Communication inquiry has deep roots at the University of Pittsburgh, dating back to 1794, when students delivered orations and debated as part of their course work at the Pittsburgh Academy. Today, the undergraduate major draws on a vibrant liberal arts tradition to cultivate skills and knowledge that empower students with critical awareness honed through analysis of the past and study of future trends in rhetorical practice and media technology.

“The Mark Twain’s sage insight that ‘history does not repeat itself, but it often rhymes,’ suggests that by examining and reflecting on the past, students gain unique perspective on the present and to some extent can envision what is yet to come,” says Gordon Mitchell, chair of the department.

Communication is one of the largest majors in the Dietrich School, with close to 500 undergraduates. The department builds on the strengths of the curriculum to position its students to excel in an ever-changing world. “It is perhaps more relevant than ever for this generation of graduates to be able to change and adapt in the new, increasingly fluid economy,” explains Mitchell.

“The communication major provides students with an intellectual dexterity that enables them to thrive in a constantly changing labor market. Students have a nimbleness of thought and the ability to translate critical thinking into new contexts. They can remodel and redirect their adaptable skill set when circumstances dictate, just as the most eloquent speakers adapt their approach when audience composition shifts.”

Through its 41 courses in persuasion, argument, interpersonal communication, political rhetoric, nonverbal communication, history of media, media criticism, and television and society, students hear about diverse views on the roles of communication, media, and rhetoric and how they affect the world today. Many students choose to double major, pairing their course work in communication with a major in political science, sociology, business, English writing, psychology, anthropology, or history.

The Princeton Review recently released its list of top 10 college majors, and communication was one of the majors that made the elite list, finishing ahead of political science and computer and information sciences.

This came as no surprise to the Department of Communication in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

Communication inquiry has deep roots at the University of Pittsburgh, dating back to 1794, when students delivered orations and debated as part of their course work at the Pittsburgh Academy. Today, the undergraduate major draws on a vibrant liberal arts tradition to cultivate skills and knowledge that empower students with critical awareness honed through analysis of the past and study of future trends in rhetorical practice and media technology.

“Our program offers students a unique mix of courses that are intellectually stimulating as well as providing practical, hands-on experience through exciting internship opportunities,” says Mitchell. “The communication major opens more professional doors than any other major does because our students graduate as critical thinkers and problem solvers with outstanding oral communication skills. While we are proud that our students move on to very prestigious jobs in many fields, including broadcasting, advertising, public relations, and pharmaceutical sales, the department’s primary focus is providing a rigorous curriculum that prepares students for life.”

The William Pitt Debating Union, housed in the Department of Communication, is an excellent forum for students to sharpen their critical thinking skills, deepen their understanding of timely political issues, and hone their speaking skills. This cocurricular program is one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the nation, dating back to 1912. The union enables undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty throughout the University to engage in public debates, debate tournaments, and debate outreach initiatives.

The department also makes available additional opportunities for practical application of communication skills through its Oral Communication Lab, where students can perfect their public speaking skills through peer-mentored instruction. Students also are encouraged to join the Communication Club, a student-run organization that holds monthly meetings and sponsors guest speakers, field trips, and workshops to help students make career and life decisions.

For more information on the Department of Communication, visit www.comm.pitt.edu.

DID YOU KNOW?

• The first University of Pittsburgh student to win a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship was William Pitt Debating Union member David Frederick in 1983. The most recent University of Pittsburgh student to win a highly competitive Marshall Scholarship was William Pitt Debating Union member Paras Minhas in 2013.

• The Department of Communication faculty have received a total of seven Chancellor’s Distinguished Teaching and Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence awards.

• The University Honors College and the Department of Communication collaborate on preparing students for international scholarship interviews through the Oral Communication Lab.
Promoting Academic Health

The Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences continually strives to ensure that all of its students have the opportunity to reach the many benefits of a University of Pittsburgh education, to achieve at the highest levels academically, and to graduate as leaders with a global perspective. This commitment to excellence is fundamental to the Dietrich School’s ongoing goal of providing students with the best possible academic advising experience so that they may achieve and sustain success at Pitt.

Academic advising at the Dietrich School is designed to be sensitive to undergraduate students’ needs and goals and is built around a two-tiered system. The first tier consists of all undeclared freshmen and sophomores as well as students preparing for admission to preprofessional programs. Academic advising through the Advising Center provides sophisticated navigational assistance for students in the exploration of their academic and life goals. This support guides them to the many resources and opportunities throughout the University and enables them to develop a greater sense of independence as well as problem-solving skills. Our advisors are highly trained and have a broad range of academic qualifications and supportive skills, including photocopies in music, biology, and education as well as experience in counseling, higher education, foreign languages, social work, and information science.

