

WHO IS THE ANGELIC NEW PLAYER ON THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT TEAM?

BY LAUREN JAREMA



Dr. James Angelini, formerly a visiting professor from Indiana University with a deep-seated interest in sports, may still be new to the UD Department of Communication, but don't think of him as a rookie.

Angelini began his teaching career at Indiana University (IU) when his Department Chair offered him the opportunity. (It's not typical for graduate students to teach a course at IU, but he got a head start while completing his Ph.D. in the Department of Telecommunications.)

During graduate school, Angelini studied media effects on emotional, psychological and cognitive responses with a focus on television and sports. Striking a balance between teaching and research is his top priority. Rather than just lecturing, he introduces a new learning experience to UD students in his course 'Topics in Mass Communication: Sports in the Media' by beginning class with current event icebreakers to get students thinking and expressing their opinions. He introduces his lessons through clearly guided stimulating discussions.

He feels fortunate to continue his full-time teaching career at UD, and states, "The communication department has a fine reputation." He is impressed that UD students value the opportunity to engage in class discussions. In his opinion, Indiana students are not as sharp or responsive, and he is pleasantly surprised by the Blue Hens' aptitude.

He also teaches 'Theories of Mass Communication' and in spring of 2009 he will offer 'Communication Principles in Advertising,' 'Introduction to Communication Research Methods' and 'Children and the Mass Media.' He is especially enthusiastic about the latter since he has studied media effects on children and has had the opportunity to do research with kids. "I'm hoping that'll be a fun class," he said. Other areas of his experimental and content analysis research include health communication public service announcements, political advertisements and print advertising.

In the future Angelini would like to pursue

Letter from the Chair

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION



Sunrise, sunset ... sunrise, sunset ... many of us recall the bittersweet lyrics from this *Fiddler On The Roof* tune. As we begin another academic year, I am reminded of how our new students arrive on campus, excited and filled with anticipation. Day-by-day, they progress in their undergraduate and graduate pursuits, until we bid them Farewell at each May's Commencement and Convocation ceremonies. It is the annual sunrise and sunset of the academic calendar and of the student academic experience.

But this new school year also bring change among our faculty, both our full-time and our adjunct faculty. We welcome Dan Tipton, a local marketing communications agency owner and former MBNA executive, as a new adjunct PR Writing instructor.

We also say Hail and Farewell to two full-time Communication Department faculty. Former Department Chair John Courtright, rejoins us after five years in UD administration. And our Advertising and Public Relations Instructor Phil Wescott retires to transition to a new phase of life as a consultant and UD graduate student. We will thank Phil for his service to our students with a reception this semester when we hope to have many of Phil's former students return to campus.

This issue of our *COMM-entator* e-newsletter contains several stories written by our recent COMM graduates. I am always fascinated by the stories that our Communication Department alumni share with us; so many of our alumni have gone on to remarkable careers and lives. As you know, President Pat Harker has placed increased emphasis on building relationships with our Blue Hen alumni, wherever they are living.

If you will be coming back to Delaware anytime soon, please let me know. I would love to see you and catch up on your activities. My e-mail address is eperse@udel.edu

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Perse, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Communication

research on NASCAR audiences, and study viewer responses to independent car racing where women compete with men. Extreme sports also pique his interest; he looks forward to studying their beginnings and how they evolved into "legitimate" sporting events. After doing research that examines men and women in sports he recommends that students interested in pursuing a career in sports media not limit themselves to thinking of sports as just for men. Women also participate and there are ample employment opportunities in those leagues.

After living in Indiana for 10 years, he has grown familiar with the Newark area. Although far from his cat he had to leave in Indiana, Newark

reminds him of the warmth of his hometown of Alexandria, Virginia. On Sundays, you can find him watching one of his favorite professional football teams, the Washington Redskins or the Indianapolis Colts. "I'm looking for a good place to go watch a football game," he said. Other sporting events he follows are the Olympics and college basketball, especially IU basketball.

He encourages students to pursue whatever interests them and he follows his own advice by teaching courses directly related to his research. Angelini believes the field of communication offers many diverse opportunities, "My best advice is to enjoy the major; there are many different niches you find and have fun with."

FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN STUDENTS' EDUCATION

Professor Wescott encourages students to seek opportunities to apply their skills BY AMANDA CARL

Throughout my four years at the University of Delaware, I came across myriad professors and educators. While some professors simply taught me the basics of the communication field, others artfully ignited a sense of passion and interest.

One such professor managed not only to spark my interest and teach me the ins and outs of the communication world, but also provide me with invaluable first-hand experience of what was to come after my graduation. Professor Phil Wescott has been the most influential and effective professor I have had the privilege to learn from while studying at the university.

