



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

COMMUNITY NEWS

Dear Students, Alumni, and Friends,

A post-truth world. Alternative facts. Fake news. News media as the “enemy of the people.”

We’ve heard these words and phrases from Donald Trump and his presidential administration, and I consider them to be absurd, dangerous, and hostile to a free and honest democracy. My view is not a partisan position or a political position. Rather, to reject the duplicity and hostility in these claims is to stand firmly on our belief, embedded to the core in our Department’s mission, that knowledge and truth go hand-in-hand with open communication, both in free speech and in the free press.

We believe in a world in which evidence, not simply a claim, carries the day and decides debates. It’s a bedrock notion: that anyone can claim anything they wish, but that the production of evidence, based commonly on verifiable realities that we call “facts,” is a necessary condition for how we make decisions, formulate policies, and assign resources and opportunities. The distinction between claim and evidence is foundational to the very first principle that undergirds our undergraduate education: [communication literacy](#). This principle is fundamental to what and how we research, teach, and mentor students. We seek to help people understand how to separate fact from fiction, to assess sources, to evaluate and make logical arguments, to discern reality from propaganda. We want people to become participants in the civic arena rather than standing on the sidelines, either by choice or because they are pushed to the side.

Communication literacy is woven throughout every fiber of our Department, and nowhere is it more explicit than in our journalism education, which has been part of our curriculum at UW since our founding in the early 1900s. We stand in full agreement with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication’s [statement](#) in February in support of robust and civil public dialogue in which communication and news media are accorded central roles in democracy. To quote journalism leaders [Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel](#), we are firmly committed to a “journalism of verification,” rather than a “journalism of assertion.”

The research and teaching that we do in the Department of Communication has never been more important. There is much at stake, and we are and will be engaged researchers and teachers. We are fully committed to sustaining and, ideally, even expanding the vital tie between public communication and democracy.

With this in mind, we are partnering with UW Libraries and local media outlets on a special event, “Why Journalism Matters: News Literacy in a Democracy,” on Saturday, April 1. This half-day conference (more information in this newsletter is [here](#)) is open to all and will be dedicated to media and news literacy. The event will provide a forum in which community members can gather to discuss journalism, media responsibility and ethics, citizen

participation within the press, and more. Our goal is to provide and further support the tools and knowledge that people need to positively influence their communities and feel empowered to tell their stories.

The day will begin with [Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson](#) being interviewed by our Journalism Coordinator, [Andrea Otanez](#), followed by several breakout sessions, including these topics:

- Evaluating Government Information
- Photojournalism and Visual Literacy
- Making Your Voice Heard
- Being a Savvy News Consumer
- Underrepresented Voices in Media
- The Citizen Journalist
- Transparency, Access, and Open Records

In 1954, U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy declared “I don’t answer accusations, I make them” (because we believe in evidence, here’s the citation for the quote: David Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, published by Oxford University Press in 2005, p. 156). Ultimately, U.S. political leadership and news media demanded evidence from McCarthy, evidence he could not produce, and brought to an end his assault on democracy, but not until many lives had been damaged — including [a number in Washington state and at UW](#).

Please join us at the event and more broadly in this work. The creation, dissemination of, and upholding of communication literacy is a defining challenge of this time. We will wake every morning determined to meet it.

David Domke

Professor and Chair

WHY JOURNALISM MATTERS

In response to the growing unrest around issues involving the media, politics, and an informed citizenry, the UW Department of Communication and UW Libraries have joined forces to produce a [half-day conference](#) on Saturday, April 1, dedicated to media and news literacy.

[Click Here to Register and Learn More | Seating is Limited!](#)

The Mind, Body, Communication Connection

It is a common chant heard throughout childhood: “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” As they mature, many an adult learns that this playground adage is anything but true. Words have a unique power to wound us; some sneered proclamation can pierce the heart with as much precision as a laser-guided missile. Yet beyond the emotional pain, an emerging field of research is demonstrating the



physical effects that a kind (or not-so-kind) word can have on a subject. The intersection between health and interpersonal communication is at the core of [Assistant Professor John Crowley](#)'s work at the UW Department of Communication...

[Read More HERE](#)

Storytelling in Tanzania? Yes please!

Imagine this: you are working full time on your graduate degree, and suddenly an opportunity to fly to Tanzania and film an international [design sprint](#) appears. You have one-course-worth of knowledge on video production and the job starts in ten days. What do you do? If you are Carrie Hawthorne of the [Communication Leadership](#) program, you apply, get the job, receive a half-day equipment tutorial from Department faculty, fly to Africa, and make it happen...



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Five Years on Scratch: A New Youth Programming Dataset



The Nature publishing group journal Scientific Data [recently published the research of two Department faculty, Assistant Professor Mako Hill and Affiliate Assistant Professor Andrés Monroy-Hernández](#), who is also a Researcher at [FUSE Labs, Microsoft Research](#).

Scientific Data's publication of a "Data Descriptor" marks the end of nearly three years of work by Dr. Hill and Dr. Monroy-Hernández to build, document, and release a massive dataset of public information, collected over a five-year study on youth programming and social interaction activity on the [Scratch online community](#)...

[Read More HERE](#)

Changing with the *Times* - and Facebook

Meghan Peters (B.A. 2008) arrived at the University of Washington with an interest in journalism. As a freshman, one of her first stops was [The Daily](#), the UW student newspaper. Before long she was writing for the paper, later serving as a news editor and features editor.



That go-to attitude has served Peters well since graduating, despite the rapidly changing landscape for journalists. Today she is a manager of strategic partnerships at Facebook, where she works closely with journalists and media organizations to find ways they can partner to expand their audiences and enrich their storytelling ...

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Even More COMMunity News:

[Shifting into Gear](#) | Driven to test her talents as a communicator, COM Senior Cristal Carrillo joins UW's EcoCAR 3 team

[Beyond the Basics](#) | UW Department of Communication Professor and Associate Chair, [Nancy Rivenburgh](#), shares Advanced Skills for Career Success

[Comm Graduate Reports on Sierra Leone Opioid Crisis](#) | Cooper Inveen (B.A. 2015) investigates the nation's struggles against an emerging public health emergency

[Kirsten Foot Receives NCA 2016 Outstanding Book Award](#) | *Collaboration Against Human Trafficking: Cross-Sector Challenges and Practices* "offers many important contributions to organizational communication scholarship"

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