Students to Debate at World Universities Debating Championships

On the day after Christmas when the rest of us are groggily re-gifting Santa’s bounty, seven interdisciplinary students, their talented graduate assistant Aaron Dicker, and their intrepid coach, Assistant Director of Debate, Nicole Johnson, will be embarking on one of the most memorable learning experiences of their university careers. Those in this group will be among nearly 1,000 students from more than 250 universities representing 82 countries traveling to the World Universities Debating Championships taking place in Berlin between December 27th, 2012 and January 4th, 2013. “The Worlds,” as the debate is known by competitors, is the largest debate tournament and one of the largest annual international student events in the world. Each year, the event is hosted by a university selected by the World Universities Debating Council.

The format of the debate is most commonly known to Americans as British Parliamentary Debate because it resembles the sort of debates that take place in the British Parliament. Recently however, the name of this style of debate has become known as “Worlds Format,” to be more inclusive of all cultures. Unlike in other forms of debate, where the resolution is established well in advance...
LAURA DEMINK (M’07) - is an Education and Outreach Coordinator for StrategicHealthSolutions, LLC and lives in Omaha, NE. Her role is to facilitate the production of the company’s educational products as well as manage the content written by their subject matter experts (SMEs).

KATIE DUKES (B’11) - is using her Organizational Communication degree in her position as a Direct Marketing Coordinator at Hoosier Park Racing & Casino in Anderson, IN.

SARAH FOUT (B’12) - is currently working at Red Gold, a private family owned company that produces premium quality canned tomatoes and tomato-based products for retail, foodservice, private brands, and club stores, in Elwood Indiana as a Corporate Recruiter.

ZAC JORDAN (B’11) - was a student-athlete at BSU, playing football and majoring in Organizational Communication and minoring in Marketing. He works as an EMS Sales Support and Product Associate with Stryker Medical, a medical technology sales Company in Kalamazoo, MI.

Alumni notes

Editor’s Note
Alumni notes are based on information received from the Alumni Association and individual e-mails. The Department of Communication Studies apologizes for any omissions or changes that have occurred since receiving this information.

Disney World or Bust: Graduate Students Attend NCA

Nine Graduate Students from the Department of Communication Studies recently traveled to Orlando, Florida to attend the National Communication Association annual conference. Megan Getter, Scarlett Hester, Charles Jones, Daniel Kemp, Robin Phelps-Ward, Tynesia Ross, Katie Sroufe, Morgan Summers, and Meg Tully all participated at the conference by presenting on panels and also had the opportunity for other professional endeavors such as networking, attending academic panels, meeting faculty and graduate students from other programs, and looking for PhD programs.

Scarlett, Charles, Daniel, Robin, Tynesia, Katie, Morgan, and Meg were all on a panel, along with graduate students from other programs, sponsored by the Basic Course Division. The title of the panel was “Creating COMMunity from a Cohort: How GTAs/GTIs/RAs (and Faculty) COMMunicate and Connect.” This spirited open discussion covered a variety of topics related to life as a graduate student that was eye-opening for some of the GAs. Tynesia identified one of the most memorable parts of the conference was “Hearing other student’s perceptions of their GTA programs.” Both Scarlett and Robin commented on being more appreciative of BSU as a result of this panel. As Robin said “Participating in the GTA Voices panel truly reaffirmed my views that Communication Studies at BSU really does have a unique, supportive and wonderful culture. After hearing the experiences of others, I must say I’m so proud to be associated with our program at Ball State.”

Megan, Robin, Morgan, and Meg also had additional paper presentations, where they were able to present their academic research. Academic presentations are an important way to both share and disseminate one’s research, while also getting other scholars’ perspectives. Both Morgan and Meg were pleased with the feedback they received from the respondent and an audience member, respectively. Morgan noted that the respondent for her panel “gave me feedback on a piece that I had written during my first semester as a graduate student. He gave me great ideas, and I look forward to editing that piece and hopefully submitting it for publication someday” while Meg indicated that “one PhD student asked if I would e-mail her my paper on texting so that she could cite my research. I felt like I had arrived in the world of academia.”

