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Communications Studies @ Ashford Student Edition

Summer 2014

Welcome to Communications Studies at Ashford University

One of the most frequently encountered questions about the field of Communication Studies concerns what, exactly, the field is. This confusion stems from the fact that we all know what communication is and use it so integrally in our lives that the idea of studying it may create a kind of “can’t see the forest for the trees” effect. Communication is so pervasive in our lives, and we encounter so many forms of it, just thinking about studying it in detail makes many think this would be too large of a challenge to take on.

We can quickly get around these concerns by simplifying the situation this way: Communication is about messages. We create, transmit, store, index, recall, evaluate, analyze and criticize messages. These messages take some form, have a source, go through some channel, are destined for some receiver or receivers and have some impact when delivered (although in some cases, the impact is nothing).

In the last three sentences, the entire field of communication and all its sub-disciplines are described. In our everyday lives, we process messages all day long. As Communication scholars, we engage these messages from the perspectives of theory, practice and critical analysis. Theory concerns itself with questions such as what effects the messages have, how society is influenced by messages and so on. Practice concerns itself with how messages are created, distributed and received. Critical analysis concerns itself with the quality and attributes of the messages.

But it all comes back to messages and the relationships or outcomes that result from their exchange. In the field of Communication Studies, we take various approaches to studying the creation, distribution, characteristics and impacts of messages. Our motivation is to better understand and more effectively use these processes that are so central to human existence.

Dr. Dan Tinianow
Program Chair, Communications Studies



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Student Profiles



Izzy Espinoza-Ortiz
BA, Communication Studies, 2014

“I am on my way to graduation and I have the greatest support system, starting with my fiancé and the team of faculty and staff, who helped me here at Ashford.”

Israel Espinoza-Ortiz, who goes by Izzy, has just completed his last class toward his BA in Communication Studies at Ashford. Like many students, earning that college degree has been full of challenges. But for Izzy, who is blind, the real achievement is that he arrived in the United States from Mexico as a young teen having never been to school. “One of my aunts in Mexico gave me a plastic alphabet set, from which I learned to identify my ABCs,” Izzy explains. “After I learned to do so, I began teaching myself to read in the license plates of cars, and anywhere where there were raised letters.”

The first year was a struggle but by the time he graduated high school, his English was rapidly improving. He had learned Braille, he learned to use a computer, and mastered public transportation. He graduated with a 3.76 GPA. He then attended Wenatchee Valley Community College, where he not only took classes but also became a very active member of several organizations. So active, in fact, that he was awarded the President’s Medal for most active student in the community. He then attended Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington, where he continued to work with the community through various organizations. He joined Ashford in 2013, at the urging of his fiancé, who is also graduating.

“On the road for fourteen years, married, two young children and five different countries and cultures that I traveled within, each time it feels like the first day at a new school.”

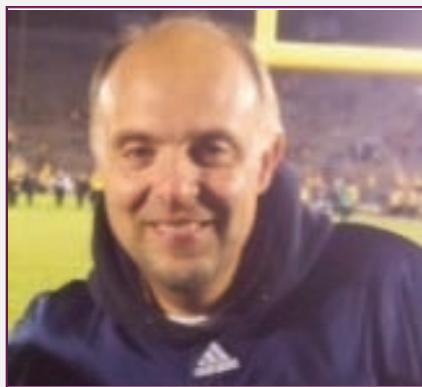


Mehtab Cevdet
BA, Communication Studies, 2014

Mehtab Cevdet is quite serious about communications. So serious, in fact, that she speaks English, Turkish, French, and is learning Mandarin. A Turkish Australian, she currently lives in Hong Kong but grew up in Sydney, Australia and has lived in Canada, Singapore, and Switzerland. That does not count the 50 or so other cities and countries she has visited with her husband and her two children.

As part of her Capstone class, COM480, Mehtab and her fellow classmates were asked to launch their own blogs and to comment on each other’s work. For Mehtab, the experience was enlightening and served to reinforce why she wanted to get her degree in Communication Studies. As she sees it, living “amongst many cultures, it is important to learn how to communicate with all. Over the years I have learned about many cultures, and have seen the importance of non-verbal communication. It is important to be a good listener as well as a good speaker. No matter what I choose to do I know it will involve people and hence the importance of strong communication skills with an understanding of different cultures.”

Faculty Profiles



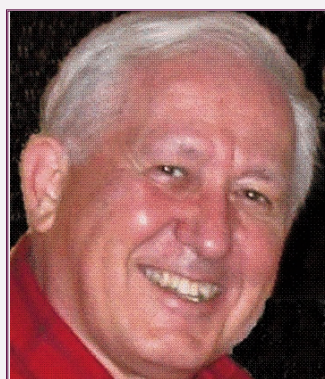
Michael Angelo
Associate Faculty since 2006

"Writing is hard work. A good sentence is no accident. But it is possible to write well if you are willing to invest yourself in the craft. Go at your own pace and believe in yourself. You can do it! Press on and soar!"

Michael Angelo is named after the renowned painter of the Sistine Chapel, although some may think of him as the ninja turtle who lives below the street, under the manhole cover, with Donatello, Raphael, and Leonardo. How culture changes and how we react to it led Michael to earn a MS in clinical psychology degree from Benedictine University in Illinois, and he later became a psychotherapist, specializing in anxiety disorders.

