# Table of Contents

- **Introduction** .......................................................................................................................... 3
- **State of the Communication Discipline** ............................................................................... 3
- **Department: Our Mission, Vision and Learning Outcomes** .................................................... 4
  - Our Mission .............................................................................................................................. 4
  - Our Vision ............................................................................................................................... 4
  - Program Goals and College Strategic Plan ............................................................................. 4
  - Learning Outcomes ............................................................................................................... 5
- **Accomplishments in Teaching** ................................................................................................ 5
  - Unique Curricular Offerings .................................................................................................. 5
  - Contributions to Other Units .................................................................................................. 6
  - Distance Education and Hybrid Course Offerings ............................................................... 7
  - Contributions to Unique Curricular Initiatives ....................................................................... 7
    - Internships ........................................................................................................................... 7
    - Martin Scholars .................................................................................................................... 8
    - Spring Break Experience Trip ............................................................................................. 10
    - Study Abroad ..................................................................................................................... 10
- **Changes in Enrollment and Workload** .................................................................................. 13
  - Enrollment Trends ................................................................................................................ 13
  - Assessment .............................................................................................................................. 13
  - Faculty Teaching Awards ....................................................................................................... 13
  - Diversity .................................................................................................................................... 16
- **Master of Arts in Communication (MCOM)** ......................................................................... 16
- **Faculty Accomplishments in Research and Professional Development** ............................. 16
  - Awards ..................................................................................................................................... 17
- **Service Contributions** .......................................................................................................... 17
  - Service to the College ............................................................................................................ 17
  - Service to the Community (Professional in Nature) .............................................................. 18
  - Service to the Profession ......................................................................................................... 18
- **Accomplishments of Students and New Alumni** .................................................................. 18
- **Curricular Development and Change** ................................................................................. 20
INTRODUCTION
The 2019-2020 academic year was anything but ordinary. From a hurricane evacuation in September to a global pandemic that canceled all in-person activities and courses from mid-March through the end of the semester, our faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Communication at the College of Charleston certainly demonstrated the ability to thrive in adversity. We learned to embrace new forms of communication, like Zoom meetings and Microsoft Teams. We discovered creative ways to learn, work, and teach from home. The most significant lesson gained in this challenging year was something communication scholars have long known: Communication is key. From maintaining interpersonal relationships during quarantine to public health campaigns educating the nation about safety practices, understanding communication is the foundation for success, and our experiences this year will be used to educate many future students in our discipline.

STATE OF THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE
Communication research and education experienced rapid growth and institutional consolidation as an academic discipline in the second half of the twentieth century, and again in the past several decades with the emergence of new technology used to communicate. Traditionally, the field is informed by the intellectual traditions of the humanities and social sciences, building on the ancient Greek arts of rhetoric, dialectic, aesthetics and poetics as well as psychology, anthropology, sociology and political science. Our theoretical foundation is built on the seven primary traditions of communication: rhetoric, semiotics, cybernetics, phenomenology, social psychology, sociocultural theory, and critical theory.

The discipline ranges in scope from the micro-analysis of individual behavior (e.g. information processing) to macro-analysis of communication at the institutional or societal level (e.g. organizational communication, international communication). Research in the discipline also utilizes various methods of inquiry including quantitative social science (e.g. media effects), critical and cultural studies (e.g. gender studies, media criticism), interpretive social science (e.g. social interaction), humanities (e.g. rhetorical studies), and applied (e.g. journalism).

Because of the diversity of the discipline, it is difficult to identify emerging issues and trends that cut across all areas, but most scholars agree that the discipline will continue to have a distinctly applied focus with significant opportunities for funding research in the areas of internationalization and global communication, media, health communication, ethics, and mediation and conflict resolution. We also anticipate ongoing discussion about the role of communication in politics and the public sphere. As with all disciplines, the role of technology in shaping and changing the way we communicate will continue to remain an important topic.
DEPARTMENT: OUR MISSION, VISION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our Mission
The Department of Communication creates and shares knowledge of communication and relational processes, including ethical and critical decision-making, with the goal of encouraging the development of engaged citizens preparing for leadership in their professions, community, and world.

