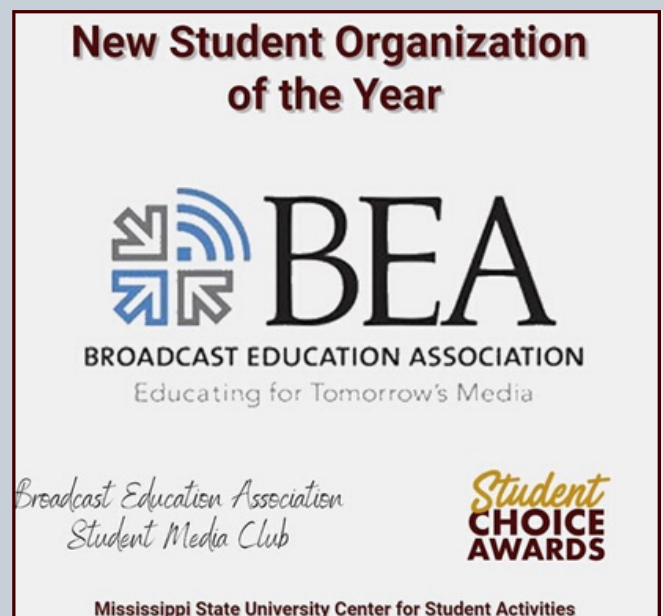
for being named

"New Student

Organization of the

Year" at the 2020

Student Choice Awards



Publications List

- Choi, H., & Thorson, E.** (2020). Satire type matters: Differential effects of Juvenalian and Horatian satire viewing on political participation.
- Choi, H.** (2020). Fox News vs. political satire: Discrete partisan pathways to participation.
- Fisher, M.T., and Gardner, A.** (2019). Researching the special public: A quantitative assessment of readiness for barbershop-based HIV prevention programs among rural African American barbershop patrons.
- Fisher, M.T.** Regulating Social Media and the Internet of Everything: The precedent of the Radio Act of 1927. *Communication Law Review*, 19(1) pp. 100–129.
- Fisher, M.T.** Music of the 1960s: The Praxis of Ideological Change. *Journal of Social Change*, 11(1) pp. 30–37.
- Fisher, M.T.** Cases in public relations: Translating ethics into action. Oxford University Press. Blackfish backlash: SeaWorld's attempt at navigating a crisis situation (pp. 207–265). In B Brunner & C. Hickerson.
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- Foreman, Josh & Starrett, Ryan** (2019) Hidden History of the Mississippi Sound. Charleston, SC: The History Press.
- Hernandez, T., & Sarge, M. A.** (2020). Plenty of (similar) fish in the sea: The role of social identity and self-categorization in niche dating.
- Hernandez, T., Lee, S., Najera, C., & Vasquez, R.** (2019). Strategic blog-mediated crisis communication: A case study of #Bloggergate. Paper presented at the 2019 annual conference of the International Public Relations Research Conference, Orlando, FL.
- Hernandez, T. & Burdine, M.** Children's Foundation of Mississippi's Website Creation. Juried Creative Competition: Certificate of Merit, Bulldog PRism Awards (Starkville PRAM).
- Hernandez, T. & Smith, T.** PRISM Logo Creation. Juried Creative Competition: Certificate of Merit, Bulldog PRism Awards (Starkville PRAM)
- Hibbs, J.** *"The Reverend" Screenplay*. NBS-AERho: The National Electronic Media Association.
- Lawrence, C.** (2019). "Behavioral Health Integration: Dual Perspectives."
- Lawrence, C.** (2019). "Tackling the Challenges of Behavioral Health Integration."
- Lawrence, C.** (2019). "Data-Driven, Clinic-Based Population Health Management."
- Lawrence, C.** (2020). Crafting your message for greater impact.
- Likes, T.** (2019). "Tenure: Building and Evaluating Dossiers in Professional and/or Creative Fields."
- Likes, T.** "Fake News Blues: A credibility crisis for Journalism." Award of Excellence for Radio Documentary. Aired on WSMV-FM. Broadcast Education Association.
- Likes, T.** "The President and the Media. From Fireside Chats to Twitter, the Love-Hate Relationship Between the Media and the Commander-in-Chief." Audio documentary. Aired: WMSV-FM. World Journalism Education Congress.
- Loehwing, M.** (2019). Amazon's CamperForce: Selling housing insecurity as a retirement lifestyle.
- Loehwing, M.** Rebuilding Main Street: A Democratic Deliberation Simulation. Rhetoric Society of America Biennial Institute.
- Loehwing, M.** Playing Mind Games: How Mindfulness Practices in Gaming Impact Group Deliberation Quality. Popular Culture Association annual conference.
- Matheny, T.** "Chaos and Stability in The Crucible." *Journal of Communication Media Watch* (Vol X, Number II, Page 398).
- Matheny, T.** *The Tempest*, Mississippi State University. Directed by Tim Matheny, Scenic and Lighting Design and Technical Direction by Cody Stockstill.