Previously, he spent nearly two decades as a professional writer and editor. His first master's degree was in journalism, earned at Northwestern University. His resume in this area includes business publications, books (including religious devotionals including one on the Bible), and marketing materials.

He first stepped into the classroom in 2002 as an instructor and has been working at Ashford University since in 2006. Michael credits his passion for teaching in the virtual environment to the ability it allows to formulate and articulate thoughts. He looks forward to spending many more years with us, making a name for himself that has nothing to do with painters or turtles!



Larry Sexton
Associate Faculty since 2009

"It is graduation day. You hear your name called. You stride confidently across the stage to receive your diploma. You have done it! Think of this image every single day and you will achieve it."

Larry Sexton likes to joke about his age: "I have been teaching since before the discovery of dirt.....on the moon!" But with age comes a wealth of experience both in the classroom and in business. He earned his BS from Central Michigan University and an MA in Communication Arts from Michigan State University. During his first career in teaching, Larry taught at Hampton University and was the creator and director of a Ford Foundation Program for Gifted Secondary School Theatre Students. He earned tenure as Assistant Professor of Speech and Theatre at the University of Akron.

When life outside the university called, Larry went into the business world, marketing residential and commercial Real Estate. He was also involved in marketing typesetting systems (think PageMaker) in the printing field. In addition to developing commercial sites for other businesses, his interest in technology also led him to develop and run a successful commercial website promoting the sale of land and lots.

He currently lives in Florida and loving every minute of his "retirement." In addition to teaching at Ashford, Larry gets face-time with students at Palm Beach State College. He is and is the proud father of two daughters and five grandchildren.

Market Watch

Job market trends look good for Bachelor's Degrees in Communications

In its January 2014 report, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics offered promising news for a wide variety of communication jobs through 2022. The following is a summary of some of the top jobs in the industry:

Technical Writers

Median Pay 2012: \$65,500/year

Number of Jobs 2012: 49,500

Education: Bachelor's degree

Job Outlook: Expected 15% increase by 2022

Writers and Authors

Median Pay 2012: \$55,940/year

Number of Jobs 2012: 129,100

Education: Bachelor's degree

Job Outlook: Fairly stable, small increase by 2022

Public Relations Specialists

Median Pay 2012: \$54,170/year

Number of Jobs 2012: 229,100

Education: Bachelor's degree

Job Outlook: Expected 12% increase by 2022

Editors

Median Pay 2012: \$53,880/year

Number of Jobs 2012: 115,300

Education: Bachelor's degree

Job Outlook: Fairly stable, small decline by 2022

Film/Video Editors and Camera Operators

Median Pay 2012: \$46,280/year

Number of Jobs 2012: 49,500

Education: Bachelor's degree

Job Outlook: Fairly stable, small decline by 2022

For the full report, click [here](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/film-and-video-editors-and-camera-operators.htm) or go to <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/film-and-video-editors-and-camera-operators.htm>



Tips for an Effective Job Package

1. The Job Search

Avoid massive job boards and concentrate on target sites that cater to your field such as Mediabistro.com. Do not forget to check out government jobs and the non-profit sector.

2. The Resume

The first section of your resume should be your education. Earning a degree shows dedication, great time-management skills and the ability to work independently.

3. Know Your Story

Be prepared to give an "elevator pitch" that summarizes what you can bring to an organization. Communication and team work are highly valued skill sets.

4 The Cover Letter

Open your letter with information on where you heard about the job opening and in your closing, do not assume that you will be called in for an interview.

5. The Interview

Do your homework. An interview is a two-way conversation. Being prepared to ask and to answer questions about the company shows that you are seriously interested in the job.

6. How to Follow-up

Use email, not the phone, to follow-up on a submission. Wait at least three weeks but do not be surprised or dismayed if you never hear back.



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Congratulates **The Class of 2014!**

Steven M. Avila	Lawanda J. Jones
Antonio Barraza	Michael J. Klouda
Elisabeth K. Bloom	Kevin LaBronte
Krystal L. Buckley	Cheryl S. Lowe
Mehtab Cevdet	Joseph R. Lynes
Michelle A. Comeaux	Bojan Maric
Blake R. Cooper	Melissa Martin
Annette Cowan	Melody A. Mccraney
Christopher R. Deniz	Melissa A. Miller
Daniel T. Dombrowski	Ervanette F. Murry
Joel J. Ehmann	Valerie D. Nunez
Israel Espinoza-Ortiz	Theresa D. Onsager
Karen L. Ferguson	Lance M. Otani
Kristan A. Franciscous	Henry Rivers
Tracy A. Glynn	Valerie A. Rose
Annavieve R. Gomez	Thomas L. Rosier
Katrina J. Grant	Jennifer S. Simmons
Kevin J. Gruenwald	Barbara Smith
Heather-Louise Hall	Amanda K. Stellmacher
Robyn Hawkins	James A. Stewart
Oscar T. Hebert	William D. Stubblefield
Donald Hicks	<i>... so far</i>

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