Our Vision
The Department of Communication at the College of Charleston is one of the nation’s premier integrated communication programs for undergraduate and master’s-level education. The department’s graduates are communication experts who write beautifully, speak eloquently, think critically, and research effectively. With the advantages of an outstanding liberal arts education and personalized instruction, the department’s graduates bring extraordinary proficiency to audience analysis, message reception, message design, and communication campaigns. These graduates are marked by their leadership in their workplaces and communities and by their ability to adapt to rapid changes in the communication practices and technologies of the twenty-first century. The department is recognized nationally and internationally for its outstanding faculty and its integration of the full range of communication interests in an innovative, challenging curriculum, which requires study of messages and audiences in communication contexts ranging from face-to-face settings to the latest developments in emerging media. The department has special research and teaching expertise in corporate communication and public relations, health communication, and political communication.

Program Goals and College Strategic Plan
The Department of Communication places highest priority on the following aspects of the College’s new strategic plan, which was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 7, 2020.

1. **Strategy 2, Academic Distinction**: Attract, enroll, and nurture intellectually curious, academically talented and civically-minded students.
2. **Strategy 3, Academic Distinction**: Identify and develop signature undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs and institutes that will advance our profile as a national university
3. **Strategy 4, Academic Distinction**: Make experiential learning a differentiator of the College of Charleston educational experience
4. **University Goal 1**: Foster a culture of innovation to create sustainable solutions.
5. **University Goal 2**: Advance our commitment to diversity, equity & inclusion.
6. **University Goal 3**: Cultivate impactful strategic partnerships

In our contributions to these strategies and goals, the Department of Communication offers signature undergraduate and graduate programs in which students develop the knowledge, skills, and civic-mindedness that will enable them to excel in a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities, and thus succeed in many different types of communication careers after graduation. We do so while embracing sustainability, diversity, and strategic partnerships within our class offerings as well as our departmental culture.
Learning Outcomes
Students who graduate from the College of Charleston with a degree or minor in Communication will be able to:

1. write beautifully
2. think critically
3. speak eloquently
4. research effectively
5. understand communication as a liberal art

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN TEACHING
Unique Curricular Offerings
Our curriculum is unique from beginning to end. Students take a two-semester course sequence focused on speaking and writing after completing their three introductory semester-long courses: Media in the Digital Age, Principles and Practices in Strategic Communication, and Communication, Identity, and Community. In addition to required courses in Communication Research Methods and Communication Ethics, students select from a variety of topically-based courses at the 300 and 400 levels, before finishing the major with a two-semester capstone sequence.

As an integrated communication program, we offer courses in multiple areas of the discipline. Some of the more unique offerings of 2019-2020 were:

- **Ethical Communication courses on**
  - Freedom of Expression
  - Digital Media Ethics
  - Ethics and Popular Culture

- **Addressing Problems in Context courses on**
  - Environmental Communication
  - Health Communication
  - Reporting in the Age of Fake News
  - Sport and Society
  - Communication and the 2020 Presidential election
  - Videogames as Conflict and Cooperation

- **Analysis of Communication Practice courses on**
  - Communicating Science
  - Examining Hollywood Film
  - Food and Travel Feature Writing
  - Inspiring Speeches
  - Sport Communication

This year, we taught nine sections of our two-semester capstone course with tremendous success. We continued our highly competitive capstone selection process, in which rising seniors received section descriptions and applied to their desired capstone selection(s). Capstone faculty then reviewed applications, rank ordered students for their course, and met as a group to “draft” students into their specific sections. In this process, students were
evaluated based on their experience and background with the subject matter of the course, internships, related work experience, volunteer work, and academic performance. Although all eligible students were placed in a capstone course, this competitive process rewards our most accomplished students who participate in curricular and co-curricular work. Students dissatisfied with their capstone placement were encouraged to wait list their preferred classes.

- **Capstone topics for Fall 2019 included:**
  - *The Leadership Labyrinth: An Exploration of Communication, Culture, and the Professional World*
  - *Strategic Communication Campaigns*
  - *Podcasting in the Free World*
  - *Narrative and Public Memory*
  - *Ritual Communication in the Mediatized World: The Construction and Practice of the Sacred Meanings*
  - *Building Organizational and Personal Identity*
  - *Destination Spain! – Experiencing and Investigating Communication and Culture Abroad* (see information on this unique study abroad offering below)

This year for the second time, we offered a semester-long study abroad capstone option (*Destination Spain! – Experiencing and Investigating Communication and Culture Abroad*), in which students studied intercultural communication and culture in Trujillo, Spain, for the fall semester and then returned to Charleston in the spring semester to complete their research projects.

