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SLUComm

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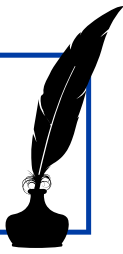
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**SLU
COMM
DEPT**



letter from THE CHAIR



DAN KOZLOWSKI

Welcome to our Fall 2021 Communication Department newsletter! We hope you enjoy it!

Inside you'll find spotlights of our awesome students, both current and past. We're proud of our students and what they accomplish, and we're grateful they chose our program to earn their master's degree. You can also read about Dr. Kelsey Mesmer, a new awesome faculty member who joined us this year.

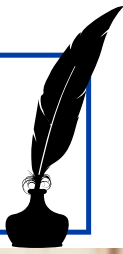
Our program continues to attract students from a wide range of professional backgrounds and with a wide range of interests. We encourage students in their time here to tailor the program in ways that fit their individual goals. We think that's a strength that we offer.

We always love to hear from our former students. Shoot us an email to let us know about your milestones and achievements! And please encourage potential applicants you might know to attend our upcoming webinar (you can find more information about that inside).

Take care, and keep being awesome.

Dan





SPOTLIGHT *Faculty*



KELSEY MESMER

“

Get to know your professors! If they are doing cool things, let them know you want to do those things.”

Introducing Dr. Kelsey Mesmer

Journey to SLU as a Communication Professor

Kelsey started her work as a professional in communication arts working for *The Columbus Dispatch*. She was one of few women in her department and was the youngest person working there at the time. While pursuing her MBA and MA in Communication at Kent State, she realized her passion as a teacher and scholar. She went on to earn a PHD in Communication at Wayne State University.

Why SLU?

Kelsey was drawn to SLU's mission and opportunities for the journalism concentration to grow in the Department. She realized that sharing her professional and graduate experience had the potential to positively impact new developments and student learning through her research.

She joined the faculty at SLU in the fall of 2021.

Kelsey appreciates that community-based research is valued at SLU and looks forward to advancing knowledge of issues of diversity, coverage of race and class in the news, and the experiences of women, non-male identifying people and people of color working within the newsroom.

Outside of SLU

Kelsey has a 5 month old son who takes up much of her time when she isn't teaching at SLU! She also enjoys hikes with her husband and kickboxing!

What advice do you have for graduate students studying Communication?

“Get to know your professors! If they are doing cool things, let them know you want to do those things. You will learn so much. Get involved in applied projects and get communicating with professors who have similar passions as you”



SPOTLIGHT

Alumni



**MOLLY
CRUITT**

Tell me a little bit about yourself!

I'm a 2018 grad from the SLU Masters program. I married my husband, Patrick, the week after our graduation (and had quite the end-of-program celebration at the wedding, too), and we stayed in St. Louis until 2020, when we moved to Minneapolis. I have a 3-year-old nephew and a one-year-old niece who I absolutely adore, and who I travel to visit as often as I can. I really enjoy crafting, writing, hiking, visiting craft breweries and watching the same four TV shows over and over again. When I'm not at my "day job," I'm also a family and couple photographer - I officially launched my business as a sole proprietorship this year! In the three and a half years since we've graduated, my cohort and I have remained very close. Though most of us don't live in St. Louis anymore, we make it a priority to see each other whenever we return. We started a weekly Zoom call at the beginning of the pandemic: it started out as a trivia game, then morphed into hanging out, playing games and catching up. We have been there for each other's weddings, childrens' birthdays and more. The friends and connections I made at SLU are the kinds I know I'll have for a lifetime.

Tell us about your career now.

I'm currently the communications manager for the School of Dentistry at the University of Minnesota. That means a lot of things that vary day to day, but essentially, I'm responsible for any external communications that come from the school. I manage our social media, am the editor-in-chief of the alumni magazine, run our online news site and manage materials for admissions and alumni. Before that, I worked for a couple years as the digital content specialist at WashU's Olin Business School, where I managed the school's social media presence. I absolutely love working in academia, something I learned while still at SLU as a professional assistant. I enjoy showcasing the stories of students and crafting the narrative of what it means to be a member of that school, or that program.