Advising in the Dietrich School is founded upon the importance of individualized one-on-one meetings with an advisor and the expectation that students will actively participate in the advising process. First-year students meet twice with their advisor during the first term and once a term after that until they declare a major. All other students must meet with their academic advisor at least once each term to discuss their academic goals and progress toward those goals. Advisors also are available by phone or e-mail if students have any questions or concerns.

The second tier of our advising system is composed of students who have officially declared a major and who have then been transferred to their respective academic departments. Departmental advisors ensure that students explore and discover the exciting and challenging range of courses open and available to them through the Dietrich School curricula as well as the array of educational experiences that exist across the University, the region, and the world. These experiences include internships, study abroad programs, undergraduate research, and teaching opportunities.

Our advisors are dedicated to a culture of academic support that promotes student success. Through annual advising workshops and symposia, we disseminate and inculcate best practices in advising and look to the future to find new ways to enhance the advising process to maximize the overall student experience.

I extend to you my best wishes for a happy new year!

John A. Twyning
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Debating Union Welcomes All Pitt Students

Students who are intellectually curious, are interested in current events, enjoy the challenge of exploring varying perspectives, or simply wish to enhance their public speaking abilities are encouraged to participate in the nationally and internationally recognized William Pitt Debating Union (WPDU). Housed in the Department of Communication, WPDU is a co-curricular program that serves as a hub for a wide range of debating activities, including intercollegiate policy debate, public debate, and debate outreach. No previous experience is needed to join WPDU.

Founded in 1912, WPDU is one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the nation. The union is composed of 20–25 student members who represent many other disciplines, including theater arts, political science, psychology, environmental studies, and engineering, in addition to communication. With two full-time directors and numerous graduate teaching assistants working with the debaters, WPDU boasts one of the largest and most experienced coaching staffs anywhere in the country.

The union engages in three primary types of debate: competitive, or tournament-style debate; public audience-oriented debate; and community outreach. Competitive debate enables students to travel to a variety of national tournaments throughout the academic year, while public debate serves as a catalyst for constructive public dialogue on salient and pressing topics facing local, regional, and national communities. In recent years, the William Pitt Debating Union has reached tens of thousands of elementary and secondary school students through its outreach initiatives. High school outreach includes alliances with 16 area high schools that participate in the College in High School Argument course, enabling hundreds of local students to receive college credit from Pitt.

The union’s goal is to produce well-rounded debaters who exhibit proficiency in critical thinking and research, can address general audiences, and are able to teach the craft of debate to other students. Pitt debaters have achieved a remarkable track record of academic success, winning prestigious awards such as Rhodes and Marshall scholarships and Fulbright, Brackenridge, and Javits fellowships.

Debate scholarships are available for incoming and returning students who are eligible to receive merit-based financial aid.

For more information about the William Pitt Debating Union, visit www.comm.pitt.edu/debate.
Dietrich School Appoints New College in High School Director

The Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences recently announced the appointment of Michael Giazzoni as the new director of College in High School. He brings 15 years of higher education experience to the Dietrich School.

In his new position, Giazzoni will oversee all aspects of the College in High School and Accelerated High School programs. Established in 1980, College in High School enables qualified high school students to earn University of Pittsburgh academic credits by taking specialized courses at their own high schools. This concurrent enrollment program is one of the largest partnership programs at the University, offering 14 courses, from calculus to communication, to more than 3,000 students throughout western and central Pennsylvania as well as eastern Ohio.

Accelerated High School allows qualified junior and senior high school students to enroll in up to six credits at the Pittsburgh campus each term while continuing their high school education.

“I am impressed by the fantastic reputation that College in High School has for its high-quality programs and its sustainment of those programs,” says Giazzoni. “This is a true testament to the University’s commitment to serve the community by providing college classes to regional high school students. It also is a statement of the unequalled dedication of the College in High School staff, who continue to work with the teachers, students, and parents to maintain these high standards.”

Giazzoni envisions expanding the program to involve more high schools and bringing best practices from around the country to Pitt’s program. “Research shows that students who participate in concurrent enrollment programs are more likely to go to college and stay in college,” says Giazzoni. “For this reason, it is important to expand the program so more high school students can reap the benefits of this experience.”