**Contributions to Other Units**

While we have the second highest number of majors in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and are one of the top five majors at the College, the Department of Communication continues to play a significant role in supporting our liberal arts mission by contributing to general education offerings for our students and in special curricular initiatives.

- **Honors:** We contributed to the honors program this academic year through the supervision of multiple Bachelor’s Essay and Independent Study projects. Additionally, three Communication faculty members were selected as part of the next cohort of Honors Faculty Fellows. Drs. Michael Lee, Ryan Milner, and David Parisi will be teaching courses and advising in the Honors College for the next three years.

- **First Year Experience (FYE) and Learning Communities (LC):** Communication faculty members contributed multiple courses for the First Year Experience and Learning Community program in the 2019-2020 year, including learning communities and first year seminar courses. We anticipate continued contributions in this area as several faculty are already assigned to FYE/LC courses for the upcoming academic year.

- **REACH Program:** Our department actively supports students in the REACH program every year, with several faculty members teaching REACH students in different courses this academic year.

- **Public Health:** Health Communication is a required course in the public health curriculum, and the Department of Communication offered multiple sections of this course during 2019-2020.
Distance Education and Hybrid Course Offerings
Departmental faculty taught online and hybrid classes every semester. Undergraduate offerings included six courses in the fall semester and four in the spring semester. In the middle of the spring 2020 semester, all courses became Distance Education classes due to the coronavirus pandemic. Also due to the pandemic, all eighteen courses were offered online during the summer 2020 terms. Our internship course continues as an online class, encouraging discussion regarding their internship experiences between students at different internship sites. Additionally, our graduate program completed the second year in its online format, and all eighteen courses were offered online during the summer 2020 terms. Our internship course continues as an online class, encouraging discussion regarding their internship experiences between students at different internship sites.

Communication faculty also provided online coursework in the Applied Communication concentration for the Bachelor of Professional Studies program, as well as for students taking the Health Communication class as part of their major in Public Health.

Contributions to Unique Curricular Initiatives
The Department of Communication offers a wide variety of options for students to participate in interdisciplinary, international/global, personalized, and high impact student experiences. Examples include internships, study abroad, and our departmental spring break trip.

Internships
Students are not required to complete internships to graduate with a Communication major, however they are strongly encouraged by advisors and faculty members to have at least one internship experience, if not more, before they graduate. A total of 40 students completed internships for COMM credit located both in and outside the state of South Carolina. Many more students participated in non-credit-bearing internship opportunities.

(see listing on next page)
In addition to for-credit internships, many students completed not-for-credit internships with companies in South Carolina and across the nation. A departmental poll sent to all students in senior-level courses yielded responses from students who reported many varied internship experiences. Most indicated they had completed just one internship, but many had two or three internship opportunities prior to their senior year.

**Martin Scholars**
The Department of Communication’s Executive-in-Residence Tom Martin and his wife, Wanda, created the Martin Scholars program in 2016. The purpose of the Martin Scholars program is to inspire and develop a future generation of leaders among today’s outstanding Communication majors at the College of Charleston. The program develops a select group of senior Communication majors through a combination of
exposure to effective communication leaders who serve as mentors and teachers, networking opportunities with Communication alumni, networking opportunities with the Department of Communication National Advisory Council members, and experiential learning.

Mr. Martin’s top priorities are improving students’ writing and decision-making skills so that they are ready to navigate the real world strategically, ethically and credibly. He also encourages students to focus on giving back. In addition to creating the Martin Scholars program, Mr. Martin also leads a spring break networking trip for students to Washington, D.C. and New York City (see below). He and Mrs. Martin, who serves as a literacy tutor with the Reading Partners at James Simons Elementary, are leading by example. The Martins believe that one of the most important forces shaping a progressive society is the mentoring of future generations by parents, teachers, coaches, employers and others who encourage and inspire great things.

Previous classes of Martin Scholars have been limited to 10 students each, however the 2019-2020 group increased to 12 students, and this year’s group of students also received academic credit for participating in the Martin Scholar experience as a problem-based learning course providing an academic foundation in combination with practical experience. The sudden onset of the coronavirus pandemic changed the group’s spring break plans to visit Washington DC and New York City. Instead, all of the planned site visits and employer meetings were successfully held virtually.

