

Department of Communication Studies / 408 924 5360

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Debate Coach heading for Afghanistan

Forensics coach Paul Deis is heading for active duty in Afghanistan after being called up from the U.S. Army Reserves. His deployment will likely take him to that country's Pashtu region that lies on the border with Pakistan. There, remnants of the Taliban continue to harass

U.S. forces and threaten the new government in Kabul. While Deis expects to be in Afghanistan for 12 months, his deployment could last two years.

As a Captain in the Army's Civil Affairs Branch, Deis will command a team of soldiers working to

enhance friendly relations between the U.S. armed forces and Afghan locals. Deis will tackle a broad range of challenges while serving in Afghanistan: supporting conventional and special operations forces,

(Cont. on page 2)

Students Scare Up Halloween Radio Debate

Communication Studies students from **Elizabeth Harris's** COMM 40 classes participated in a rollicking KSJS radio debate on Halloween, tackling issues related to initiatives on the California special election held this fall.

The student debates, concentrating on propositions 74, 76, and 77, contributed to a full day of radio programming dedicated to the special election and coordinated by KSJS Public Affairs Director **Ramon Johnson**.

Ms. Harris's students in Argumentation and Advocacy employed their newly learned Lincoln-Douglas skills to defend opposing sides of each initiative, while other students provided on-air critiques.

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"It was really cool to meet the people whose research I have been reading over the past couple of years, particularly those whose research is going to be the basis for my thesis..."

- Karen Williams recalling her adventures at NCA - page 2



David Rosas and Missy Jordan debate the issues

Photo by Andrew Wood

Deis heading for Afghanistan



Photo by Andrew Wood

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enhancing cooperation between civil authorities and military personnel, helping local citizens, and interacting with civilian aid organizations seeking to assist the people of Afghanistan.

Deis admits mixed emotions about his deployment: “On the one hand, I love my job at SJSU and would love to continue what I’m doing... On the other hand, I’m

excited about the opportunity to test my mettle in Civil Affairs and hopefully have a positive impact in the Afghan reconstruction.”

Deis brings plenty of experience to the job. He entered the military as a Marine in 1994, receiving his commission five years later. In the enlisted ranks, Deis worked as a Force Recon Scout and as a Combatant Diver. As an officer, he worked as a Fire Control Team Leader,

Counter-terrorism Instructor, Legal Officer, and a Latin American Foreign Area Officer. Later, Deis transferred to the Army Reserves.

After his deployment, Deis hopes to return to his duties as a teacher and debate coach for SJSU. But he might also pursue graduate studies in communication or law, either in the United States or Scandinavia.

Halloween Radio Debate

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Responding to the threat of “dead air” while students prepared their speeches, the debates featured a “flowmaster” who listed the arguments made by both sides.

Genelle Austin-Lett also contributed to the program

with her taped introduction to the fundamentals of LD-style debate.

Elizabeth noted the debate’s impressive outcome: “What started out as three debates turned into 12 hours of political broadcasting including a teach-in and a few interviews with people

from other departments that were interested in this election. There was effort put forth by many people to make it successful; the students should be very proud of their work. They have a greater understanding of debate and the political process.”

The debate continues the

relationship between KSJS and Elizabeth Harris’s classes. In previous semesters, her COMM 20 students have delivered on-air Public Service Announcements to demonstrate their mastery of persuasion.

Elizabeth Harris contributed to this article

NCA Wrap-up and Conference News

This year, nineteen faculty members and students attended the National Communication Association conference in Boston. For several graduate students, the conference provided an opportunity to meet some of their scholarly inspirations. MA candidate **Karen Williams** notes, “It was really cool to meet the

people whose research I have been reading over the past couple of years, particularly those whose research is going to be the basis for my thesis.”

This year’s conference was the second largest in NCA history, featuring over 1,200 programs and 5,400 participants. Next year’s NCA will be held in

San Antonio - and **J. Michael Sproule**, NCA Second Vice President and former Communication Studies professor at SJSU, will serve as primary convention planner.

In the spirit of the 2006 convention theme, “Creating Sites for Connection and Action,”

NCA is partnering with the Federación Latina Americana de Facultades de Comunicación Social (FELAFACS) to create a one-day preconference on Wednesday, November 15, 2006.