Giazzoni previously worked for 10 years as an academic advisor and director of student assistantships in the University Honors College at Pitt and, before that, spent two years overseeing tutoring and supplemental instruction at the Academic Resource Center.

FUTURE LEADERS LEARN TODAY

The Power to Persuade

The earliest memory that senior communication major Katherine McGarry recalls of using words to influence a particular situation was at the tender age of 3, when she very deliberately and strategically convinced her parents that going to a favorite store was a good idea. By the time she reached eighth grade, her skills had expanded and developed to the point that she successfully “ungrounded” a friend by putting pen to paper and writing a persuasive letter that totally impressed her friend’s parents.

A native of Phoenixville, Pa., McGarry now uses her communication skills to impart a passion for rhetoric and persuasive debate to her peers at the University of Pittsburgh. “Because the communication department provides students with a rich theoretical background in interpersonal, rhetorical, and mass communication, students have the exciting opportunity to tailor the major to fit their particular interest,” says McGarry. “There is not a single industry that does not need a communication major, so I recommend that students first figure out what they are passionate about and then find the jobs. Students should remember that college is not preparing them for a career, it is preparing them for life.”

As a paid student worker in the Oral Communication Lab, McGarry coaches her students on what constitutes a good speech and advises them on how to transition from being an average speaker to a dynamic, persuasive speaker. “This is the best job that I have ever had. It is so rewarding to help students learn a skill that gives them more confidence in public speaking,” says McGarry. What makes a dynamic speaker? McGarry advises her students to believe in themselves, talk from a knowledge base, simplify sentences so that the audience can relate to it, and use appropriate body language.

McGarry, who also is working toward a political science minor and a Certificate in Public and Professional Writing, is passionate about life and learning. In addition to working in the Oral Communication Lab, McGarry is on the Allegheny River by 5:30 a.m. six days a week as a member of the University of Pittsburgh Crew team. She also is an undergraduate teaching assistant for the Rhetorical Criticism class and president of the Communication Club. During the fall term of her junior year, McGarry studied abroad in Galway, Ireland, fulfilling some of her general education requirements. “I would highly recommend that students take a semester to study abroad. My experience was incredibly eye-opening. Throughout my travels to the Netherlands, Czech Republic, and Austria, I was completely amazed that I could still see the residual effects of World War II.”

This past summer, McGarry interned at VideoRay LLC, an international company that specializes in underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROVs). During her internship, she wrote proposals and marketing materials and traveled to Scotland to deliver ROV equipment. “I would not have had this incredible internship at VideoRay had it not been for the University Honors College at Pitt and, before that, two years overseeing tutoring and supplemental instruction at the University Counseling Center. Disordered sleep possibly may be a sign of anxiety, depression, or another medical condition. Many young adults are night owls, falling asleep in the early morning hours and waking up late, sometimes late for class. Sleep-deprived students may be irritable because of chronic fatigue, have slower reaction times on exams and while driving, and have a less effective immune system. They may eat an excess of 350-500 calories per day because hormones that regulate hunger and satiety are secreted during sleep. Common sleep problems include difficulty falling asleep, difficulty staying asleep, and never feeling rested upon waking. The following are some suggestions to help your student resolve sleep challenges:

• Maintain a consistent sleep schedule. It is important to go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every morning.

• Manipulate the environment to promote better sleep. Reduce noise and keep the bedroom comfortably cool. Keep the room dark; light inhibits the release of melatonin, a hormone that maintains sleep.

• Place drapes over windows to shut out light from streetlights. Turn off electronics and clocks with lights or keep them on the floor. Such lights may jolt the brain awake during normal sleep arousals.

• Reserve the bed for sleeping. It is better not to use computers in bed.

• Do not exercise within four hours of getting into bed. A drowsy or ready-to-sleep state must initiate sleep.

• Turn off computers, videos, or televisions at least 30 minutes before preparing to go to sleep; active brains need time to calm down.

• Wear socks to bed or take a quick hot shower to promote the deep stages of sleep. Deep sleep starts at about midnight, the time when one’s core body temperature drops.

• Use mindfulness, a technique that calms the mind, at bedtime to promote the first stage of sleep. The Stress Free Zone (SFZ) section of the University Counseling Center Web site has audio downloads that introduce and facilitate this practice. Mindfulness also is taught in the SFZ Wednesday evenings at 6 and Thursday evenings at 7. No appointment is needed. If sleep problems persist, please encourage your son or daughter to either consult a family physician or schedule an appointment with the Student Health Service or the University Counseling Center. Disordered sleep possibly may be a sign of anxiety, depression, or another medical condition.