The successful migration of the Martin Scholar program to 100% online collaboration from this past March through May has underscored the program’s continual mission to inspire and develop a future generation of leaders among today’s outstanding communication majors at the College of Charleston. The recently graduated 2019-20 cohort quickly adapted to the new classroom and work environment created by the pandemic, and they wrapped up the semester with virtual presentations of personal branding projects.

During the spring semester, the next 2020-2021 class of 15 new Martin Scholars were selected. They will be the largest group yet and will be the second cohort to complete the program with
its integration into the communication major curriculum as a section of COMM 336 Addressing Problems in Context.

“Each of you brings unique talents, backgrounds, and perspectives that will add to the richness of the shared experience you have together. You have faced many life challenges already, and these have made you stronger, wiser and better prepared for what lies ahead on your life journey. The collective wisdom of the fifteen of you—reflecting this multi-dimensional life history—will make our interactions more meaningful and our time together more precious. I look forward to exploring that with you.” - Executive-in-Residence Mr. Thomas R. Martin, Founder and Director of the Martin Scholar Program (see full blog post on The COMMunity Network)

Spring Break Experience Trip
The Department typically hosts an annual Spring Break Experience trip for students to visit and connect with industry leaders in New York and Washington, D.C. This weeklong experience, led by Executive-in-Residence Tom Martin, is designed to enhance student understanding of the communication profession by offering a series of tours, presentations and networking events in the Washington, D.C. and New York markets. Plans for the March 2020 trip were upended with the start of the pandemic, but Mr. Martin worked quickly and efficiently to assemble virtual meetings with all the companies the group was originally scheduled to visit.

Through the usage of four virtual meeting platforms (Zoom, Bluejeans, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams) the 2020 spring break trip became a series of virtual meetings and tours by communication executives at several small firms, national companies, and large organizations: including Google, Landor, APCO Worldwide, Vested, Bloomberg, U.S. Chamber, Brunswick, Ketchum, Integral, Peppercomm, Hot Paper Lantern, and more.

Study Abroad
The department offered two study abroad trips in the Fall 2019 semester. Drs. Celeste Lacroix and Robert Westerfelhaus took one group of students to Florence, Italy and another group to Trujillo, Spain, and the two faculty members split their time between locations.

Courses offered in Florence included COMM 280 and 281 Introduction to Communication Messages, as well as COMM 315 Communication Ethics in Multicultural Contexts and COMM 336 Cross-cultural Communication. Colleagues from the English department also offered classes in Florence.

Some highlights from the Florence, Italy trip include:

- Weekend trip to Bra to attend the biennial Slow Cheese conference, which draws sustainable food producers and other related exhibitors from around the world;
- Private tour and visit to the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Bra, Piemonte;
- Organic cheese tasting in Scandicci (a town near Florence);
- Chocolate-making demonstration and tasting at a small family-owned chocolate factory;
- Gelato-making lesson by a world-renowned artisanal gelato maestro;
- Basket weaving class at a traditional Tuscan farm;
- Tours and tastings at two Tuscan wineries;
- Tour and pasta-making demonstration at 6th generation family-owned factory specializing in producing pasta made from heritage grains;
- Truffle hunting expedition and then dinner with the Savini family of Montanelli;
- Visit to the town of Lucca to explore its culinary culture and history, and weekly Slow Food farmers market;
- Guided tour of the city of Siena to explore its culinary culture and history;
- Guided underground tour of the Roman ruins of the city of Alba in Northern Italy;
- Visits to the Great Synagogue and Jewish Museum, Palazzo Medici-Ricardo, Palazzo Strozzi, Salvatore Ferragamo, and other museums; as well as the Baptistery, the Duomo, Santa Maria Novella, the Spanish Chapel, and other churches.

Courses offered in Trujillo included COMM 315 Communication Ethics in Multicultural Contexts and COMM 336 Cross-cultural Communication, as well as an upper level COMM 410 writing course focused on Spanish film and a COMM 480 capstone class on Experiencing and Investigating Communication and Culture Abroad. The classes incorporated communication, cultural, historical, linguistic, philosophical, and sociological material specifically related to the town of Trujillo, the region of Extremadura, and the nation of Spain. In the Capstone course, students conducted primary ethnographic research in Trujillo.

