

## COMM Welcomes Dr. Ahmed

After completing a post-doctorate at The National Center for Super-computing Applications at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed joined the department faculty in fall 2012. Dr. Ahmed, who received his doctorate at Texas A&M University, is currently working on three projects related to scientific cyberinfrastructure, distributed collaborate research environments, and group formations in virtual environments.



Dr. Ahmed joins two new faculty members in the departments of Linguistics and Technical Communication and Radio, Television, and Film, who also began in fall 2012, as part of a social media cluster within the College of Arts and Sciences. This group is cur-

rently surveying faculty throughout the university who teach in the areas of digital, social, and new media. Working collaboratively across disciplines, the cluster members are exploring the possibility of creating an undergraduate certificate program in digital and social media that will be open to students throughout the university.

Earlier this fall, Dr. Ahmed learned that he has been awarded a quarter of a million dollar grant by the National Science Foundation for his research on the process of developing virtual research environments.

Our students are excited because he teaches courses in Communication and Virtual Gaming.

## RETURN OF THE VAUGHN

Holley Vaughn, an alumna of our Bachelor's and Master's programs, was hired this summer as the Undergraduate Advisor and Lecturer in Performance Studies. For the first time in the department's history we have a staff-person devoted half-time to advising our undergraduate students. With the university's newfound commitment to recruitment and retention, Holley will be busy, working closely with our majors and with potential transfer students to keep them well-informed and on the right track for timely graduation.



After teaching service courses in the fall, Holley will be teaching a course of her own design in the spring, *Performance and Tourism*.

# COMMUNICATION STUDIES EVENTS

**DEMOUGEOT DEBATE**  
JAN 8 - 11, 2013  
UNT CAMPUS

**CLICK HERE FOR PHOTOS OF GENDER FAIR 7**

**Fifty Shades of Gender**

**CHECK OUT OUR BLACK BOX FACEBOOK FOR THE SPRING 2013 PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE - COMING SOON!**

**STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE @ UNT**  
MARCH 1 & 2, 2013



## August 2012 Undergraduate Commencement



### COMM Picnic

The department hosted its inaugural back-to-school picnic on September 15, 2012. The faculty welcomed new and returning graduate and undergraduate students and their families (and a number of animals) to our department family.



### All in the family

Faculty member Dr. Brian Lain and former faculty Dr. Karen Anderson were married on August 25, 2012 by Dr. Jay Allison.



### Dr. Justin Trudeau achieves tenure!

Congratulations are in order for Dr. Justin Trudeau, who successfully cleared the tenure hurdle and was promoted to Associate Professor beginning fall 2012. His dossier, which was divided equally between published and creative research, was universally praised by his external reviewers. We look forward to seeing his post-tenure scholarship.



### Fall 2012 Teaching Assistants

TA Orientation Fall 2012 welcomes new TAs: Karen Wisdom, Anna Bogdan, Flora Ceka, Laura Maninger, Derek Zielger, Dino Galdino, Eric Sloss, Kara Brittain, Jo Lugo, and Collin Roark. The returning TAs are Brittany Hale, Miranda Chesson, Jake Beck, Travis Williams, Monica Strauss, Alyssa Lucas-Bolin, and Samantha Duque. Alumna Christi Saindon addressed the group on how to facilitate discussion based on online content.

## My Vieux Carre´

Graduate student Travis Williams performed his thesis production, *My Vieux Carre´*, this September. This one-man show was based on hauntology research and his experiences in the French Quarter.



## Pardon our dust

The main COMM office got a makeover at the beginning of term with a fresh coat of paint! The walls are much brighter, much like the students beginning their undergraduate and graduate degrees in our program. Dr. Jay Allison sits among his library of books, waiting for his student workers to return them to the shelves.

## The British Came!

UNT Debate hosted their annual British Debate on October 2, 2012, with UNT's Alyssa Lucas-Bolin (left) and Derek Zeigler (right) going up against the British National Debate Team's Wilfred Foxtton (second from left) and Ettie Bailey-King (second from right).

This dust-up marked the 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the British Nationals and UNT Debate. Their first meeting, in 1962, was televised nationally. Their topic this year was "This House would abolish the Electoral College".

[Check out UNT Debate on Facebook!](#)



## Petit Jean Performance Festival

Many COMM alumni and current COMM faculty and students joined performance studies students from around the United States at the Petit Jean Performance Festival October 18-20, 2012.

Our very own Dr. Justin Trudeau served as festival co-leader along with David Terry from San Jose State University. Following its successful UNT debut, Travis Williams performed *My Vieux Carre´* in a spotlight performance.

Raquel Polanco (left), a UNT alumna and current doctoral candidate at LSU, participates in the workshop activities.





### UNT Homecoming 2012

The Department of Communication Studies tailgated at the UNT Homecoming football game (against Arkansas State University) November 3, 2012. Alumni Larrah Lewis, Carolina Parrack, Kassie Hernandez, and Steve Newton joined Dr. Brian Richardson and other faculty, staff, and students for food and drinks before the game.



### Titanic

COMM Senior Caleb Wood directed *Titanic* in the Black Box Theatre November 8, 9, and 10, 2012. The cast included Kate Avery, Jesse Snider, Reese Finley, Jaysin Williams, Matthew Stewart, and Adam Waddell. Natalie Scardis provided technical assistance. The production was for a Special Problems course with Dr. Kelly Taylor.



### Gender Fair 7

Dr. Suzanne Enck and the students in COMM 4140 (Gender and Communication) held the 7th Gender Fair, "Fifty Shades of Gender," in the One O'Clock Lounge on December 4. Students presented information on feminism, politics, public life, masculinities, sexuality, gender and violence, and race and gender. Lambda Pi Eta, also in attendance, collected donations for Denton County Friends of the Family.



### Debate-A-Palooza

Debate-A-Palooza brings together UNT Debate, students in COMM 2140 (Rhetoric & Argument), Debate alumni, and the community for a day of public debates. This fall, Jon-David Wells of the Wells Report on 660AM KSKY, served as keynote speaker for the event. Debate-A-Palooza is the brain child of Dr. Brian Lain, Director of Debate, who has hosted the event for the past three semesters. The event is free and open to community members who are interested in debate and discussion.



### Fall 2012 Communication Studies Hooding Ceremony

Several years ago, UNT made the decision to no longer hood Master's graduates at formal commencement ceremonies. After student activism failed to change the minds of administrators, the department faculty decided to create its own ceremony recognizing the accomplishments of our Master's graduates. In spring 2011, the department held its first hooding ceremony, which was an overwhelming success. Distinguished alumni are chosen for each semester's ceremony thus far. The graduates, the faculty, and their families have been addressed by Keturi Beatty, Cliff McKenzie, and Rick Deviny. This fall Libby Eddleman Spears, owner of Bravo Communications and Consulting, served as our speaker. Each semester since that first ceremony the event has continued to evolve; this semester we included graduating seniors to join the festivities and be recognized.



### Fall 2012 Undergraduate Commencement



### GREAT NEWS!

Following the death of former chair and UNT Debate coach John S. Gossett, the department established a debate scholarship in his name. With donations from alumni, department and UNT faculty, as well as administrators the John S. Gossett Memorial Debate Scholarship reached endowment status last spring. In fall 2013 the UNT Debate program will name the first recipient of the Gossett Scholarship.