As I mentioned above, I'm also a photographer, mainly shooting with families and couples, though I second-shot my first wedding this year and absolutely loved it. I hope to continue growing my photography business in addition to my "day job!" I also write regularly for Grotto Network, a Catholic young adult media platform, where I'm a contributing author.

How has your Communication Graduate degree been useful at your current job?

I really wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for my time at SLU. Before my masters program, I had studied and been active in politics. I knew I wanted to pivot to communication, but wasn't able to do so without the knowledge and experience. The masters program at SLU taught me all the fundamentals I didn't know beforehand - from theories of communication to really practical things, like how to produce a video or be a good photographer. What I loved the most about my time at SLU was my ability to take part in a professional assistantship, working half-time in SLU's Office of Marketing and Communications. That position allowed me to see what it would be like working in a communications office at a University, and it gave me experience in digital media. The team at MarCom really encouraged me to grow and try new things - I helped produce the annual Christmas video, wrote articles for every alumni magazine and even wrote some content for social media. That job gave me the confidence and the expertise to go straight into a full-time job after graduation.

What was your favorite part of the Communication Graduate program?

In addition to my work with MarCom, I loved building relationships - with my faculty mentors and with my cohort. I loved writing a thesis - getting to really dive deep into questions that were interesting to me. Even though my thesis topic isn't directly related to my work today, it really impacted me personally, academically and professionally. I was so proud to have put something meaningful together, and it's even come up a few times in interviews!

I also loved getting to try out new things. In fact, those new things I tried out became some of the things I use most in my job and in my life. I'd never really used a professional camera, or created a video, before my time at SLU. Taking courses like digital storytelling and multiplatform journalism encouraged me to think outside the box, doing things I never thought I'd do in an academic setting, and helped me really find my creative side.

What advice would you give to current students in the program?

Pursue what sparks passion in you. Know that everything in communication won't be right for you, so find what works for you and work hard at it. Members of my cohort have gone all over the place with their degrees: from working in marketing to public policy to strategic communication to teaching. Don't spend too much time comparing yourself to other people or their pathways. Be ready to work hard and stretch yourself creatively, and you'll do just fine. And always feel free to reach out (to me or anyone else) for advice, mentorship, etc!



Alumni Megan and Carter were married in April, 2021

SPOTLIGHT

Alumni

MEGAN & CARTER

Tell us a little bit about yourself!

My name is Carter Chapley, I graduated in 2019, and I love spending time with my puppy, reading comic books, spin class, and watching any sport you can find on television (or otherwise)!

Tell us about your work!

I am a sportswriter and content strategist/producer for multiple digital platforms in the midwest, but my largest engagement is with ScoopswithDannymac.com. My work has focused on St. Louis-based teams, primarily our very own Billikens, but has expanded to include coverage of the NHL, MLS, and the NBA.

How has your MA in Communication been useful for your work and/or civic life?

A lot of what I do involves creating well-researched and informed written work that can be consumed across multiple platforms. My MA helped prepare me to be ready to learn in so many different disciplines across the spectrum of communication and then be able to apply that newfound knowledge in practical and diverse ways. From Strat Comm to Multiplatform Journalism, to quantitative and qualitative study, my experience in the Comm department made me a more complete professional.

What was your favorite part of the MA program in Communication?

My favorite part of the program was the life-long friends that I made. Not only making some of my best friends within the cohort, but also meeting my husband, Carter! You are each other's best assets both in the program, and professionally after you graduate—make sure to lean on those relationships whenever you need, and make sure your peers know they can do the same.

What advice would you give to current students in the program?

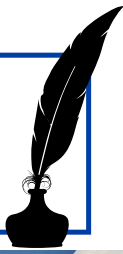
My advice is to realize that you will never be done learning. Your professors will provide a strong foundation, and you will spend the rest of your life building on it. Dive as deep as you can into the foundation, so you know that you are going to build something solid.

What was your favorite part of the MA program in Communication?