Highlights from the Trujillo, Spain program include:

- Cáceres, UNESCO World Heritage site, which included a walking tour of the old city center;
- Bodega Ruiz Torres, a vineyard and winery, where students were treated to a private tour by a member of the owner-family and tasting;
- Tour of the Monastery of Guadalupe, UNESCO World Heritage site;
- The Villuercas-Ibores-Jara Geopark;
- Tour and lunch at an Extremaduran “Pata Negra” Heritage Pig Farm;
- Guided tour and hike in the National Monument of Los Barruecos;
- Guided tour and traditional lunch at the Museo Vostell;
- Visit to the factory and store of La Chinata, an Extremaduran company founded in 1936 which produces products with extra virgin olive oil;
- Merida, UNESCO World Heritage site, where students had a private guided tour of the extensive Roman ruins as well as Moorish sites;
- Visit to the traditional baths at Montemayor;
- The town of Toledo, which included a visit to the El Greco Museum, the Cathedral of Toledo and the El Transito Synagogue;
- Hiking and Birdwatching tour of Monfragüe National Park.

Students were also taken on two long weekend trips to Madrid and to Lisbon, Portugal. Highlights of these trips include:

- Guided tour at Museo Reina Sofia;
Guided Tapas tasting tour in the old center of Madrid;
- Walking tour to Plaza Mayor, Puerto del Sol, Mercato San Miguel;
- Visits to the Prado Museum, Lisbon Cathedral, and Lisbon Oceanarium;
- Tour of the Jeronimos Monastery;
- Visit to the Castelo de San Jorge.

The Trujillo students also took a mid-semester week-long trip to Andalusia (southern Spain). Highlights of that trip include:

- Visits to the Mezquita (cathedral/mosque complex), Sinagoga and Jewish Quarter, and the Medina Azahara Archeological Site at Cordoba;
- Guided tour and ancient Sephardic music performance at the Casa de Sefarad;
- Guided tour of the Alhambra;
- Visits to the Sacromonte, Royal Chapel, and the Albayzin neighborhood in Granada;
- Private guided tour of the rooftops of the Cathedral of Seville;
- Visit to the Alcazar palace complex;
- Flamenco dance and music performance at the Casa de la Memoria in Seville;
- Welcome and pre-departure celebrations with the host families held at the Fundacion Xavier de Salas at el Convento de La Coria, which is also where classes were held;
- On Thanksgiving, the students were also treated to a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner served at La Coria.

These and numerous other activities enriched students’ understanding of material covered in course textbooks, in-class discussions, and lectures. In addition, they helped expand students’ site-specific knowledge in other ways as well. Whenever possible, the professors invited locals to share their indigenous experience and knowledge with the students. This was complemented by the housing of students with local families, from which experience students gained much cultural and language learning.
CHANGES IN ENROLLMENT AND WORKLOAD

Enrollment Trends

The number of students majoring in Communication was 590 at the end of the Spring 2020 semester. This represents an increase from previous years. Additionally, we had 59 students minoring in Communication, a slight decrease compared to the past two years. We also graduated 112 undergraduate students and 4 graduate students in May. The average class size is 24.1 with 80% of student credit hours offered by roster faculty, and 20% offered by highly qualified adjuncts.

The department again experienced a slight increase in number of majors during 2019-2020. We continue to fill sections of our general education classes, as well as our introductory writing and speaking course and our capstone course to their seating capacities, and additional sections have been added as space and faculty availability allows.

Assessment

The College of Charleston suspended assessment activities when data were not able to be collected in the spring semester due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Department of Communication plans to use this time to revise our assessment practices. Next year’s annual report will provide a much more comprehensive description of our revisions in this area.

Faculty Teaching Awards

Within the department, undergraduate communication students awarded both Dr. Xi Cui and Dr. Beth Goodier with the Outstanding COMM Faculty Member of the Year award for 2019-2020. Some of the seniors who voted for these two professors said things like:

- **Praise for Dr. Cui:**
  - "Any class I have ever taken with Professor Cui has always been more about the learning of the materials and helping his students grasp the concepts than the grades we make or how pretty his presentations are. He genuinely cares about his students, is understanding that life happens and is funny all while staying professional."
  - "Always patient, kind and willing to work with you. Dr. Cui has an outstanding ability to understand others and guide you in the right direction."

