Catching up with Melissa Doty

RECENT GRADUATE FROM OUR Masters of Science in Communications program and previous GSA, Melissa has moved to Saudi Arabia and immersed herself in the application of her interpersonal and intercultural communication skills as she is teaching and developing new course curriculum to assist in the improvement of communication skills for Saudi women of all majors.

Despite being the only communications consultant at the University of Dammam, Melissa has thrived and is currently constructing the course syllabus and references for a new introductory communications course in Saudi Arabia. We are so proud of all her accomplishments and will continue to support her in her outstanding work across the globe.

“Laugh or you’ll cry. We took a coffee break at the same time that men came to fix some thing in the [university]. Because we were uncovered, we were stuck at the wrong side of the building -- away from our office. After ten minutes of waiting, I decided to improvise. Introducing Chanel’s new trashy chic head scarf, available only in standard garbage bag size.”

~Melissa Doty

Suggested Classes for Spring

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Meet Our Newest GSA

Lindsey Messer

Smart and Diligent, Lindsey began her college career at the early age of 16 as a Running Start student and in 2013 she graduated from EWU with a BA in Communication Studies. During her undergrad years, she obtained a leadership certificate and worked multiple jobs simultaneously, including working for the Associated Press in the Sports Department and for PostNet as a customer service representative. In addition to her studies and work schedule, Lindsey found time to do an internship with Therapeutic Dimensions, engaging with social media and enhancing marketing opportunities.

"The internship gave me invaluable experience; I was able to sit in on weekly cash flow meetings to see real examples of how a successful business operates!"

Continuing her quick-paced journey of excellence, Lindsey joined the MSC program this fall and already has an idea for her thesis. "Communication in businesses is important to me and so I'm interested in looking at Mission Statements for my thesis. How successful they are being incorporated into the everyday business practices and how well the employees are using them."

From her first job at age 13, working booths at local events such as Pig out in the Park and the Spokane County Fair, Lindsey has fostered a passion for the way businesses are run and how they work. She has since been involved in many different kinds of businesses such as: family owned and operated, seasonal, franchise, and corporation and direct sales. So it only makes sense that she takes what she has learned about communications and applies it to her experience in an endeavor to improve business operations, representation, and public relations.

This fall we were delighted to welcome Lindsey not only to the MSC program, but as a fellow GSA team member as well. In just a few months, she has developed her teaching style, focusing on rich group discussions and classroom activities that encourage students to identify the importance of communication tools and methods and then recognize how they can implement these concepts in their lives.

As a GSA, Lindsey brings a warm smile and fresh approach to classroom instruction by combining many teaching methods and learning styles developed from her academic studies and work-related experience, which enables students to quickly understand the material and apply it to their day-to-day activities.

Not only is she starting a new journey as a MSC graduate student and GSA, but we are also pleased to congratulate Lindsey on her recent engagement and celebrate with her as she begins this new chapter in her life.

"I am looking forward to finishing the MSC program as he begins his doctorate in physical therapy; I am excited to see where these adventures take us."
Learning Institute and continued in the Graduate Preparation Program, later enrolling as a full Graduate student in the MSC program and plans to graduate fall quarter 2015.

When asked about her experience in the MSC program, Lulu said the first thing that touched her was when one of her professors told the class to “be creative.” That sentiment has opened her mind to new thoughts and ideas, allowing her to approach problems in new ways and engage in paradigm thinking. Lulu also mentioned the diversity in the MSC program, stating:

Quick-witted, charismatic, and with a flair for the Fine Arts, Lulu lights up the MSC program with her bright smile and creative approach to learning. In 2011, she graduated from King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia with a BA in Mass Communications and Journalism. After taking a year off to look for work and see what masters programs would best fit her, she moved to the US to continue her education at EWU in the summer of 2012. She then enrolled in the English Learning Institute and continued in the Graduate Preparation Program, later enrolling as a full Graduate student in the MSC program and plans to graduate fall quarter 2015.

Her recommendation to incoming international students is to be creative and think unconventionally. She advises that they’ll need to be reading a lot and willing to accept other cultures and new ideas. Lastly, she said that international students should not let a difference in language or perspectives keep them from expressing themselves.

Lulu is a strong feminist and an artist as she not only paints rich and detailed written pieces, but likes to express herself through her drawings as well. She is admittedly obsessed with Coldplay, and loves The Big Bang Theory and Seinfeld. She’s also a Johnny Depp fan and a movie buff, sometimes seeing two movies in theaters back-to-back. Lulu has an extensive family and is currently residing with her uncle and brother where she enjoys being “with the guys.” This excellent scholar reminds us of the importance of staying true to our passions and beliefs, while remembering to enjoy the gift of creative learning.
Momo Terada

Always quick to smile and engage you in conversation, Momo has been a wonderful addition to the MSC program. In March 2012, she gained her BA in Intercultural Communications from Gakushuin Women's College in Japan. She then worked part time as a guest service specialist at a hotel. Because Momo is bilingual, she would assist English-speaking foreigners at the hotel, giving directions and helping them navigate local Japanese cities. In the spring of 2013, Momo moved to the US, continuing her education at EWU. She enrolled in the English Learning Institute in winter 2013 and continued on in the Graduate Preparation Program for the next two quarters. In winter 2014, she enrolled as a full Graduate student in the MSC program and graduated fall quarter 2014.