While panels are a very important formal part of NCA, of equal importance are
of a tournament and is the same for every round of the tournament, in Worlds Format, the resolution is not established until shortly before the debate round begins, and there is a new resolution for every round of debate. Since it would be unrealistic to require teams to research every topic they could be possibly be asked to debate, parliamentary debate requires very little research or “hard evidence” to support speakers’ arguments. Professor Johnson notes that Worlds Format is “unlike any debate format Americans are used to,” testing participants’ ability to “think on their feet,” using persuasion, logic, and a large measure of wit. Johnson, who has coached collegiate debate for a number of years, observes, “Worlds Format is the most engaging format I’ve ever watched! It’s fun!”

Sophomore Communication Studies major Dakota Wappes and junior Criminal Justice major Caitlin Bartnik are the two team members slated to compete at the Berlin tournament. Sophomore International Relations major Dylan Paul will be representing Ball State as an adjudicator. However, all members of this immersive learning group (Communication Studies freshman Caren Adelsperger, Communication Studies junior Josh Fern, Accounting junior Rachel Harned, and Classical Cultures senior Marta Vitolins) have been working hard since mid-summer learning Worlds Format. Some members of the team travelled to LaVerne, CA in July, while others travelled to Milwaukee, WI in September to attend workshops designed to teach them basic principles of World’s Format. Additionally, the students have been working diligently all semester, watching videos, running debate drills, and engaging in practice sessions twice a week. To gain practical tournament experience, the group hosted the Midwest Matchup World’s Format debate tournament, competing against such powerhouse teams as Purdue, Marquette, and the University of Mississippi. The team performed well at this inaugural event, with Dakota Wappes taking “top speaker” honors and Caitlin Bartnik winning “3rd place speaker.” More recently, the group travelled east to Waltham, Massachusetts to compete in the Brandeis IV Tournament where teams from Yale, Vermont and Rutgers also geared up for the Worlds competition. Stay tuned as the students document their experiences on a blog with videos, pictures and their reflections at bsuatworlds.wordpress.com

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ights a week while spending her days as a full time mom.

A few years later, Rebecca was offered a semester long position at her alma mater, the University of Indianapolis, as a visiting professor in the Communication Department. During that semester Rebecca really began to find her niche for teaching, and she was delighted when she was invited to return for the next academic year while the search committee continued to look for a permanent replacement. Since she loved the job so much, Rebecca decided to start working towards a doctoral degree at Ball State, with the hope of being considered for the permanent position. In addition to teaching a full course load and beginning work on a doctoral degree, Rebecca also started a student run PR firm, Top Dog Communication, which serves nonprofit organizations. Meanwhile, Rebecca was invited to interview for the position, and soon after the interview she gave a teaching demonstration. Finally, all her hard work paid off and Rebecca was offered the full time tenure track position, which she has been in for the last four years.

Since then, Rebecca has enjoyed a number of successes. Last year, Top Dog Communication was recognized by the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) and was named the “Outstanding Firm” of 2011, a yearly honor given to one firm nationwide. In May of this year, Rebecca finished her E.D. at Ball State. Soon after, Rebecca was named as the inaugural University Distinguished Professor of Service Learning, a newly endowed position designed to foster growth of the university’s service learning program. The position allows Rebecca to serve as a mentor for faculty members working with the service learning program as well as to continue teaching public relations courses and providing academic advising for about thirty students. In addition to her new role, Rebecca is continuing her work with Top Dog Communication, and she hopes that the firm will be recognized as PRSSA’s “Outstanding Firm” again in 2013, since it isn’t eligible for competition in 2012. Although Rebecca wasn’t sure where she was headed when she first started her education at Ball State, it’s clear that studying Communication at Ball State helped guide her path. Since finishing her MA at Ball State, Rebecca has achieved great success and continues to make the Communication Studies department proud to claim her as an alumnus.
On Sunday, December 2, the COMM 210 Public Speaking Program held the semi-annual “Bucket Speech” competition. The objective of the Bucket Speech is to raise money for a non-profit organization. Students enrolled in COMM 210 have the option of doing their final persuasive speech advocating for a worthy cause. Donations are solicited from faculty and students. A competition is held with the winning speech receiving all the donations for the chosen charity.