- **Praise for Dr. Goodier:**
  - "Dr. Goodier has been there for me from the beginning of my communication journey. I have learned so much in her classes. I will always value and remember her standards of excellence and her understanding of life."
  - "Dr. Goodier had gone above and beyond to make sure that we are completing our work and that we are staying on track. I have never seen a professor more dedicated and willing. She wants to see everyone succeed and will challenge you to do that."
  - "I do not have enough words to say all of the great things about Professor Goodier. She has been a mentor to our entire class this year through her work ethic and relationship building. She pushes her students to do their best work because she knows what we are all capable of. Most importantly, she is ALWAYS available whenever someone needs her. One of the biggest lessons I have learned from her is “be comfortable with the mess.”"
(Assignments & life aren’t perfect sometimes, which is normal, but they will get there) Those words have more truth now than ever."

For the Outstanding COMM Adjunct of the Year, the undergraduate students recognized both Dr. Caroline Guthrie and Mr. Tom Martin for their accomplishments in teaching and service to the department.

- **Praise for Dr. Caroline Guthrie:**
  - "Professor Guthrie has so much enthusiasm for what she does. I had her for a movie analysis class and she was a blast. She created a fun and productive environment that made me and many others excited to come to class each day. Her assignments were the right amounts of challenging and fun."

- **Praise for Mr. Tom Martin:**
  - "As a current Martin Scholar, I don't think I could thank Professor Martin enough for bringing such an amazing program to the College. This program has opened my eyes to new opportunities in the industry, significantly expanded my network, shown me more of my strengths and weaknesses, and united me with a community of people who I know will be supporting for a lifetime. Through his program, I have become a better, more confident writer, and I feel fully equipped to enter into the next phase of my life. Genuine passion and excitement practically radiate from Professor Martin, and it's incredibly motivating and inspiring to see that as one of his students. He is also always willing to help and really pushes us to be the best we can be. It's so clear how much he cares about us, and I am so honored to have met him."
Additionally, Dr. Jenna Abetz was recognized by the graduate students as the **Outstanding COMM Graduate Faculty Member of the Year** for 2019-2020.

- **Praise for Dr. Jenna Abetz:**
  - "Dr. Abetz is an incredibly supportive professor who cares about letting each student explore their own interests. Her passion for communication is contagious, and I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to take two graduate courses with her during my time in the program."
  - "Dr. Abetz has been a great professor for me this semester. She is upfront and clear about expectations, responds to emails in a timely manner, and is very approachable. She's always made herself available to answer questions. She definitely deserves this award!"
Dr. Amanda Ruth-McSwain was the recipient of one of the six college-wide annual faculty awards of distinction: the **Distinguished Service Award**. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of a colleague who, beyond his or her required duties, has a sustained career of serving the college community in an outstanding and distinguished manner. Nominations for these awards are submitted by CofC faculty colleagues, and a recipient is selected after comprehensive review by the designated award committee for each award.

“...she brings a particular shine to the College of Charleston through the reach and impact of her endless service. The committee was most impressed with Amanda for her extraordinary leadership by placing the College in the national spotlight through the Bully Pulpit Series, while at the same time devoting her energy and commitment to her students on campus. Her skillful engagement with industry and political leaders -- with the College’s constituencies and betterment always being her highest priority -- makes her an invaluable member of our campus community. As a servant leader, Amanda has integrated her service to the College by creating countless experiential opportunities for her students (e.g., NASA production assistants during the eclipse, CBS and CNN debate and town hall volunteer opportunities), thereby extending their career horizons. Her service has extended to many other opportunities, including being an interim Associate Dean, Director of the Master of Arts program in Communication, and so many campus-wide committees and efforts. Amanda notes that it is particularly satisfying to see students launch careers they would not have thought of as a result of their participation in these events. Dr. Ruth-McSwain embodies the selflessness and commitment of a faithful public servant as she seeks the best for students, her department, and the College, and we are pleased to see her honored with the College’s 2020 Distinguished Service Award.” – excerpt from Interim Provost Fran Welch and the award selection committee

**Diversity**

The Department of Communication currently has 22 tenured or tenure track faculty: thirteen white females, six white males, one non-resident female and two non-resident males. We continue to make every effort to increase diversity in our applicant pools for our searches to create a stronger and more diverse department.

**MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION (MCOM)**

The [Master of Arts in Communication](#) has completed its second year as a fully online program. Students in the program now have more flexibility to achieve this degree while located remotely, whether within South Carolina or even further away. Full-time students can complete this advanced degree in one year, including the summer term. Part-time students can complete the degree in two years. Please see the separate Master’s in Communication (MCOM) annual report for more detailed information on the program’s achievements during the 2019-2020 academic year.

**FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This year, departmental faculty published one scholarly book, eighteen new articles in peer reviewed journals, and seven additional popular articles, book chapters, invited publications, or reviews.
A selection of this activity includes:

- Dr. Beth Sundstrom published *Birth Control: What Everyone Needs to Know* with Oxford University Press, in addition to ten academic journal articles. Several of the articles were co-authored with colleague Dr. Merissa Ferrara.
- Dr. Kelly Jakes published an article titled “Crafty Capitalism: Arts and Crafts Ideology in Vaudeville Advertising.”
- Dr. Doug Ferguson published a co-authored chapter on “Virtual Reality.”
- Dr. Beth Goodier published a chapter in *The International Encyclopedia of Organizational Communication* called “Jamming.”
- Drs. Celeste Lacroix and Robert Westerfelhaus published an article examining “The Usual Suspects: Agatha Christie’s Detective Hercule Poirot as Refugee and Icon of the “Other” in The ABC Murders.”
- Dr. Ryan Milner published a *Washington Post* article on “Trump has started to lose control of his own memes.”
- Dr. David Parisi published a journal article and a book chapter on tactile temporalities

Nineteen presentations were made by Communication faculty members at regional, national, and international conferences. Additionally, multiple faculty members serve as reviewers for peer reviewed journal publications and conferences and are active in the discipline (see FAS report and appendix for summary data).

**Awards**

Dr. Beth Goodier received the John I. Sisco Career Excellence in Teaching from the Southern States Communication Association. This award honors SSCA members who have consistently demonstrated excellence in teaching communication throughout their academic careers.

**SERVICE CONTRIBUTIONS**

Communication faculty are involved in service at all levels at the College, as well as within our discipline. A selection of our activity follows:

**Service to the College**

- Dr. Jenna Abetz: Institutional Review Board member
- Dr. Vince Benigni: Appointed by the President as Faculty Athletics Representative, member of the Athletics Compliance Oversight Committee, and liaison with the Colonial Athletic Association
- Dr. Julie Davis: First Year Experience Committee member
- Dr. Doug Ferguson: Faculty Coordinator for eLearning and Distance Education
- Dr. Merissa Ferrara: Committee on Nominations and Elections
- Dr. Beth Goodier: Member of the IT Advisory Group and member of the Library Committee
- Dr. Celeste Lacroix: Member of the Scholarship Committee for the Office of International Education
- Dr. Michael Lee: Member of the FAM By-laws Committee
- Dr. Namjin Lee: Faculty Senator
- Dr. Deb McGee: Speaking Lab Director and chair of the Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness Committee
Dr. Amanda Ruth-McSwain: Director of the Bully Pulpit Series and Interim Associate Dean for the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Service to the Community (Professional in Nature)
- Dr. Deb McGee: St. Benedict’s Catholic Church, Lector
- Dr. Elena Strauman: Speak Up For Horses, Communication Consultant
- Dr. Beth Sundstrom: South Carolina Cervical Cancer Awareness Initiative, Advisory Board Member
- Dr. Robert Westerfelhaus: Oratorical Festival Judge

Service to the Profession
- Dr. Vince L. Benigni: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Conference Reviewer
- Dr. Beth Goodier: Member of the Publications Committee for Southern States Communication Association
- Dr. Jenifer Kopfman: Manuscript reviewer for the Southern States Communication Association Undergraduate Honors Conference
- Dr. Celeste C. Lacroix: Voices of Diversity Division, Eastern Communication Association, Conference Reviewer
- Dr. David Parisi: Critical Studies in Mediated Communication Advisory Board Member
- Beth L. Sundstrom: South Carolina Coalition for Healthy Families, Board Member, and Charleston Birth Place, Foundation Board Member
- Dr. Robert G. Westerfelhaus: Past President of the Carolinas Communication Association

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF STUDENTS AND NEW ALUMNI
The communication major was the second largest for the Class of 2020. A total of 112 students graduated with the communication major in May 2020.