Professor Wescott, a graduate of Wabash College and Indiana University, has been a professor in the Department of Communication since 1998 and has restructured the public relations and advertising curriculum within the major. Wescott recognized the inherent need to have a contemporary and up-to-date persuasive communication program, in order to properly prepare students for the vast and always-changing world of marketing communication.

Wescott began his public relations career at General Motors. Working as a public relations representative, he was responsible for aspects of community and media relations. After GM, he completed graduate school and became a junior public information officer for the United States Army, stationed mostly at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. As a public relations officer for the military, Wescott was responsible for numerous tasks, including event planning, media and government relations, producing television and radio-station programs, publishing the

post newspaper, and speech writing for the Commanding General. "This was the fastest period of learning in my professional life," Wescott said.

Following his military service he worked for Bristol Myers-Squibb, PR agency Burson Marsteller, and the Medical Center of Delaware, where he was responsible for all marketing communications, external relations, and fund-raising. He re-branded the organization as Christiana Care in 1997. In 1998 Wescott became an adjunct professor for several departments at UD, and in 2001 he joined the Communication faculty full time. Unlike many professors, Wescott does not utilize a textbook as his foundation for teaching. Instead, he recounts personal experiences and brings expert guest speakers from various communication professions to the classroom. Professor Wescott believes students have a better opportunity to assess the pros and cons of public relations and communication positions in the real world. Wescott said he believes he is, "paying it forward, and investing in the nation's talent pool," by bringing his executive contacts to campus to speak with students.

Wescott is clearly a supporter of applied communication theory, assigning real-world projects, and encouraging students to apply for internships. Through these practices, he helps students realize there is more to communication than what they read in textbooks. "In academic circles, there is a dichotomy between advanced knowledge in the abstract and enabling people in applied areas," he said.



Phil Wescott

Wescott believes it's important to offer students opportunities to learn about their perspective fields on a first-hand basis, and to enable them to develop and practice their skillsets through interactive courses.

Furthermore, Wescott suggests, "I think students need to actively embrace learning opportunities instead of seeing them as a nuisance. If they can adopt the attitude that one more learning opportunity leads to new perspectives, then it will pay dividends in the future."

Students, according to Wescott, "are in an intellectual candy store with an unlimited budget," and if they pursue the opportunities set forth for them, it can result in having a more enriching college and career experience.

Although Professor Wescott can often be found teaching all five of the public relations courses as well as the introductory advertising course, his interests also lie outside the University. When not in the classroom, Professor Wescott can be found admiring artwork in the various art galleries on campus and in the regional community. Wescott, who has a life-long interest in fine art, plans to eventually help emerging young artists in less developed nations to bring their artwork to the attention of American collectors. He also enjoys travelling around the world and spending quality time with his family, including his six grandchildren.

Throughout his years at the University of Delaware, Professor Phil Wescott has truly impacted his students by employing alternate methods of teaching communications. His determination to teach students through applied practices is evident in each of his many classes. His real-world perspectives have helped broaden the scope of the Department of Communication and his influence has been invaluable.

UD COMM GRAD ENJOYS PR WORK AT JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT BY VALERIE VALENT

Not sure what you want to do with your new communication degree? Well, one way to gain some perspective is to get an inside look at what previous communication graduates have done with theirs.

2007 graduate Lisa Barile is enjoying a PR career at a local non-profit organization, Junior Achievement of Delaware. JA Delaware is an organization that provides high school students with a solid foundation of business and economic education. The students learn about the work place, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial skills that are essential to their future success.

As the Events and Public Relations Manager, Barile coordinates JA's special events and major fundraising activities, as well as providing branding and fundraising support.

She particularly enjoys the event planning aspect of her job. "It is extremely rewarding to see the events that I work so hard on come together in the end." Barile likes that every day at her job is different and exciting. She constantly has the opportunity to work with new people, community members, and business leaders.

The sales portion of her job is the most challenging aspect so far. "I struggled with making the 'ask,'" said Barile. Yet she also

stated that she realizes it is an important skill that she will need in the future.

Before being hired at Junior Achievement, she was the PR intern there. She was offered the full-time position when she graduated.

As a UD communication major, Barile feels that her PR Writing class was the most beneficial, especially since writing is such a central part of her career. "I constantly check myself for the format, grammar and AP style of writing that we practiced, and I write more concisely and clearly than before," said Barile.

Barile is enjoying her job at Junior Achievement and is very excited to see what the future holds for her. "It is a tremendous opportunity for someone right out of college, and JA will be an important step in my career."

INTRODUCING “HER EXCELLENCY”: DANNA YOUNG

There’s A New Professor On The Block... And She’s Here To Stay

BY MARCUS CHIN-QUEE

What is it about being a Communication professor that makes life more entertaining? Second-year professor Danna Young sat down with me to talk about her first year in the Communication Department at the University of Delaware. During her first year at the



Danna Young and her son, Baxter

University, she taught Communication 245: Mass Communication and Culture, and Communication 450: Mass Communication Effects. At the young age of 32, she’s already accomplished a great deal.