This year, 42 public speaking students participated in 6 speech rounds, judged by COMM 210 instructors, with the top 6 moving to the final round. The final round took place before a packed house in AC 125. The finalists and their topics were: Olivia Brooks (Hive Tutoring Program); Taylor Cantrell (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention); Whitney Morgan (Krochet Kids, Inc); Carly Pelfrey (American Cancer Society); Paul Sarasien (Multiple Sclerosis research); and Ashley Sneed (St. Jude Pediatric Brain Cancer Research).

Katie Sroufe, Public Speaking Instructor and Second Year Graduate Student served as the Chair of the COMM 210 Service Learning Committee, which organized the Bucket Speech Philanthropy Event. When asked about what she liked about the event, she stated “It’s to see the growth of the students over the course of the semester and to listen to them speak with so much conviction on behalf of something they are passionate about. It is really astounding!”

The topics chosen by the speakers were typically ones in which they had a vested interest. Ashley indicated “I chose this topic because my friend currently has brain cancer and is hosting a charity event for St. Jude.” Similarly, Carly chose Relay for Life “because I have known many people with cancer and I want to do everything I can to find a cure and help out. I have seen the effects cancer has on people, and no one should have to go through it, so I want to try to help eliminate it.”

Though all of the competitors obviously wanted to win, just being part of this experience was worthwhile, particularly in advancing to the final round and speaking in front of an audience of over 100 people. Whitney stated, “Giving the speech multiple times was a very different experience. Usually when I give a speech, I can breathe a sigh of relief because I’m done, but this time, I couldn’t just yet. I also liked the experience of speaking in front of a larger group so that it won’t be something
I have to worry about for the future.” Taylor, however, had some experience in both competitive public speaking and presenting to large audiences. She said, “Having been on my high school speech team and given speeches in the Showcase Showdown for academic decathlon, giving speeches multiple times and in front of a large audience is nothing new for me. It is as exhilarating as it is overwhelming, but in the end it was worth it.” For Olivia, the size of the audience impacted her performance, but the ends justified the means. She stated “I was thrown off by the size of the large crowd and forgot a part of my speech. But I was glad to give my speech multiple times and spread the word.”

After each speaker was finished in the final round, the judges determined that Paul’s speech on Multiple Sclerosis Research was the winning entry, with the $290.00 collected going toward that cause. Paul summed up his experience in terms of his topic choice, preparation, and overall performance:

“I chose the topic of Multiple Sclerosis because it’s a disease that my mom has and I knew so little about it. I learned quite a bit and I wanted other people to learn about this disease as well. Many people know about cancer and Alzheimer’s, but very few know of MS. Giving the speech multiple times helped me improve it every time. Whenever I give a speech I notice something wrong with it and try to fix it and make it a little better the next time. I’ve never spoken in front of such a large crowd before, but I was happy to do it so I could inform all of them about MS and spread the word.”

With the competition complete, and Paul declared the winner, Katie offered her impression of the winning speech, “It is also fun to see how excited the winning speaker is when he/she realizes all of their hard work has paid off. In this case, seeing Paul win was exciting because he spoke about a topic that he is sincerely passionate about and that hits so close to home. To see his passion when he won was truly inspiring.”