Some of our student accomplishments from the 2019-20 academic year include:

- **Braelyn Diamond (2020)** was accepted to present at the Theodore Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference at the 2020 Southern States Communication Association (SSCA) annual meeting. The title of her paper was: “Creating a Diverse and Inclusive Space in the Fashion Industry.”

- **Zoe Murrie (2021)**, Editor in Chief at the CisternYard Fashion Magazine, was instrumental in the magazine’s release of its first issue this past April. As Editor in Chief, she is responsible for a team of 20+ people and conceptualizing the high-end magazine spreads.

- During the 2020 Southeastern Wildlife Exposition (SEWE), **Brett Lott (2020)** had multiple event photographs published at the Post and Courier, through his internship with the media outlet. Brett double majored in Studio Art and Communication.
- **Katie Stagliano (2020)** has been continually featured by local media outlets during the coronavirus pandemic for her nonprofit organization’s (Katie’s Krops) local impact on the Lowcountry community. She was recently named a Spring 2020 Young Explorer by National Geographic Education.

- **Katie Stagliano (2020)** was awarded the Humanitarian Award by the Department of Communication for her impressive work in the Charleston community and across the nation with her nonprofit Katie’s Krops, throughout her studies at the College of Charleston.

- **Abbie Kline (2020)** received the distinguished campus-wide Alexander Chambliss Connelley Award. “Abbie Kline’s engagement in the community is unique because in most cases, she has sought to draw in both the campus and the broader Charleston community. She has a unique and comprehensive understanding of service based on inclusivity and synergy. This penchant for inclusive leadership is a hallmark of Abbie’s leadership. Abbie was a co-liaison with a fellow student on the Green Heart project. The Project builds garden-based experiential learning projects for students of all ages. She also served as President of the Rotoract Club, which brings students together to exchange ideas with leaders in the Charleston community and develop leadership and professional skills. Additionally, Abbie organized the Hurricane Matthew Relief for Haiti Student Fundraiser, served as a leader in the Campus Outreach Leadership Project, and co-founded Cougars with Purpose, which seeks to rally students together to advocate for and work towards curing pediatric cancer. She organized the Lowcountry Citizens’ Summit, an event that seeks to bridge the gap between the campus and the community by serving as an interdisciplinary venue for conversations regarding the construction and sustaining of a productive, equitable Lowcountry community.”

- **Laurie Fogleman (2022)** interned with The College Today and had five articles posted on their widely-viewed publication.

- **Kalea Perez (2022)** and other CofC students received the unique experience (after applying) of working behind-the-scenes at CNN’s Town Halls held in Charleston in February 2020. The Town Halls featured the candidates who were running for the 2020 presidential election.

with the high-profile Bully Pulpit Series. This series hosted 12 presidential candidates on campus over the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters.

- COMM juniors Grace Daughtry, Jada Davis, Catherine Flanders, Avery Gavornik, Charles Havens, Madison McGraw Heid, Megan Llewellyn, Marley Lucas, Alaysha Maple, Anna Perkins, Grace Peyton, Damian Porter, Celie Shankman, Bobby Valach, and Fern Wooden were all named to the next class of Martin Scholars, 2020-21.

- Jordan Carr (MA, 2021) was named an Elite 15 student-athlete for Fall 2019 due to his high GPA on the team.

- Maggie Vickrey (2020) interned with CHS Today during the Spring semester and was a featured writer for the Lifestyle section from time to time.


**CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE**

No new changes were made to the undergraduate curriculum. We remain an integrated communication major that educates students in all areas of the discipline, with twelve required classes for a total of 37 credit hours.

Similarly, the graduate program in Communication also experienced no curricular changes as this is just the second year of implementation since our recent revisions.

Thank you for reading about the Department of Communication’s accomplishments in the 2019-2020 academic year. For more information about the department, please visit our website (communication.cofc.edu) or email us at commdept@cofc.edu. You can also find us on social media! Follow along on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter at @cofccomm.