Publications List

Matheny, T. *Radio Gals*, Carey Dinner Theatre.

Matheny, T. *Peace Like a River*, Carey Dinner Theatre.

Matheny, T. *The Magician's Nephew*, Mississippi State University. Directed by Tim Matheny, Scenic, Lighting and Projection Design and Technical Direction by Cody Stockstill.

Matheny, T. *Islam and Theatre*, Southeastern Theatre Conference presentation.

Nicholson, J. Southern States Communication Annual Convention – Instructional Development Division, Montgomery, AL. The Challenges and Opportunities of Increased Interactivity and Electronic Textbooks.

Nicholson, J. Chapter added to "Introduction to Communication Theory," Great River Learning, Dubuque, IA. Classical Rhetoric – Chapter 14 – electronic text.

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Page, T. "Beyond attribution: Building new measures to explain the reputation threat posed by crisis." *Public Relations Review*, 45(1), 138–152.

Page, T. "Risk and crisis communication in schools: Understanding current challenges and opportunities." The role of risk communication in community resilience building.

Poe, P. Music of the 1960s: The praxis of ideological change. *Journal of Social Change* 11(1), p. 30–37.

Poe, P. Chaos and stability in "The Crucible." *Media Watch* 10(2), p. 260–266.

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Smith, C. N., & **Seitz, H. H.** (2019). Correcting misinformation about neuroscience via social media. *Science Communication*.

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Robertson, M. N., **Seitz, H. H.**, Downey, L. H., Hardman, A., Steen, J., Williams, D., Stone, A., & Buys, D. (2019).

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Robertson, M. N., Hardman, A., Downey, L., **Seitz, H.**, Stone, A., Williams, D., Steen, J., Buys, D. (2019). Applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to predict intention to talk about opioids with family members.

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Publications List

Smith, P. "Raising Unshirted Hell": The Journalism of Norma Fields, State Capitol Correspondent for the Northeast (MS) Daily Journal." *Journalism History*, Vol. 45 (2): 114-134.

Stockstill, C. *Hell in High Water*, New Stage Theatre. Directed by Francine Thomas Reynolds, Scenic Design by Cody Stockstill

Stockstill, C. *The Tempest*, Mississippi State University. Directed by Tim Matheny, Scenic and Lighting Design and Technical Direction by Cody Stockstill.

Stockstill, C. *Radio Gals*, Carey Dinner Theatre. Scenic Design by Cody Stockstill.

Stockstill, C. *Peace Like a River*, Carey Dinner Theatre. Scenic Design by Cody Stockstill

Stockstill, C. *The Magician's Nephew*, Mississippi State University. Directed by Tim Matheny, Scenic, Lighting and Projection Design and Technical Direction by Cody Stockstill.

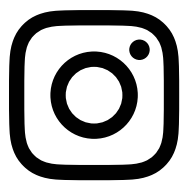
Stockstill, C. *Beowulf*, Mississippi State University. Directed by Cody Stockstill, Co-Playwright, Scenic, Lighting and Sound Design and Technical Direction by Cody Stockstill.

Veluscek, A. M., & Guerrero, L. K. (2020). Attachment style during military deployment: Associations with satisfaction, stress, and changes over time.

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