

**2009.7.21**

**YOUNGSTOWN  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**School of Graduate  
Studies & Research**

**Program  
Development Plan**

## **PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION (M.A.)**

**College of Fine and Performing Arts**

**An Integrated Degree Offered by the Departments of:  
Communication, English, & Marketing**

## **Program Development Plan**

### **Master of Arts in Professional Communication**

#### **Designation**

The departments of Communication, English, and Marketing and Advertising propose a new master's degree program entitled "Professional Communication." This new degree will be housed in the Department of Communication in the College of Fine and Performing Arts but jointly administered. The program will provide graduate students with the necessary background and skills to succeed in professional writing, public relations, and management positions.

The range of coursework will offer students substantial and high-level preparation for moving directly into challenging professional positions in businesses and organizations. Students who have completed undergraduate and graduate programs in professional writing, communication, and marketing have reported that their careers require a combination of skills and knowledge that their respective programs did not address fully. By collaborating, the three departments will provide students with a distinctive opportunity. Youngstown State University provides accessible programs to a unique geographic region. Currently, 90% of the students commute to YSU, and 99% of our graduate students commute. No such program is currently available to the greater Youngstown area.

This interdisciplinary program addresses such concerns, combining the assets of three colleges and at least eight faculty members. The program is needed in this region of the state, and is distinct from other regional MA programs in that the focus is oriented more toward skill development and job improvement, and entrance requirements and tuition are more modest. There is a greater emphasis on writing skills, and course offerings present diverse alternatives. The program is also accessible and available to a variety of majors. We offer this program in the spirit of YSU's mission to aid development of the economy in the Mahoning Valley.

#### **Program Description**

The Master of Arts in Professional Communication will draw on the strengths of three concentration areas: Communication, Professional Writing and Editing (in English), and Marketing. Communication is developing new coursework and is using presently existing swing courses. The Professional Writing and Editing (PWE) program offers a graduate certificate and a Professional Writing and Editing track within the English M.A. Marketing offers thirteen graduate courses that contribute to a Master of Business Administration (MBA). This degree program will require no significantly new resources and only a few new courses to become operational.

#### **Mission Statement**

The Master's Degree in Professional Communication is designed for people in any organizational setting who wish to develop advanced communication knowledge and skills, as an end in itself or as preparation for a doctoral degree. Specifically, the proposed program seeks to cultivate student skills in the following areas:

- Writing effectively for multiple audiences using current technologies.
- Developing strategies for effective organizational marketing.
- Acquiring advanced analytical and research skills appropriate to organizations.
- Organizing, synthesizing, and communicating complex bodies of data and information.
- Gaining effectiveness in face to face and computer-mediated interpersonal relationships.
- Appreciating ethical communication choices necessary for today's professionals.

## **Program Requirements**

To be admitted to the program, students will need to submit the following documents for consideration:

- Satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- A current resume outlining academic and professional experience.
- A letter of interest explaining how the academic and /or professional experience and goals are a good match with the MA program.
- Official transcript(s) documenting a minimum unrecalculated GPA of 3.0 on a 4 pt scale.
- 3 completed recommendation forms (form is posted on YSU website:  
[http://www.ysu.edu/gradschool/pdf/studentforms/Recommendation\\_Form\\_in\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.ysu.edu/gradschool/pdf/studentforms/Recommendation_Form_in_PDF.pdf))

## **Courses**

For a full listing of the courses in the proposed MA in Professional Communication, see Appendix A. In general, students will take courses according to the following plan:

### **Total: 12 courses (33 - 36 s.h.)**

#### **Core Courses (18 s.h.)**

- CMST 6957 - Organizational Communication Audit
- CMST 6999 - Applied Research Methods
- ENGL 6943 - Technical Communication
- ENGL 6944 - Document Design and Production
- MKTG 6900 - Foundations of Marketing
- MKTG 6942 - Strategic Marketing Management

#### **Elective Courses (9 s.h.)**

- Students will take a total of 3 three-credit courses, from at least two of the areas.

#### **Internship in Concentration Area (3 s.h.)**

#### **Capstone in Concentration Area (3-6 s.h.)**

- Thesis (6 s.h.) or Non-Thesis/Portfolio (3 s.h.)

