

# COMMUNICATION STUDIES

s o m e t h i n g   t o   t a l k   a b o u t

interpersonal/organizational | rhetoric | performance

## IN THIS ISSUE:

2013-2014 Overview

- Fessor Graham Winner:  
Dr. Brian Lain
- Faculty Spotlight
- Student Awards
- UNT Debate
- Student Activities: Lambda  
Pi Eta  
NCA Future Pros  
Gender Fair X
- Annual Student Conference:  
New Voices, New  
Perspectives
- Comm Masters
- Blackbox Theatre
- Around Town & Other News
- Alumni News
- New Faces
- Graduation
- Looking Forward



## FESSOR GRAHAM WINNER

Dr. Brian Lain, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, has received the prestigious 'Fessor Graham Award, the highest honor bestowed by the student body at UNT. The award recognizes one faculty member each year for outstanding and unselfish service beyond the call of duty to students. It is named for the late Professor Floyd Graham who taught at UNT for more than 40 years. In 1958, the North Texas student body honored Professor Graham with this award and established the tradition of recognizing one faculty member each year on Honors Day.

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# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

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## President's Community Engagement

### Honor Roll - 2013

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Dr. Suzanne Enck

Dr. Suzanne Enck participated in various community outreach commitments, including volunteering for Resolana in the Dallas County Jail. She facilitated various workshops with incarcerated women and also chaired their fundraising music festival a few years ago, working with a number of our grad students as interns and undergraduate majors as volunteers at the event.



Dr. Brian Lain

Dr. Brian Lain has also participated in many community outreach commitments. To name a few, he has been a part of the Dallas Urban Debate Alliance since 2007, he has served on the Texas Forensic Association, and Dr. Lain has provided assistance by judging at various local, regional, and national tournaments as a judge, seminar leader, and tournament coordinator. He is also involved in the Mean Green Workshops here at UNT, which serves high school students during the summer by providing a place for instruction. (MGW is the largest debate camp in Texas since 2008, and the #1 requested camp for teachers engaged in professional development.)

## Honors Day Awards

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Dr. Brian Richardson

Dr. Brian Richardson and Dr. Justin Trudeau were selected for recognition on Honors Day. They received the "Honors Professor - Department of Communication Studies Award," which was presented at the Honors Day Convocation which took place in the Murchison Performing Arts Center on Friday, April 4, 2014.



Dr. Justin Trudeau

## College of Arts & Sciences Awards

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Our favorite Undergraduate Advisor, Dr. Holley Vaughn, received the College of Arts & Sciences "Excellence in Advising Award"!!

Also, our Director of Debate, Dr. Brian Lain, received the "Excellence in Service Award".



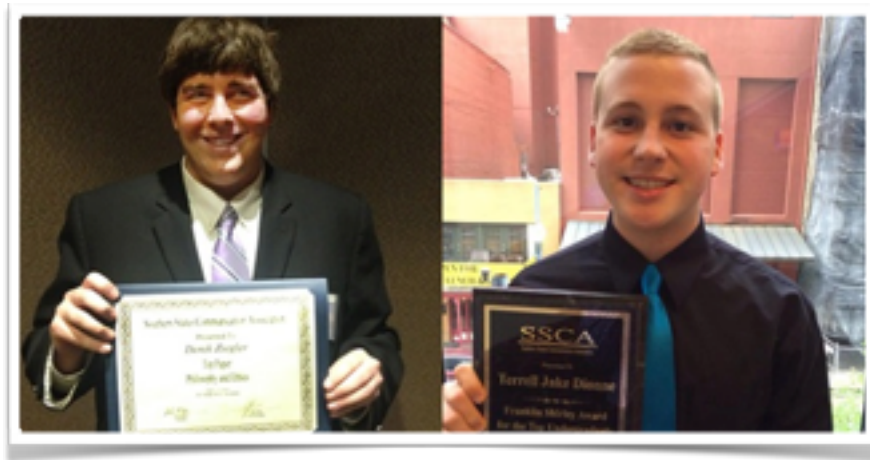
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# STUDENT AWARDS

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## SSCA Awards

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One of our Masters Students, Derek Ziegler who is on the left, won the Philosophy and Ethics Top Paper Award during the SSCA conference on April 4th. One of our fantastic graduating seniors, Jake Dionne who is on the right, won the Franklin Shirley Award for Top Undergraduate Honor's Conference Paper.