RESOURCES

University Counseling Center
334 William Pitt Union
412-648-7930
www.counseling.pitt.edu

Student Health Service
Medical Arts Building, Fifth Floor
3708 Fifth Avenue
412-383-1800
www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shshome

MAINTAINING HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

by Patricia Pesselline, University Counseling Center

Maintaining healthy sleep patterns is an essential part of overall well-being. It is crucial to prioritize sleep to ensure physical health, mental well-being, and academic success. Here are some tips to help you maintain healthy sleep patterns:

1. Establish a consistent sleep schedule: Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every night, even on weekends. This helps regulate your body's internal clock and improves the quality of your sleep.

2. Create a sleep-conducive environment: Make your bedroom a place for rest and sleep by keeping it cool, dark, and quiet. Use comfortable bedding and a supportive mattress.

3. Limit screen time: Avoid using electronic devices, such as phones, tablets, or computers, for at least 30 minutes before bedtime. The blue light emitted by these devices can disrupt your sleep cycle.

4. Avoid caffeine and alcohol: These substances can interfere with sleep quality and duration. Try to avoid caffeine after lunch and limit alcohol intake, especially before bedtime.

5. Exercise regularly: Regular physical activity can improve the quality and quantity of your sleep. However, avoid exercising close to bedtime, as it may disrupt your sleep patterns.

6. Practice relaxation techniques: Activities such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga can help you relax and prepare for sleep.

7. Avoid large meals before bedtime: Eating a heavy meal close to bedtime can cause discomfort and interfere with sleep. Try to finish your dinner at least 2-3 hours before bedtime.

8. Consult a healthcare provider: If you continue to have trouble sleeping or if sleep problems persist despite these tips, it may be helpful to consult a healthcare provider for further advice and guidance.

By implementing these strategies, you can enhance your sleep quality and promote overall health and well-being.
Communication Lab Helps to Perfect Speaking Skills

The Department of Communication invites all University of Pittsburgh students, staff, and faculty to improve their communication skills by using the services of the Oral Communication Lab. Located in 1109B Cathedral of Learning, the lab provides free individual and small group instruction in all forms of public speaking and oral communication.

Under the direction of Mickey Bannon, lecturer in the communication department, the lab is structured as a supplemental training resource for students and as a support resource for faculty and staff. Students across all disciplines and schools may bring any type of speaking project at any stage of development to the lab for personal consultation and instruction. Some examples of projects appropriate for review include speeches, discussions, focus groups, research presentations, and interviews.

Students also may make an appointment to seek assistance in choosing speech topics, organizing presentations, and analyzing the needs of an audience. Students learn specific techniques for controlling speech anxiety and developing discussion and group presentation skills as well as best practices in delivering speeches.

The Oral Communication Lab also holds the annual Oratory Competition that acknowledges and rewards outstanding speaking skills among University of Pittsburgh undergraduates. The categories are graduation commencement speech (open to senior communication majors only), commemorative values speech, and persuasive policy speech.

For more information on the Oral Communication Lab and the Oratory Competition, e-mail speaklab@pitt.edu or visit www.comm.pitt.edu/undergraduate/commlab.html.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spring term enrollment ends and classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Spring term add/drop ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr’s birthday observed (University closed)</td>
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February

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Summer term enrollment period begins for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Honors Convocation</td>
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March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spring term deadline for students to submit Monitored Withdrawal forms to the dean’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-17</td>
<td>Spring recess for students; University offices and buildings remain open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Spring holiday (University closed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Deadline to apply for August 2013 graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Fall term 2013 enrollment appointments begin</td>
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April

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Last day for fall term enrollment appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fall term 2013 open enrollment period begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Last day for undergraduate day classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-27</td>
<td>Final examination period for undergraduate day classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Spring term ends; official date for degrees awarded in spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Residence halls close; annual Commencement Convocation</td>
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May

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spring term grades must be approved by instructors</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spring term grades available online</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Summer term enrollment period ends and classes begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Summer sessions 12-week, 6-week-1, and 4-week-1 enrollment period ends and classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Memorial Day (University closed)</td>
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For the online academic calendar, go to www.provost.pitt.edu/information-on/calendar.html.