## **Administrative Responsibilities**

The three collaborating programs will jointly oversee the program to ensure that students are well served, but the program will be housed in Communication, where the department Chair will help students find advisers in their focus areas. Each of the three areas (Communication, PWE, and Marketing) will assign a program representative to review graduate applications and assess the MA program's progress as a whole.

## **Evidence of Need**

The three programs (PWE, Communication, and Marketing) share several key goals. All three programs aim to educate students in the knowledge and skills necessary for clear, professional communication. PWE offers professional and technical writing, document design, rhetorical theory, and instruction in managing publications. Communication offers a solid theoretical and practical basis in group dynamics, public speaking, and organizational communication. Advertising & Public Relations and Marketing prepare students to plan and manage multiple media and PR campaigns. In all cases, we work to provide students with solid abilities in writing, speaking, and research.

Graduates of our undergraduate programs report, as mentioned above, that they are multi-tasking even more than we have anticipated. They are required to cross the boundaries of knowledge and

skill-sets that they encounter in our academic programs. With an interdisciplinary MA degree such as the one we are proposing, students will be better prepared to meet the multiple and complex demands that will be placed upon them in the workplace.

## **Prospective Enrollment**

Within three years, we expect to reach an enrollment of ten to fifteen graduate students per year. Most of the courses in this program serve other master's degree programs, so students new to the proposed program will be enrolled almost entirely in existing courses (see Appendix A for course information). From a survey of current students, we have reason to believe that this estimate is reasonable, although the potential for far more students is real.

In the fall of 2005, we surveyed current YSU students to discover potential interest. Student participation was voluntary and anonymous, and took place in YSU classrooms. See Appendix B for the survey of students and collected data.

A total of 106 students responded; the majority were majors in Communication Studies or English. Strong interest in the MA program emerged. On average, students indicated being somewhat or very interested in oral communication subjects (93.5%), writing subjects (86%), and PR & marketing subjects (88.3%). A final section of the survey indicated students' general lack of familiarity with software programs designed for professional communication, with the exception of MS Word, PowerPoint, and, to some degree, Excel. Students expressed significant interest in learning more about all the software packages, whether familiar or unfamiliar.

In addition to surveying the students, we surveyed area employers in the spring of 2006. We mailed a similar survey to approximately 80 organizations in the greater Youngstown area. Organizations were chosen for inclusion based on the likelihood of professional communication needs. See Appendix C for the survey of local employers and collected data.

By summer 2006, a total of 33 local employers responded. A wide variety of for-profit (66%) and nonprofit (34%) organizations were represented (e.g., volunteer and service agencies, retail sales, retail management, manufacturing, marketing, media production, banking and financial, public library, newspaper, telephone, health care, television, real estate, and art. The number of employees ranged from 1-10 (31%), 11-25 (19%), 26-50 (3%), 51-100 (22%), 101-500 (6%), and 500+ (19%).

Among employers, too, strong interest in the MA program emerged. On average, employers indicated being somewhat or very interested in their employees gaining further training in all subject areas: oral communication (94.8%), writing (85%), and PR & marketing (93.8%). Nearly half of the employers who responded reported that they subsidize tuition for employees; 81% would consider offering an internship to a student in the program; and 84% would consider offering a paid internship.

A majority of employers (58%) indicated that 60% of their workforce regularly engages in internal communication; similarly, a majority of employers (54.5%) indicated that 60% of their workforce regularly engages in external communication. However, a significant number of employers (58%) reported that at much as 60% of their workforce is NOT very skilled in communication. More than 1/3 (37%) of employers felt that more than 60% of their workforce needs significant improvement in communication skills.

### **Publicizing the new MA program**

We will jointly advertise the new program in our various colleges and departments, and we will create a website and brochures to describe the program and invite inquiries.

## **Existing Faculty and Facilities**

The faculty will be drawn from graduate faculty in all three areas who already have graduate faculty status. In addition to these current graduate faculty members, four members of Communication have applied for Graduate Faculty status.

This program will not require any additional faculty members. Most of the courses are in place and offer graduate credit. Of the courses currently offered, sufficient space remains to add the estimated new graduate students. Several courses are being introduced to the curriculum from Communication Studies to meet the overall course requirements (see Appendix A for course information).

A Graduate Program Director, who will oversee the MA program, will be named from one of the three areas and will serve a three-year term that will be renewable or that will switch to another person from any one of the three areas.