When asked about her experience in the MSC program, Momo mentioned her culture shock while becoming accustomed to the “American style” of education. Students asking questions in class, sometimes cutting professors off as they spoke, was new and different for her, as was the way in which American students openly expressed their opinions and feelings in classroom settings. This expectation to engage in a different way with her peers, professors, and the course material prompted her to think more deeply about her opinions and beliefs. Momo said the MSC program opened her mind to a lot of ideas and viewpoints, allowing her to “think outside the box.” Diversity was also a plus that Momo saw in the MSC program, citing the presence of students from Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, and more. Momo advises future international students thinking about joining the MSC program:

"keep an open mind toward new cultures and ideas as individuals can’t learn about authentic cultures unless they’re open to it."

She said her view of other cultures changed drastically through her openness to new ideas and her proactive engagement in communication with others.

Momo is a passionate and inspiring young woman who not only excels in her studies, but enjoys getting to know others as well. Her favorite job was as a barista at Starbucks during her undergrad years, where she was able to interact with people all the time. Momo spends her free time catching up with friends and family as well as cooking, working out, and watching her favorite show, a Japanese reality TV show that translates into “How do You Like Wednesdays?” Momo is also obsessed with Disneyland, at one time possessing a special pass so she could get in any day she wanted. We are very proud of all Momo’s accomplishments as it has been a pleasure supporting her endeavors to provide a more open-minded perspective to the study of communications.

Sihmy Algamedi

Born and raised in Jeddah, a coastal city in Saudi Arabia, Sihmy joined the MSC program fall of 2013 and graduated fall of 2014. When speaking with Sihmy in his cap and gown, having just received his MS in Communications, his intelligence and joy are quickly apparent, but what is less known is his journey from Saudi Arabia to the US.

In 2001, Sihmy graduated from King Abdulaziz University with a BS in Accounting. He then worked in Jeddah as an accountant for seven years before coming to the States to seek further education and international experience with his wife, who is his "greatest supporter". Having studied and worked in accounting for nearly a decade, Sihmy was well-versed in the technical language of business and numbers. Yet, communications proved to be an entirely new field with its own set of terms and concepts. Sihmy wisely became an active reader of communication literature, including journal articles, books, and social media news in order to learn the terminology and recognize ways to implement the knowledge he gained. This allowed him to understand and produce rich qualitative and quantitative research, which he then applied to other fields such as history, philosophy, anthropology, and even business.

Gracious and humble as always, Sihmy allot a generous portion of his success to his helpful professors and classmates. When asked what advice he would share with future international MSC graduate students, he said: "I would like to say to them that if you want to reach your success in the MSC program and acquire great knowledge, read a lot in the communication field, be active in classes, and don't hesitate to ask your professors or classmates about difficulties that you face."

Sihmy is highly motivated and is continuing his education by applying for a PhD program in hopes of becoming a professor in the US or Saudi Arabia. In the meantime, he spends time with his wife of nearly seven years, plays soccer once a week, keeps up with political discussions through Twitter and Facebook, and is an avid viewer of The Walking Dead.

Sihmy’s maxim for life... "There is no one way for success"
Last year, we had a wonderful time at the Northwest Communication Association (NWCA) conference as several of our graduate students and one outstanding undergraduate shared their insights on an assortment of topics with scholars from all around the US. Lujain Alahmadi, Sihmy Alghamdi, Azzam Alomran, and Mohammed Altamimi presented "Communication in Saudi Arabia" and successfully challenged common misconceptions in an effort to enhance intercultural communication. Melissa Doty did a stellar job serving as their chair and also presented with her fellow GSA members Desalyn Graybeal, Heather Chandler and Hannah Seagrave on the topic of transitioning into graduate school. Another knowledgeable and confident Communication Studies scholar, Aunja Norland, was the only EWU undergraduate to have her paper selected for presentation. She made us all very proud as she delivered a deft, condensed version of her rhetorical analysis of Senator Robert Byrd's 2003 "Arrogance of Power" speech.

This year we hope to keep the enthusiasm and enlightenment flowing at the 2015 conference, with a theme of “Communication & Convergence.” Our very own Patty Chantrill, PhD is this year's Conference Planner and encourages you to join us as “You won’t want to miss this particular convergence. Something’s happening here.” All submissions are due to the Division Chairs on February 16, 2015. For more information please visit northwestcomm.org.

At the exact time as NWCA's April 16-18th conference, EWU is proud to host the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR). This is a wonderful opportunity to promote your research scholarship and creative activity completed in partnership with faculty or other mentors as a vital component of higher education. We encourage all Communication Studies graduates to support our undergraduates as they present their research at the NCUR.

While the NCUR opportunity is limited to undergraduates, we encourage our graduate students to share their research at The Graduate Research & Creative Works Symposium, which will be held in collaboration with NCUR on April 16th. This is an excellent opportunity for you to showcase your academic accomplishments, explore the research of your peers, and interact with students and faculty across all academic disciplines. We are proud to support your participation in the Symposium as an integral component of your higher education. Abstracts for the Graduate Symposium are accepted February 6 - March 13, 2015.

Opportunities abound for all our students as we head into 2015. Let’s celebrate the joy of learning together!