I'd be remiss to not say that my favorite part of the program wasn't meeting my wife Megan, but from an academic standpoint, having the opportunity to explore and educate myself in so many disciplines of communication with some of the brightest people I've ever met. I largely came to the program without a ton of professional direction, but thanks to my cohort, amazing professors (shout out Dr. Koz), and the University News, I found myself working in my dream field!

What advice would you give to current students in the program?

Do not be afraid to utilize the resources around you! It took me way too long to understand that the pros were desperate to find ways to help you and excited when you had questions! The program and department have so much to offer and can provide so many opportunities, but you need to be active in engaging with them! You never stop learning but very rarely will you have the opportunity to learn so freely and without risk as you do while in the Communication department!



SPOTLIGHT *Student*



MARCO RAMIREZ

As a current graduate student specializing in strategic communication, Marco Ramirez knows the importance of networking. As he prepares for graduation, has engaged in numerous activities to not only to learn about future professional opportunities and create important connections, but also to enhance his creative intellect and serve others.

In October, Marco attended the New Millennial Community Boston Bound Conference where he had opportunity to network and learn about the public relations, communications, and marketing roles with SharkNinja, GBH, NBC Universal, Zumix, The Institute of Contemporary Art, and Bodega Makeover.

Marco then attended the ANA Educational Foundation's Annual Honors Night Gala, where he networked with representatives from Who's Who's in Marketing, PR, and Corporate Communications in New York City. He connected with executives from corporations such as IBM, Disney, and Omnigroup.

Marco was also invited to the 2021 Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations' Annual Milestones in Mentoring Gala, part of the Plant Center's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Summit. As a former Plank Center Scholarship recipient, he is excited to meet public relations executives in Chicago this November.

Also in November, Marco will be attending the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Media and Entertainment Summit. He is a recipient of the 2021 Hispanic Scholarship Fund and accepted the opportunity to serve as a mentor at the Summit. He is excited for the event and to meet with executives from organizations like Turner, HBO, and Disney while he is there.

When not creating networking opportunities, Marco can be found tasting "the best pasta he ever had" made by Chef Rudy (former chef for the Obamas) and working on his applied project, which aims to build supportive programs for LGBTQ+ individuals at SLU.



Awards AND Shoutouts

Graduate students **Sofia Hingorani**, **Tristan Johnson**, and **Hali Wood** received awards from the Knoedler Student Research Fund to support their thesis projects.

Marco Ramirez received a \$2,000 grant from the New Millennial Community to support his applied project, which aims to build programs and create events to support the queer community at SLU.

Jennifer Ohs and **April Trees** were awarded the Stolle Fund to support their research exploring the living experiences of roommates matched through an intergenerational homesharing program.

Professor Alex Rafi's short film, *a door away*, won an award for Best Documentary at the AfroComicCon International Film Festival.

Dr. Dan Kozlowski was selected as one of two SLU faculty members to receive Emerson's 2021 Excellence in Teaching Recognition Award. Through this annual award, Emerson recognizes teaching excellence in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Dr. Tim Huffman is the 2021 recipient of the Dr. Norman A. White Award for Engaged Scholarship and Service. This award honors a faculty member who exemplifies community-engaged scholarship and service at Saint Louis University.



Department Activity in the National Communication Association (NCA) 107th Annual Convention

The 2021 NCA convention will be held in Seattle, Washington November 18-21. Below are some of the activities of our graduate students, graduate alumni, and faculty at the convention.

Graduate students **Sofia Hingorani** and **Tristan Johnson's** work "Muteness of WLW Romantic Authenticity in Monster" was accepted for presentation at NCA. Sofia is looking forward to presenting in Seattle!

Ashlee Lambert (alumnus) is a co-author of "People of Color Mentoring People of Color: Putting Critical Race Theory and Co-Cultural Theory in Action Through Autoethnography," to be presented at NCA in the Ethnography Division. Ashlee is also the first author of "Co-Cultural Stories of Racialized Trauma, Vulnerability, and Empowerment: A Collective Autoethnography of Negotiating Whitespeak and Whitespace," which was paneled in the African American Communication and Culture Division.