The program's office will be housed in a small suite of offices in Bliss Hall, home to the Department of Communication. The office suite has room for graduate assistants and the program director and a small, welcoming lounge for graduate students and faculty.

## **Additional Faculty and Staff Needs**

No new faculty positions are needed to start and maintain this program for at least the first three years of the inception of this program. We do envision a half-time administrative assistant to handle the administrative details such a program would entail. The person holding this position would be responsible for coordinating internships for graduate students as well as the routine administrative tasks such as records and files, course scheduling, budgets\*, and correspondence and marketing of the program through brochures and a program website.

We envision establishing three graduate teaching assistants in any given year, for the duration of two years, who will teach either required undergraduate courses in English, Communication, or non-required courses in Marketing.

\* The program as we envision will not require any significant *new* sources of income over and above those detailed below. Therefore, while we will have budgets, income and costs will balance without requiring significant new resources.

## **Program Development and Consultation**

### **Faculty involved**

The Professional Communication Advisory Committee developed this proposal. It includes members from the three departments (See Appendix D for bios of all involved faculty):

- Communication: Dr. Cary Horvath, Chair, and Dr. Dan O'Neill
- English: Dr. Julia Gergits and Dr. Jay Gordon
- Marketing and Advertising: Dr. James Kohut, Chair

## Appendix A

### Courses Associated with the Professional Communication MA

#### \*Communication Courses:

Cmst 5850: Computer Mediated Communication.

An exploration of strategic decision making regarding electronic communication. Emphasis placed on effective groupware, newsgroups, email and websites. 3 sh.

Cmst 6910: Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication.

Competent one-on-one communication styles and strategies, cross-cultural communication problems and approaches. 3 sh.

Cmst 6953: Group Decision Making and Team Building.

Creativity and critical thinking, leadership and teamwork, conflict mediation, motivation. 3 sh.

Cmst 6956: Interviewing Techniques.

Information gathering, interviewer and interviewee preparation, sales and marketing interviews, employee performance appraisals. 3 sh.

Cmst 6957: Organizational Communication Audit.

Applies theories of organizational communication to a chosen organization. Culminates with report and presentation. 3 sh.

Cmst 6960: Corporate Persuasion and Sales Effectiveness.

Theories and strategies of persuasion, listening and body language, communication channels, presentation techniques and technologies. 3 sh.

Cmst 6998: Applied Research Methods.

Research methods applied to the business setting. Leading focus groups, survey research methodology, the Nominal Group Technique, Brainstorming, Case study methodology, and Quality Circles. 3 sh.

\*These courses are being proposed.

#### Marketing Courses:

Mktg 6900: Foundations of Marketing.

A basic examination of marketing as a business process by which products are matched with markets and through which transfers of ownership are affected. This course satisfies the appropriate prerequisite requirement for the M.B.A. degree. 2 sh

Mktg 6910: Business Internship.

Mktg 6942: Strategic Marketing Management.

A managerial approach to the planning and implementation of marketing with emphasis on the integration of the marketing function with other business activities. Through conceptual material and case analysis, students develop abilities to analyze markets and design effective marketing strategies in the areas of product, promotion, pricing, and distribution. Prereq: MKTG 6900 or equivalent, Level 1

Mktg 6946: Consumer Behavior.

Analysis of the behavior of consumers, both in groups and as individuals, in order to assist the marketing manager in areas such as selection of target markets; advertising and media strategies; personal selling; product development; marketing research; pricing; and distribution decisions. In addition to business

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writings, relevant material from psychology, sociology, economics, and anthropology will be utilized to familiarize the student with the behavior of the consumer in the market place. Prereq: MKTG 6942

Mktg 6968: Special Topics in Marketing.

### **Professional Writing and Editing Courses:**

Engl 6943: Technical Communication.

In-depth discussion of audience, format, document design, and corporate structure. Focus on refining skills and providing theoretical supports for practical applications. Prerequisite: English 3743 and 4849/6949) or permission of instructor. 3 sh.

Engl 6944: Document Design and Production.

Application of computer software and hardware to design and produce professional and technical documents. 3 sh.

Engl 6945: Theory of Professional and Technical Communication.

Examines the theory and research in professional and technical communication with an emphasis on the application of theoretical concepts and empirical findings to practical problems in the field. Introduces students to theories and research methods through reading current literature and through class research projects. 3 sh.