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Photo by Andrew Wood

Debate Champions from the 140 Face-Off Held on December 2, 2005

Jason Marr (top speaker) and **Brian Lombard** (3-0)
James Echinvaria and **Charles Lowery** (3-0)
Amy Shull (fourth top speaker) and **Chris Stoytchev** (3-0)
Pam Stair and **Chris Anderson** (sixth top speaker) (3-0)

Forensics Update – *Genelle Austin-Lett*

The team is off to a strong start. This is a rebuilding year since nine members of the team graduated. Four junior debaters, novice competitors in extemporaneous speaking, are pushing their limits to compete in open in preparation for the International Forensics Association competition in Prague, Czech Republic.

Peter Ballard, **Laurie Redding**, **Autumn Tyr-Salvia**, and **David Patterson** are working hard to compete in three individual events plus parliamentary debate.

Also, on December 2nd, we hosted our end-of-the semester intramural tournament. Three of the Comm 140 classes (44 debaters and 25 judges with their coaches, Professor **Teri Young** and **Genelle Austin-Lett**) started the day with three rounds of parliamentary debate competition. In the afternoon, thirty-five COMM 20 speakers, seventy-eight COMM 40 debaters, and fifty-five COMM 191J judges participated.

Conference News

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Dedicated to bringing communication scholars together across political and cultural boundaries, this preconference will serve as a follow up to the First Communication Conference of the Americas in 1997, in Mexico City. **Federico Varona** serves as coordinator of the FELAFACS steering committee.

Results of the Fall Tournament Season

Santa Clara University, Sept. 23-25

Sean-John Barksdale – 2nd place in Novice Impromptu

Santa Rosa Tournament, Oct. 7-9

Laurie Redding and **Peter Ballard** – 2nd place Junior Parliamentary Debate

Peter Ballard – 3rd place Speaker Award

Laurie Redding – 5th place Speaker Award

Sean-John Barksdale – Finalist in Novice Extemporaneous speaking

Delta/UOP Swing Tournament, Nov 11-13

Sean-John Barksdale placed in every event he entered. He was a finalist at Delta in Extemp, Impromptu and After-Dinner speaking. At UOP he was finalist in those same three events, 10th speaker in Novice Parliamentary debate and a Quarter finalist with his partner **Dan Harrigan** in Novice Parliamentary debate. The team took 3rd place Sweepstakes for small school entries.

Department Contributes to 2006 Martin Luther King Celebration – Marquita Byrd, VP, Santa Clara MLK Association

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Santa Clara Valley is planning for the King Birthday Celebration on January 16, 2006. The MLK Association had been producing this event for 20 years; this year is the 21st. The celebration in honor of Martin Luther King's birthday is the second largest the country; Atlanta, Georgia, has the largest. Educational scholarships, community activism and social change are the foci of this non-profit organization. A diverse group serves on the Board of Directors and participation in the activities of the organization is open to everyone.

There are three segments to the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. On January 13th, the MLK association will produce a religious night, which is a Gospel Fest. Gospel choirs from around the Bay Area will participate in an evening of praise and worship. The second phase of the celebration is the Mover of Mountains Awards Breakfast, a gathering based on "moving mountains" as a recurring theme in King's works. Here, scholarships and awards for outstanding community service will be given. The third phase of the MLK celebration is a Freedom Train.

The Freedom Train runs from San Jose to San Francisco, with stops at Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, and San Mateo. Two thousand participants will board the train on this hour and twenty-five minute ride. The train ride commemorates the Underground Railroad, a route traveled by runaway slaves from the South to the North and the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to demand civil rights for every American. The Freedom Train is the only one of its kind in the nation. The ride ends in San Francisco where participants join Rev. Cecil Williams of Glide Memorial

in a bus ride to the Civic Center. The bus ride will honor the late Ms. Rosa Parks as a key person in igniting the civil rights movement. People pour in from as far as Sacramento, building a group 3,000-4,000 strong.

Save the date to join the Freedom Train on January 16, 2006. The train leaves the Diridon Train Station, 65 Cahill St., at 10:00 a.m.