## University Student Awards

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2013

Outstanding Achievement in College Debate-Brian Kersch

Outstanding Graduate Student in Communication Studies-Kara Brittain

Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Communication Studies-Mya Parker

Outstanding Service by a Graduate Student Award-Miranda Chesson

Outstanding Service by an Undergraduate Student Award-Caleb Wood

Ted Colson Award for Excellence in Performance Studies-Jesse Snider

2014

Outstanding Achievement in College Debate -Brian Kersch

Outstanding Graduate Student in Communication Studies- Noura El Wazani

Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Communication Studies-Jake Dionne

Outstanding Service by a Graduate Student Award-Eric Sloss

Outstanding Service by an Undergraduate Student Award-Sydney Davis

Ted Colson Award for Excellence in Performance Studies-Jesse Snider

## 2014 Departmental Honors Awards

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Undergraduate Research Award- Jake Dionne

Outstanding Graduate Scholar- Noura El Wazani

Outstanding Performance by an Undergraduate Student- Samuel Groom

Outstanding Performance by a Graduate Student- Joanna Lugo and Flora Ceka

Outstanding Teaching by Graduate Student- Eric Sloss

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# UNT DEBATE

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## UNT Debate qualifies for the National Debate Tournament

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"We've had a wonderful group of students who have worked really hard to make this a reality. They are doing a fantastic job, especially when you consider that we're competing against every other university across the country. To be included in a list to even qualify is a significant honor."  
- Brian Lain, Director of Debate

## Debate Tournament Success

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The North Texas Debate team competed at two different tournaments and had extraordinary levels of success at both tournaments. The University Debate team sent four teams to the Bear Shock tournament hosted by Wichita State University located in Wichita, Kansas. Those four teams consisted of juniors Darrian

Carroll, Lila Friedlander, Hope Saucedo, sophomore Bryan San Miguel and freshmen Brenden Dimmig, Roberto Caballero, Steven Kayo, and Jesse Anyalebechi. Meanwhile the debate team had two teams invited by invitation to the Val Browning Round Robin hosted by Weber State University, located in Ogden, Utah. Those teams consisted of seniors Brian Kersch, Colin Quinn, Hunter McCullough and Sophomore Max Anderson.

At the Val Browning Round Robin the team of Brian Kersch and Max Anderson finished their preliminary debates with 6 wins and 1 loss, including wins over Kansas State, Wyoming, and California State University-Fullerton. They advanced to the final round to debate a team from Michigan State University. Where they won on 2-1 decision and were crowned the 2014 Val Browning Round Robin Champions . Brian Kersch was also recognized as the Top Individual Speaker at the Round Robin. The team of Colin Quinn and Hunter McCullough finished their preliminary debates with 6 wins and 1 loss including wins over Arizona State, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, Wichita State, and Gonzaga. They nearly missed being in the final round as well finishing 2nd in their pod. Hunter McCullough was recognized as the 2nd Speaker and Quinn was awarded 5th Speaker.

The Team had similar success at the Wichita State tournament. The team of Roberto Caballero and Steven Kayo finished their preliminary debates with 5 wins and 1 loss including notable wins against UT-San Antonio, the University of Northern Iowa, and Lindenwood University. They advanced to the elimination rounds and lost on a close decision in the semi-finals. The Team of Jesse Anyalebechi and Bryan San Miguel finished their Preliminary debates with 3 wins and 3 losses narrowly missing the Elimination debates.

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## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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### Lambda Pi Eta

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Canstruction is a unique charity which hosts competitions, exhibitions and events showcasing structures made entirely out of full cans of food. After the structures are built, the creations go on display to the public. At the end of the event, all food is donated to the Denton Community Food Center. This semester Lambda Pi Eta raised a total of over 600 cans for this event.

## NCA Future Pros

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As the saying goes the early bird catches the worm, but in today's job market the stakes are a bit higher. The bird that doesn't catch a worm goes hungry for a day, but for most college graduates the hunger for a job can last weeks or even months. NCA Future Pros attempts to alleviate that hunger by prepping communication students for the job market before they graduate, offering insight into various fields across the communications field. This Monday the students who decided to be early birds met up with the NCA Future Pros at Crooked Crust, a local pizzeria located feet from campus. NCA

Future Pros advisor Dr. Brian Richardson

and the students discussed potential fields of interest for the members of the organization. Students in attendance expressed interest in the fields of marketing, public relations, mediation, and the legal field to name a few. In future meetings, notable alumni and friends of the University of North Texas will inform members on each respective field, helping to guide students through a variety of future careers.  
*-Jeremy Castro, Communication Studies Senior*