Inclusive Pedagogy and Diversity: Education for the 21st Century

During the 2011-2012 academic year, Dr. Kristen McCauliff served as a Diversity Associate on a project titled “Inclusive Pedagogy and Diversity: Education for the 21st Century,” for the Office of Institutional Diversity. The group of 12 faculty members, under the direction of David Concepcion, met weekly to discuss issues of diversity in higher education and ways to integrate diversity into their teaching. As Dr. McCauliff explains “Last year we were charged with implementing an innovative pedagogical project into one of our classes. The project was documented throughout the semester. Those videos are done and ready to be showcased. They will soon be up on the OID and OEE’s webpages.” On November 30, the group had an open forum to view the video and discuss the project, which will continue in the Spring 2013 semester.

Submitted Photo

DIVERSITY ASSOCIATE — Dr. Kristen McCauliff at the Diversity Associate’s Forum.
On any given Tuesday at seven in the morning, most college students are preparing for their day - showering, working out, or maybe catching up on homework or much-needed rest. However, one group of eight Ball State students devotes their Tuesday and Thursday mornings to Muncie South Side High School students by teaching debate to juniors and seniors before their classes start.

“It’s early [in the morning], but it’s worth it. I can’t imagine my time better spent than sharing what I think are my strengths with students who don’t get the same chance I had to learn debate,” said senior debater Lucas Blauvelt.

Blauvelt started debating as a 9th grader. After several weeks of recruiting and communicating with various teachers and programs around Muncie, the group began working with Julie Snider, a government teacher from South Side who had an interest in starting a Debate Club. When asked about their involvement with the Debate Club, Snider said, “The Ball State students have been instrumental in its creation. They [the Ball State students] have taught my [high school] students so much about the art of debate.” She and the students said they are excited for Ball State’s continued future involvement with the club since the high school does not have an existing debate program or team. In the spring, the program will continue with a new set of students participating in a similar debate-focused immersive project.

In addition to the morning program, the same eight students also devote their Wednesday afternoons to high school students at Connection Corner, Muncie Public Library’s newest branch in the Whitely Neighborhood.

There are no after-school programs for high school students in this area, so Ball State’s immersive learning debate program provides a unique opportunity and creative outlet for young people to plug into,” said Drew Shermeta, Connection Corner’s building supervisor and the program’s liaison.

One of the “Debate and Diplomacy: Extending Argumentation Across Cultures” immersive learning project’s goals for the semester was to develop a community-based debate program in Muncie that instills public speaking, critical thinking, research and argumentation skills for at-risk students through weekly activities and debates. The overall immersive learning project is three-pronged: debate with the Ball State Debate Team, establish a community program for at-risk youth, and participate in the World Universities Debating Championship in Berlin.

On November 26, BSU Alumnus David Letterman came to BSU along with media icon Oprah Winfrey for a spirited discussion before 3300 people in Emens Auditorium. An overview, and video highlights, of this event can be accessed through the link to the BSU website.

Department of Communication Studies Graduate Students were very excited about this event, as the pictures on this page indicate!

Submitted Photos

LEFT — Dave and Oprah walking through LB

MIDDLE TOP — Graduate Students (left to right) Jumah Taweh, Robin Phelps-Ward, Marilyn Pugh, and Meg Tully waiting all night for tickets.

MIDDLE — Meg Tully, Robin Phelps-Ward, Scarlett Hester, Marilyn Pugh, BSU President JoAnn Gora, and Jumah Taweh in the all night ticket line.

MIDDLE — Graduate Students (left to right) Michelle Colpean, Marilyn Pugh, Elena Chudnovskaya, Sarah Clark, and Elizabeth Dunn on the LB balcony trying to get a picture of Dave and Oprah as they walk through LB.

MIDDLE BOTTOM — Graduate Students Tynesia Ross, Morgan Summers, Alyssa Chagnon, and Jumah Taweh with the coveted shirt!
Midwest Matchup 2012: Debate Team Hosts Local Tournament

Before Going Global

On November 3rd and 4th, the Ball State Debate Team went where no other Midwestern debate team has gone before and hosted its inaugural U.S. Universities British Parliamentary (Worlds Format) Debate Tournament, dubbed the Midwest Matchup. The energy was high among the competing schools. “It was a great opportunity to get the chance to put our practice into action,” Caitlin Bartnik, Junior Criminal Justice Major, said. “It was exciting to compete against other schools in our area that are also starting out and committed to such a cool opportunity.”