Young graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in Political Science and French. Originally, she was interested in political philosophy, then she took a class called ‘Mass Media and Politics,’ and it completely changed her career path. She realized that her passion was media.

After graduation from UNH, she earned her Ph.D from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research included media effects, public opinion, and the effects of political humor on viewers’ political

knowledge and attitudes. Currently she’s working on a research proposal for a conference on entertainment and politics.

Thinking about why she wanted to be a professor, Young mentioned that she loved being a student. She loved to learn and to gain understanding. She also has an understanding of how to relate to her students, getting them to understand the information in a fun and interesting way. It’s clear that her method of teaching is why her students love her.

“Professor Young is awesome. She just looks like she loves what she’s doing, and she makes class so much fun. She presents the information in a way that makes us want to listen. I only wish she taught more classes,” raved senior Emily Dourte.

You would assume that in order to get that type of reaction from the students that she would be teaching small intimate classes. But the classes she enjoys most are the large lecture classes that can have as many as 150 people.

“I love teaching a big class. Most professors prefer the intimacy of a small class, but it gave me this great high to teach big lectures for the first time. It’s like performing on stage at a concert. I love it.”

For Young, she said the experience of teaching is like something you can’t find at any other job.

“The lifestyle of a professor is unmatched. You’re free to do things your own way, but you also have to be very self-motivated,” she said.

The only thing Young finds somewhat difficult, and what applies to most professors, is how to balance research and teaching. She notices that some professors will focus more on their research than teaching their courses, but she’s found a great balance between the two, and enjoys doing both.

Dr. Young, or “*Her Excellency*” as she jokingly asked to be called after she received her Ph.D, is also a regular person. With the flexibility of her job she’s still able to take care of her two-year-old son Baxter, and in between having fun with “the Bax man” she enjoys doing lots of yoga, and drinking cup after cup of vanilla lattes while grading papers.

If you ask her what she would be doing if she hadn’t gone into teaching, she said she’d want to be either a party planner, cruise director, or hair stylist. Judging from her personality, she’d be great at any of those. It was rumored that she was going to be leaving after last year, but she emphatically states that she’s here for the long haul.

“I’m not going anywhere!” And anyone who has taken a class with her hopes she’ll be a Blue Hen for many years.

THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF A UD COMMUNICATION MAJOR

BY MOIRA DOUGHERTY

When I was applying to colleges more than four years ago, I was a confused high school senior who had no idea where I would end up. As visions of endless opportunities danced in my mind, I knew one thing: I wanted to pursue a communication degree.

I remember the days when I played “hospital” with my cousin, because she loved the idea of taking care of people. Now, she is completing her nursing degree. I, on the other hand, would never stop talking, whether someone was listening or not. I announced the news and weather to my community of stuffed animals.

As a freshman communication interest major, the academic standards were high. Initially, it seemed intimidating that only 100 communication interest majors could advance into the program after sophomore year. Even with significant work, I was motivated to strive for the best grades I could attain. I am happy to say I never felt a sense of “competitiveness” with other students. Rather, I fostered close relationships with individuals who work together both in and out of the classroom, creating friendships that will last a lifetime.

Throughout my time at UD, I learned the importance of being a well-rounded individual. As important as it is to work diligently and efficiently with schoolwork, extra-curricular activities within the Communication Department allow students to expand on their classroom knowledge.

Following my Public Speaking course, I had the opportunity to work as an Oral Communication Fellow, meeting with students who need guidance on organizing and delivering speeches.

Along with the extra-curricular activities that are offered to communication majors, the Department helps students secure internship opportunities. Thanks to the extensive list of employment opportunities on the department’s website, I was able to secure a Marketing and Public Relations internship at Crozer-Chester Medical Center, a renowned hospital located in Upland, Pa. There, I had the ability to assist the Vice President of Marketing with administrative tasks as well as participate in executive team strategy meetings. I enhanced my writing skills by writing articles for the hospital’s monthly edition of *The Journal and The Playmaker*. Meeting deadlines for press releases, planning events, and setting up interviews also stressed the importance of good time management.

My experience as a communication major at the University of Delaware has given me important skills. As a new graduate, I look forward to the opportunities of the future, never forgetting the impact that college has had on me.

**LIVING LIFE IN 15
SECOND INCREMENTS**

BY JORDANA ZIRPOLO
ENGLISH-JOURNALISM MAJOR

After 22 years in the spotlight of WHYY's *Delaware Tonight*, University of Delaware alumnus Nancy Karibjanian teaches field television production as an adjunct instructor in the Communication Department.