Kathleen Murphy and **Margaret Murphy** (alumni) will be presenting their paper, "Transforming the Turf: Football, Gender Norms, and the Case of Sarah Fuller" at NCA in the Feminist and Gender Studies Division.

Dr. Amber Johnson will be presenting, "Mediated Identity, Stereotypes, and the Making of Hyper(in)visibility in the African American Communication and Culture Division.

Dr. Diana Carlin (Professor Emeritus) is the co-author of the work, "Have You Come a Long Way, Baby, Since 2008? One Major Step Forward with Missteps Along the Way," to be presented in the Political Communication Division.

Dr. Tim Huffman's paper "Rest, Community-Based Research, and the Qualitative/Activist Day" received a Top Paper Award in the Ethnography Division. Congratulations!

KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE A GOOD MATCH FOR OUR MA PROGRAM?

We are accepting applications for admission and assistantships. Review begins January 31, 2022.

Our MA program is designed to provide a high-quality graduate education for individuals interested in becoming communication professionals, scholars, leaders, and activists through advanced knowledge of research, theory and practice. Our flexible program provides students opportunities for professional development as communication scholars and practitioners, drawing on SLU's Jesuit values. We encourage students to explore the role of communication in creating a more just society through their work as communication specialists.

If you aim to enhance your expertise as a scholar or communication specialist in the spirit of social justice, integrity, and ethics, SLU's MA program in Communication is for you. Coursework options allow students to deepen their understanding of communication theory and research within a variety of areas, including:

- Organizational Communication
- Intercultural Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Rhetoric and Public Dialogue
- Media Studies
- Strategic Communication
- Health Communication
- Social Justice Communication

Did you know?

Our MA program in Communication has three options for degree completion.

- **Applied Project** - Students with a professional focus engage in an in-depth application of communication theory and research in a professional setting. Students design a project applying knowledge and skills developed during graduate study to produce a professional project on behalf of an organization or field of practice.
- **Comprehensive Exam** - Students synthesize knowledge from across their coursework, with a focus on their area of specialization. Students have additional coursework opportunities that culminate in an exam demonstrating their knowledge.
- **Thesis** - Students create new knowledge in their area of specialization. Informed by research and theory, students conduct a study examining an issue of importance to them in the field of Communication.

Tuition assistance is available!

We offer **graduate assistantships** that provide students with a monthly stipend, health insurance, and free tuition. We offer teaching, research and professional assistantships. For working professionals, employers sometimes offer tuition remission to employees interested in continuing their education. Ask your employer for details! For those who do not qualify for graduate assistantships or employer support, our Department offers a limited number of tuition hours covered by our **Access Scholarship** to support students who would not otherwise be able to cover the cost of tuition.

Visit our website at tinyurl.com/slucomm to learn more or contact Jennifer Ohs, Graduate Program Coordinator at jennifer.ohs@slu.edu.

AWESOME 1ST YEAR STUDENTS



SHARE THE NEWS!

GRADUATE PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR

Know someone who may be interested in pursuing an MA in Communication at SLU?

We are hosting an informational webinar about our MA program

November 12 (Friday)

5:00-6:00PM CT

The webinar will include information about the application process and assistantships, as well as a chance to interact with faculty, alumni, and present graduate students.

Register here!

<https://slu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tjYlduurqD0tHNUwWpLDZj2CU9wE38Tni0Ee>

Join the meeting on November 12 at 5pm CT here!

<https://slu.zoom.us/j/92812366761>

Can't make the webinar? Have additional questions?

Contact Jennifer Ohs, Graduate Program Coordinator, for a recording and to set up a time to talk about additional questions!

jennifer.ohs@slu.edu

Got Internships?

Saint Louis University students studying Communication are eager for real-world experience. We offer students course credit for interning with organizations in a wide range of industries that offer them hands-on experience. Internships may be any semester, including the summer, and students average 10-15 hours of work per week. Employers report that they benefit from our students' communication skills and ability to apply the knowledge they learn in class to their work. If you have internships to offer or would like more information, please contact Professor Keli Jackson at keli.jackson@slu.edu.