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For more information, contact Marquita Byrd at drmbbyrd@yahoo.com

Faculty, Staff, and Student News

Jay Baglia made two presentations at NCA: "Disavowing Disease: Identity, the Chart, and a Soul to Squeeze," a part of a Performance Studies sponsored panel of illness narrative performances; and "Harvest: Profit and Politics in Women's Reproductive Health," a critical discourse analysis of news stories about fertility and infertility in US newspapers, sponsored by the Feminist/Women's Studies division.

Dr. Baglia was also elected as the Western States representative to the Performance Studies division committee.

Solara Foxie, major in communication studies, won a \$3,500 scholarship to study in Ghana, West Africa, during the spring semester.

She won the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and the Institute of International Education, despite facing stiff competition. Only about one in four applicants received awards. [News gathered from *SJSU This Week*]

Rona Halualani recently finished a one-year sabbatical funded by a Ford Foundation (\$30,000) grant to conduct research for her upcoming book entitled, *Mainland Hawaiians and the Politics of Membership* for the University of Hawai'i Press.

In addition, Dr. Halualani is writing a book manuscript for Sage Publications entitled, *Critical Intercultural Communication Studies: An Introduction*. Both books are slated to be out next academic year.

In Summer 2005, Dr. Halualani was selected by the Carnegie Foundation For the Advancement of Teaching (at Stanford University) to serve as one of only twenty-five 2005-2006 scholars and conduct research on learning in the core Intercultural Communication course. Dr. Halualani was selected out of 500 faculty applicants to this prestigious national program that focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

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In November 2005, upon invitation, Dr. Halualani presented her research on race and blood quantum identifications during a research colloquium hosted by the Science, Technology, and Society

Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Matthew Spangler performed James Joyce's short story "Counterparts" from his *Dubliners*

collection at Evergreen College in November. "Counterparts" is part of Dr. Spangler's one-person show of Joyce's stories.

Andrew Wood published his essay "What happens

[in Vegas]": Performing the post-tourist *flâneur* in "New York" and "Paris" in *Text and Performance Quarterly*.

News for next issue?
Email Andrew Wood!

Chair Report - Dennis Jaehne

The pendulum seems to be swinging back toward an emphasis on the importance of liberal education for our students. According to Carol Geary Schneider, head of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, colleges in the 19th century taught a common core curriculum. In the 20th century, the world became more technologically complex and we saw the rise of "majors" as areas of specialization. At first these specialized "depth" studies complemented the "breadth" of the general education ideal; however, by the end of the century, specialized majors had begun to eclipse the importance of a core curriculum. Universities saw tensions arise between the goals of developing engaged citizens versus skills-trained workers. But more and more employers are telling us that they want to employ graduates who can read, write, speak with others, work effectively in diverse groups, and be able to make sense of the endless stream of information that bombards us. They want students to understand what makes people tick, how cultures

condition our behavior, and what mistakes history can prevent us from repeating. So universities across the country are rethinking their educational purposes and practices to "prepare students for a diverse, globally interdependent, and knowledge-fueled world."

Sadly, a recent national AACU survey of high school and college students found that among the "least valued outcomes" for their education were "values, principles, ethics," "tolerance and respect for different cultural backgrounds," and "civic responsibility and orientation to public service."

Our department has begun to respond to these challenges. During our last five-year program review, we identified four cornerstones for our curriculum: democracy, diversity, technology, and globalization. These themes guide our curricular decisions and we have structured our learning objectives to reflect that. You can find these learning objectives at: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/ugs/>

PA/pa-Comm.htm. I would appreciate your feedback.

Starting this fall, after two years of planning, we launched a significant revision of the major. We are introducing electronic portfolios in which students collect and reflect upon their best work - and we have added a new Senior Seminar as a capstone for the major. A new course in qualitative research methods helps students better understand the excitement of learning about lived communication in actual contexts. We now require students to complete a full three unit applied activity (often serving as a tutor or taking an internship). Overall, we believe these changes will help us to both teach to our learning objectives, and assess how well our students are meeting those objectives.

We hope to contribute to the shift in higher education as universities seek to become places where people learn, and not just places where people teach. We want our students not just to get jobs, but also to become "intentional learners - empowered, informed, and responsible."

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

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depts/commstudies/](http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/commstudies/)