Even though Karibjanian is recognized by Delaware TV viewers as a local celebrity, she is humble about her accomplishments. In September of 2002, she hosted the Emmy Award-winning program *Delaware Tonight: Kids Coping with Terror*, a live post 9/11 forum for teens. In June of 2006, she was also named Critic's Choice for Best News Anchor in *Delaware Today*.

"You're only as good as your last newscast," Karibjanian said. "It is the best inspiration to keep you working your hardest."

Although, she is still an active member of the WHYY team, Karibjanian stepped down as host and news director at WHYY in 1994 after the birth of her third child, Maggie.

"It's not a matter of having it all, it's a matter of putting it all in perspective," said Karibjanian.

From the very first communications class that Nancy Karibjanian took at the University of Delaware, she knew that broadcast journalism was for her. "It just came to me very naturally," she said. Her career in news casting began at WHYY as an intern while she was still a senior at the University of Delaware. Karibjanian's first and only internship evolved into her full-time career.

For students interested in pursuing news production, Karibjanian offers her words of wisdom: "Never let them see you sweat."

Ben Aaron, a senior at the University of Delaware, would be one of the first to recommend Karibjanian's communications course in field production and journalism.

"Thanks to Professor Karibjanian's vast professional experience, she was able to truly provide everyone in the class with a solid foundation in the writing, shooting and editing of television news," Aaron said. "Her teaching is clear and captivating and her assignments are creative, fun and effective."

Although being a part-time professor at the University of Delaware and a part-time news anchor at WHYY are gratifying experiences, nothing surpasses the adrenaline rush of being in the newsroom.

"Once you're addicted, it's a drug that you can't get off of," said Karibjanian. "You live your life in the newsroom in 15 minute increments."

THE WOMAN BEHIND THE DESK: MEET LUCI COUMATOS

Senior Communication Department Secretary, Luci Coumatos, shares her job experience BY NATALIE PETERS

Dozens of questions from parents and students filter into the UD Communication Department office daily. Who provides the answers? Often, it is the same person who orders textbooks for professors, sets up appointments, and assigns students to advisors.

That person is Luci Coumatos (kah-mah-tis), the secretary of the Communication Department. She plays an integral role in the academic lives of students and professors.

Coumatos has been with the University for more than a year now, and says that no day at work is ever the same. One thing that remains constant is her positive attitude and willingness to help. "The door to the Comm office is always open, and the atmosphere is always welcoming," Coumatos explained.

Some students go to Coumatos for personal advice due to her maternal perspective.

"I have two kids of my own, and I try to treat the students as I would want my own children treated," she said. Many students visit Coumatos with problems regarding class scheduling, or with questions about the major. While trying to be as accommodating as possible, Coumatos also tries to make the students feel relaxed, because they are often stressed. After seeing hundreds of students throughout the semester, Coumatos notes how respectful, friendly and understanding they are.



She also admitted to feeling a bit sad the first time she attended the graduation convocation and saw some of the students she had formed bonds with leave the University. Coumatos plays an important role regarding convocation, because she helps plan and execute the event. Students who are members of Lamda Pi Eta, the Communication Honor Society, may also be familiar with Coumatos because she works with members of the organization and helps plan their induction ceremony.

Coumatos also helps the faculty plan their calendars, order supplies, and generally tries to make their lives easier in any way she can. "All of the professors are very nice and they treat me with great respect," Coumatos said.

Coumatos is a Delaware native, and lives in Bear with her husband of 21 years, her two children, and her beloved Yorkshire terrier.

**SOLEDAD O'BRIEN
VISITS UD**

University of Delaware Communication and Journalism students spent more than an hour with national broadcast news reporter and anchor Soledad O'Brien – questioning her about her work and her life in the field of television news. O'Brien, who has anchored CNN's "American Morning" and NBC's "Weekend Today" news programs, now reports television news documentaries for CNN. On Thursday, September 18, 2008, she met with UD students in the Communication Department's student television studio, fielding questions about her travels (to Thailand covering the Indian Ocean tsunami, to Russia covering First Lady Laura Bush's visit to Moscow, to New Orleans covering hurricane Katrina, to Cuba covering the visit of a Pope, and other events). The students also asked O'Brien about juggling her life with a family of four children and her broadcasting career, and about her experience starting



her career at local television stations before moving to national jobs. And they asked about her political run-in with the Republican Party during the GOP national convention this Fall – a dispute over her coverage of the nomination of Alaska Governor Sarah Palin as candidate for Vice President. O'Brien's visit took place during the "Broadcast News" class (Comm 427) of Communication instructor Ralph Begleiter, who brings his own former CNN experience to the class. Students learn to report, write, shoot, edit, produce and present their own weekly newscasts shown on STN, UD's Student Television Network.