

Department of Communication Studies  
Spring 2014 Faculty Activities and Accomplishments Report  
(January 1 to May 1)

**Sara Baker** will be joining the department in the fall as an assistant professor in corporate communication. In May, **Sara** earned her Ph.D. in Communication Studies at the University of Nebraska. **Sara** was also awarded the University of Nebraska Communication Studies Department's Bruce Kendall Award. This is the department's highest teaching honor, awarded annually to an individual who demonstrates both excellence in teaching and a "spirit that extends beyond the classroom door."

**Shirley Bell** retired after 19 years of service to the Department of Communication Studies and EIU. She was granted emeritus status in May 2014. **Shirley** delivered a research retrospective colloquium entitled, "A Life in the Academy," where she discussed the challenges and rewards of "marrying" two research traditions (conversation analysis and interpersonal communication), which are grounded in markedly different philosophical assumptions. Even though **Shirley** will be retiring from the department, she will continue to work with EIU students. For example, in the spring, she secured IRB approval to work on a project with an undergraduate student (the student was enrolled in Shirley's CMN 4765: Communication in Families class). The student's project explores mother-daughter support talk. **Shirley** believes that, with more revisions, the paper will be a very good candidate for conference presentation and/or eventual publication.

**Mike Bradd** broadcasted 18 EIU Men's Basketball games on WEIU-FM Radio as well as broadcasted five EIU Men's Basketball games on WEIU-TV. In late March, he coordinated the 2014 Broadcast Industry Fair, attended by approximately 80 students. He was selected as a finalist for the Illinois Broadcaster's Association 2014 Silver Dome Award for Best Sports Play-by-Play in the Small Market Radio Category. The award winner will be announced on June 18th.

**Elizabeth Gill** presented "The Negotiated Identities of Long-Term Inmates: Breaking the Chains of Problematic Integration" at the annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association (SCSA) in Minneapolis. In addition, **Elizabeth** was appointed to EIU's Institutional Review Board. She replaced **Melanie Mills** who served on the board for three years.

**David Gracon** presented "Through Being Cool: The Political Economy of iTunes" at the American Culture Association/Popular Culture Association conference in Chicago (he also served as the panel chair for the session). At the conference, he also participated in the roundtable discussion panel called "Punk Pedagogy." David also attended the What is Documentary? conference in Portland, Oregon where he presented another paper, "Notes for the DIY Documentary Filmmaker."

**David** screened short observational documentaries "Hardcore Will Never Die" and "Images for Airports" at the New Art Film Festival held at the Art Theater in Champaign. He also

screened a retrospective of his film and video work titled “Amateur versus Professional: Experimental and Documentary Film and Video Works by David Gracon 1997-2014” at the Doudna Fine Arts Center.

In the area of service, **David** organized and presented the “Cut and Paste — EIU Zine Symposium” in conjunction with Booth Library. In addition, he organized four community multi-media events at Hallways Microcinema in Champaign.

**Marita Gronnvoll** presented, “Dissolving Borders and Eliding Ethical Controversial: A Material Rhetorical Analysis of ‘Bodies: The Exhibition,’” at the Rhetoric Society of America conference in San Antonio, Texas.

**Rich Jones** attended the national Basic Course Director's Conference in Dayton, Ohio and served as a discussion facilitator. He also hosted and presented at a regional conference, Communication and the Common Core, which was held on EIU’s campus in April and was co-sponsored by the Illinois Communication and Theatre Association (ICTA) and the Department of Communication Studies.

**Rich** performed his academic work, “Performing Queer Bodies and Politics: Intersections and Identities” at Hallways Microcinema in Champaign in May. Additionally, he was interviewed for and quoted in an article about social media and friendships in the April issue of *Good Housekeeping* magazine.

**Rich** has continued to serve as a reviewer for academic journals, reviewing for *Language and Communication* and the *Basic Course Communication Annual* this semester.

On campus, **Rich** continued his work as the faculty expert on speaking and listening with the Learning Goals Executive Committee, organizing and presenting the Speaking and Listening Workshop in March. He also presented on the panel “Gut Feelings: Exploring Gender and Emotions” which was part of Women’s History Awareness Month.

Lastly, **Rich** has continued his involvement with community theatre, which ties into his research interest in performance studies. He was in Charleston Community Theatre's production of *Moonlight and Magnolias*, performed in two interactive murder mysteries presented by Central Illinois Stage Company, and performed in the play *A Question of Loyalty*, which was written to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Charleston riots.