Students from the University of Mississippi, Purdue University, Marquette University, and Taylor University came together for the first time in the U.S. middle region to compete in this debate format. Worlds Format tournaments are popular and common on the U.S. east and west coasts, as well as around the world, but none have been established in the Midwest before now. Worlds Format debate dates back to the mid 70s with roots in North America and Europe. Since then, this format has spread quickly across the globe, and BSU is happy to be involved.

“This was our first step as a player in the global environment to promoting a free exchange of ideas and international cooperation through academic debate,” said Nicole Johnson, Assistant Director of Debate.

The World University Debate Championship (WUDC) tournament is hosted in a different country each year. This year the tournament will be in Berlin, Germany and is huge, with teams coming from 82 countries. Ball State’s successful bid to compete at the WUDC in Berlin was the catalyst for this on-campus event. “The tournament was just a small taste of what I’ll experience in Berlin, and I’m so excited to get there,” Dylan Paul, Sophomore International Relations Major, said.

Through the “Debate & Diplomacy: Extending Argumentation Across Cultures” immersive learning program, seven students will be attending the championship over winter break. Two students, Dakota Wappes (Sophomore Communication Studies and Political Science Double Major) and Bartnik have been nominated by their peers in the immersive group to represent Ball State as competitors. Paul has been nominated to serve as an adjudicator during the competition while the remaining four students will participate as observers. The team heads to Berlin on Dec. 26 and returns Jan. 4. You can read about their experiences debating, judging, exploring Berlin, and networking on a global scale through their blog at bsuatworlds.wordpress.com.

As December graduation approaches, that age-old question arises: What can I do with a major in Communication Studies?

By Laura O’Hara
Associate Professor

Plenty, that’s what. Here is what some senior Communication Studies majors say as they think about how their degree has prepared them for “life after BSU.”

Maggie Brown (Interpersonal Option): I really can do anything with a Communication Studies degree. It’s not specific to one area of study and communication is happening every day at every business! I love that I really can do anything I’m passionate about once I have graduated from this major!

Lauren Criswell (Interpersonal Option): What I love about graduating from a Communication Studies program is that I really can go into a variety of different directions. I have many doors and options open to me post - graduation. I would love to do something with a sports team or a nonprofit organization.

Jordan Habayeb (Organizational Option): For me, a degree in Communication Studies lays the groundwork to get a Master’s degree. Once I finish my bachelor’s degree, I will go into graduate school next year for Student Affairs in Higher Education. I will have an awesome communication core to draw from.

Kimberly Holmes (Interpersonal Option): Anything is possible with my Communication Studies degree. You can tailor it to fit what you love and what you are good at doing. When I graduate I want to work at the corporate level of a fashion company so I can combine my love for people, communication, and fashion.

Haley O’Donnell (Interpersonal Option): When I get my degree in Communication Studies, I can work in a variety of fields, especially where communicating among staff, managers, and the public is important. These positions include marketing, public relations, and event planning, as well as many other organizational opportunities.

Sarah Rowland (Interpersonal Option): A Communication Studies major allows you to have a variety of options for future careers. Being well-versed in communication is a skill every employer is looking for. You can go into any career

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from human resources to counseling. A degree in Communication Studies works for whatever interests you.

**Kaity Shedd (Organizational Option):** A Communication Studies major can work in job/employee training for a number of different types of organizations. Communication Studies majors are also prepared to help improve employee/employer relationships within the workplace. A Communication Studies degree helps to set one apart from others in any job that requires one to work with the public and to deal with customer service.

**CONGRATULATIONS DECEMBER COMMUNICATION STUDIES GRADS!**
**GO GET ‘EM!!!!**

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