## Comm Ambassadors

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Under the direction of Dr. Holley Vaughn, we have a brand new program in the Department of Communication Studies. The Communication Studies Ambassador Program seeks to establish a stronger connection between upper-level and lower-level classes in the department through tutoring and mentoring. Furthermore, the program aims to recruit high schoolers in the DFW region to attend UNT and major in Communication Studies. After a competitive application process, both Dr. Holley Vaughn, and student assistant Jake Dionne, are proud to announce the spring 2014 Communication Studies Ambassadors. The Communication Studies Ambassadors are as follows: Laura Lynn Peck, Ben Lawing, Quinn Montgomery-McClure, Austin Schubert, Rhett Richardson, Travis Richard, Alisia Martinez, and Cody

Armstrong. These students were selected by their professors and then by Dr. Holley Vaughn and Jake Dionne to serve in the leadership this semester. This is a huge honor. If you see these students, tell them congratulations! We look forward to seeing the department expand and foster amazing scholars

### Gender Fair IX & X



Gender Fair IX & X were a huge hit this year with around 800 students attending the events. Gender Fair led by Dr. Suzanne Enck, for her class Gender Communications, is a class project geared towards educating the public about gender norms in our society. The event includes popcorn, gender molded candy and fair style games. Some of the games played are, "Gender Jeopardy" and "Match the Gender," where students matched questions and artifacts to their respective gender.



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# ANNUAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

## NEW VOICES, NEW PERSPECTIVE

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The Annual Student Research Conference of 2014, "New Voices, New Perspectives", students from Arizona, Ohio, Idaho, Oklahoma, Illinois & Texas came to UNT to present their research on February 21st-22nd. Congrats to Dylan Rollo from Drake University and Molly Shade from UNT for best research papers!



A big thanks to our guest speaker, Marshall Scott Poole, who is a Professor in the Department of Communication, Senior Research Scientist at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, and Director of the Institute for Computing in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

# COMM MASTERS

There were many new Communication Studies Master Students this year. After they successfully passed their comprehensive exams or thesis defenses, we asked them what they were looking forward to after they graduate. Here are a few of their answers:



I will be going to the University of Georgia - Athens to pursue my Ph.D in Communication Studies and eat myself to death on chicken biscuits. ~ Eric Sloss



I will start in the fall my PhD in Women's Studies at Texas Women's University. So excited about that! Also hard to say goodbye to wonderful faculty members and colleagues! ~ Noura Elwazani



After graduation, I will be traveling to Albania to visit family and friends. When I return, I'll be working in Chicago for a science and technology academy until finally coming back to Texas at the end of the summer. I plan to teach for a year before applying to PhD programs. I'm also looking forward to watching hours of Netflix to the point where I can finally converse with people about all the awesome shows I've missed out on. ~Flora Ceka

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# BLACKBOX THEATRE

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It was a big year in the Communication Studies Blackbox Theatre! There were three amazing women to put on their final showcases Brittany Hale, Flora Ceka and Joanna Lugo. Also there was a splendid show, "Big Tex is Burning," that was compiled and directed by our performance faculty and put on by our performance students.



"Paper Dolls," Written and Directed by Brittany Hale. This performance was inspired by the artist's own journey in locating her story in rape culture and in an earnest belief that, together, we can co-create a better future.



"Beyond the Glass," Adapted and Directed by Flora Ceka. Adapted from Lewis Carroll's, "Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There", *Beyond the Glass* takes a look at Alice's journey in Wonderland, including the trials she experiences and characters she meets along the way to becoming Queen. Through a performative lens of passing, *Beyond the Glass* questions, can you truly leave your life behind to pass as someone else?



"Dirty Grrrls," written and directed by Joanna Lugo, focuses on the image of the mudflap girl as a common yet unexplored symbol of hypersexual visual culture in U.S. American society. *Dirty Grrrls* brings the image to life, and questions the existence and transience of the mudflap girl through a critical feminist perspective.



"Big Tex is Burning," Compiled and Directed by Dr. Justin Trudeau and Dr. Holley Vaughn. This performance explores the untimely death and resurrection of "Big Tex", the beloved state icon of the annual State Fair of Texas located in Dallas.

Utilizing archival and cast generated performative writing materials; the show investigates and confronts the iconicity of Big Tex as a cultural synecdoche of regional and national identity. By means of inter-Text-ual adaptation and staging techniques, the show both looks back and towards an identity that ultimately

celebrates our own unique experience of collective Texan identity. We have drawn on the mythos of Texas and the historicity of Big Tex from a variety of sources, and our compilation is indebted to resources such as songs, short stories, twitter feeds, as well as records from debates on the floor of the Texas senate, Biblical texts, and various archival news materials and editorials concerning the history, destruction, and rebuilding of Big Tex. As co-directors, we draw upon our own personal backgrounds (Justin being a regional transplant and Holley being a native Texan) as source material for the show and several writing exercises created by the cast concerning their own Texas identities. Additionally, we utilize ethnographic materials that the cast gathered as part of field research conducted at the unveiling of the new Big Tex at the State Fair of Texas in 2013.