**Stephen A. King** attended the Academic Chairpersons Conference in Jacksonville, Florida. In addition, **Stephen** attended the CSCA conference and completed a short course on interdisciplinary research methods. He also published an article on country artist Jamey Johnson:

King, S. A. (2014). Between Jennings and Jones: Jamey Johnson, hard-core country music, and outlaw as authenticating strategy. *Popular Music and Society* 37(1), 1-21.

**Melanie Mills** retired after 29 years of service to the Department of Communication Studies and EIU. She was granted emeritus status in May 2014. In April, she delivered a research retrospective lecture as part of the department's 2014 colloquium series. While at the CSCA conference, Melanie co-chaired a GIFTS (Great Ideas for Teaching Speech) panel, "Elevating Sex, Gender, & Sexuality with Innovative Curriculum & Classroom Activities." At the same conference, **Melanie** was both chair and respondent for the panel, "Pushing Boundaries Beyond the Communication Classroom: Teaching Ideas for Elevating New Scholars." **Melanie** also attended the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI) conference and presented "Believing is Seeing: Conversations that Illuminate the Experience of Sight Loss" for a panel titled *What's (Un)said, (Un)voiced, (Un)heard: Silence and Conversation Around Disability*.

In the spring, **Melanie** worked with Lauren Kluge Padillo to finish her MA creative thesis ("A Strategic Communication Campaign to Build Effective Relationships"). She also worked with Amanda Loehr to complete her undergraduate honors thesis ("Patients of Alzheimer's and Their Families: Effects on Communication and Personal Well-Being").

**Melanie's** long record of service continued into the spring semester. She reviewed articles for *Health Communication* and *Women & Language* as well as a new upcoming book, *Studies of Communication in the 2012 Presidential Election* (edited by Robert E. Denton, Jr.). In addition, she completed a program review with Alberto Gonzales of the Communication Studies Department at University of North Carolina Greensboro. On campus, **Melanie** is an active member for WHAM (Women's History & Awareness Month); she coordinated performances of Living History students in the local elementary schools for WHAM. Finally, **Melanie** served the Charleston community in multiple ways from her work on the part of Excellence in Education Foundation Board to the Women Connected Philanthropic Giving Circle.

**Andrew Robinson** was presented with the Alpha Image Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service by the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. In addition, **Andrew** presented "Religiosity and Spirituality among African American Students" at the 2014 EIUnity Diversity Conference. From January through May, Andrew trained 48 faculty from various colleges and universities in online course development through the Illinois Online Network. **Andrew** continues to serve as Volunteer Pastor and Faculty Advisor to ACTS Campus Ministry. As part of his work, he worked with twelve students and recent graduates in ACTS Cultivating Ministers Ordination Training Program (1.5 years in and candidates anticipated ordination is August 2015).

**T. M. Linda Scholz** has embarked on a two-year online Mindful Facilitation Certification program. As part of the certification process, **Linda** will attend a number of face-to-face workshops, including a cross-cultural diversity trainings seminar in Berkeley, California this summer.

In April, **Eric Schumacher** presented a co-authored paper, "From Competition to Collaboration: Cultivating Convergence in Student News Media" at the Broadcast Education Association Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Brian Sowa** continued working on his public relations management book (Fall 2014 publication date). He also attended the Faculty Summer Institute on Pedagogy and Online Teaching at the University of Illinois.

In April, **Scott Walus** and **Angie Jacobs** presented, "Creation of Space and Place in *The Office: An Examination of Humor as a Mechanism for Creating Space, Resistance and Incorporation*" at the CSCA conference. At that same conference, **Scott** and co-author, **Melissa A. Click** (University of Missouri), presented a paper on exploring averageness in the mediated myth of rock and roll on the top papers panel for the Media Studies Interest Group. Later in the semester, **Scott** presented an essay on the representations of gender in rock and roll in "Behind the Music" at Console-ing Passions, an international feminist media conference. In the area of creative activity, **Scott** produced a music video for the Cavetone Records band Cedar Plank Salmon, which was premiered by the *Chicago Music Guide*.

**Carrie Wilson-Brown** served as a faculty mentor to the Spring Student Commencement Speaker (Anna Percival). She also coordinated a university and community screening and discussion about Autism Spectrum Disorder for the Central Illinois Feminist Film Festival. In addition, **Carrie** was honored at the Disability Services Faculty Appreciation Event.