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# AROUND TOWN & OTHER NEWS

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The Graduate Mixer at the beginning of the semester is always a perfect way to kick off meeting the faculty and grad students. Here the students were able to meet up with one of our newest faculty members Megan Morrissey and pick her brain about what she was going to teach this year at UNT.

Communication Studies Pizza Social. This event is always a hit with free pizza for the students and door prizes! This is the perfect way for comm students to use their skills to break the ice with their fellow commrads before classes get started.



We won the Homecoming department decorating contest! The theme this year was "Mean Green on the Big Screen." We choose to go with the Wizard of Oz and transform our office into the Mean Green City! Our department chair, Dr. Jay Allison played the Wizard of Oz of course while Cindy Gordon, our basic course director played Dorothy with her wonderful red glitter shoes!



Comm Department Homecoming Tailgating Event. We had a great time with some sun, fun and football for this event. It is a time for us to get together with our students and Alumni to cheer on our Mean Green Eagles!

UNT Department of Communication Studies representing at the Lt. Dan Choi Distinguished Lecture Series.



# ALUMNI NEWS



You can do so many things with a master's degree in Communication Studies! Here's 2013 grad (BA & MA), Brittany Hale, in her new job as a Vendor Management Specialist for Zodiac Aerospace -- Communication skills at work!



Congratulations to COMM graduate Earlina Green on the publication of her new book \*Seven Tips for Breaking into the World of Sports: Landing the Job of Your Dreams for the College Graduate\*. Available on Amazon.



Former Communication Studies Alums, Norma Jones and Maja Bajac-Carter, are now co-editors of two books; "Heroines of Comic Books and Literature & Heroines of Film and Television." They are both in the PhD program at Kent State University. Way to go heroines!!! Both books coming to the UNT Comm Library soon!



Congratulations to COMM Alum, Eric James, who recently completed his PhD at Texas A&M University. Happy doctoring!

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## NEW FACES

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Megan could not always claim the West or the Rockies as her home. She spent a good deal of time in North Carolina, receiving her BA in English, Spanish and Communication Studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2002). Immediately afterwards, she accepted a teaching position at a local public high school and spent the next four years teaching Spanish, receiving training in the International Baccalaureate program, and serving on the School Improvement Team. Working with this diverse student body inspired a curiosity in race and social justice that eventually led her to pursue an M.A. in Communication Studies from UNC-Greensboro (2008).

As an instructor, Megan brings an enthusiasm and interest for how a variety of communicative practices inform the daily aspects of people's lives, and is committed to conveying the importance of understanding such practices for participation in the (re)production of those social conditions of which we are all a part. Her scholarship is driven by a desire to explore how the ways that people talk about different identities and different bodies influences their inclusion or exclusion from social and/or cultural groups. Megan sees the time she spends in the classroom as intimately informed by her research, and the research that she is conducting being equally affected by her teaching.



The Department of Communication Studies is delighted to welcome Dr. Mark Hlavacik as a tenure-track member of our faculty beginning in the Fall of 2014. Mark will join us from Pennsylvania State University where he earned his PhD in 2012 and is currently completing a post-doctoral fellowship. Dr. Hlavacik's research and teaching at the crossroads of rhetorical criticism, public address, and public deliberation will complement well our existing rhetoric faculty and the interests of our undergraduate and graduate students alike. Mark's expertise in researching matters of educational policy reform and his extensive work with Penn State's Center for Democratic Deliberation will add tremendously to our department's commitment to providing opportunities for our graduates to develop public advocacy skills and will bolster UNT's mission of emphasizing community engagement. We are excited for this addition to our UNT COMMunity and look forward to

welcoming Dr. Hlavacik into our "Mean Green" traditions of excellence and engagement!



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# GRADUATION

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Fall 2013 Hooding & Senior Recognition Ceremony



Spring 2014 Hooding & Senior Recognition Ceremony

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# LOOKING FORWARD

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We are moving to a monthly newsletter starting September 2014. Keep in contact with us through our website [www.communication.unt.edu](http://www.communication.unt.edu) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/UNTCOMM](http://www.facebook.com/UNTCOMM).

**Dates to Remember:**

*Fall Registration: August 14th - August 21st*

*Fall Late Registration: August 22nd - August 27*

*Add/Drop Dates: August 25 - August 29th*

*First Day of Class: August 25th*

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