Engl 6953: Publications Issues and Management.

Exploration of the issues involved in managing and producing professional publications, including publications in students' own fields. Focus on organizational, editorial, and authorial voice; editorial practices; audience analysis; and the processes by which publications are conceived, designed, and produced. 3 sh.

Engl 6949: Professional and Technical Editing.

A study of the skills needed to make appropriate changes in the content, grammar, mechanics, style, format, and organization of manuscripts for scholarly, trade, journalistic, and other professional publications. The course deals with stages in the publishing process, hard-copy versus online editing, mechanical and substantive editing, and the use of house and press styles. 3 sh.

Engl 6992: Professional Communication.

Focus on selected topics in technical writing or professional communication, e.g., proposal writing, science writing, computer documentation, nonfiction prose. May be repeated once with a different topic. 3 sh.

Engl 6998: Professional Writing Internship.

Supervised work-and-learn experience in professional communication under the direction of a University faculty member and an employee of a participating firm. Ten to twenty hours of work a week of student time are expected. Enrollment is contingent upon the availability of internships. Students are selected on the basis of personal qualifications, including GPA, courses taken, recommendations, and an interview. May be repeated with the approval of the department chair. 1-3 sh.

## Appendix B

### Survey of Students ( $N = 106$ )

Current majors of respondents

English: 26%

Communication Studies: 55%

PR/Adv/Marketing: 1%

Other: 18%

PART 1: Student interest in specific skills and kinds of knowledge

The first part of the survey concerns the types of knowledge and skills *students would like faculty in the proposed program to teach.*

Oral and Interpersonal Communication

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not interested
1. Interviewing Techniques: Information gathering, interviewer and interviewee preparation, sales and marketing interviews, employee performance appraisals.	53%	44%	3%
2. Group Decision Making and Team Building: Creativity and critical thinking, leadership and teamwork, conflict mediation, computer-mediated group work, motivation.	54%	36%	10%
3. Corporate Persuasion and Sales Effectiveness: Theories and strategies of persuasion, listening and body language, communication channels, presentation techniques and technologies.	58%	37%	5%
4. Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication: Cultural differences in communication styles and strategies, globalizations, cross-cultural communication problems and approaches.	56%	36%	8%

Writing, Document Design, and Editing

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not interested
5. Document Design and Production: Theories and strategies of document design, use of computer software and hardware to design and produce professional and technical documents	62%	27%	11%
6. Publications Issues and Management: Development of organizational, editorial, and authorial voice; editorial policies; audience analysis; budget and distribution issues	43%	41%	16%
7. Professional Communication Genres: Writing proposals, scientific articles, computer documentation, nonfiction prose; transforming documents for different audiences	49%	38%	13%

8. Professional and Technical Editing: Advanced issues in grammar, mechanics, style, format, and organization of manuscripts for trade, journalistic, and other professional publications	45%	39%	16%
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#### Marketing, Advertising, and Public Relations

	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not interested or N/A
9. Theory and Practice of Public Relations: Role of public relations in society and within organizations, impact on various publics, history of public relations concepts and strategies	61%	32%	7%
10. Theory and Practice of Advertising: Consumer behavior, target markets, advertising and media strategies, product development, marketing research, pricing, distribution issues	55%	35%	10%
11. Marketing Communications: Promotional aspects of marketing decisions such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling	60%	31%	9%
12. Marketing Management: Planning and implementing marketing approaches, market analysis, integration of the marketing function with other business activities	37%	42%	21%

#### PART 2: Students' interest in specific software tools

This part of the survey concerns students' familiarity with, and interest in, specific software packages relevant to the proposed program.

#### Software packages

	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not familiar at all	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not interested
13. Microsoft Word (word processing)	85%	15%	0%	45%	29%	26%
14. Microsoft PowerPoint (presentations)	57%	41%	2%	50%	33%	17%
15. Microsoft Excel (data and graphing)	22%	51%	27%	41%	43%	16%
16. Adobe InDesign (page and book layout and design)	15%	43%	42%	51%	33%	16%
17. Adobe Photoshop (image creation and manipulation)	21%	38%	41%	58%	35%	7%
18. Adobe FrameMaker (large, structured documents for paper and web)	3%	14%	83%	38%	41%	21%

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19. Macromedia Breeze (multimedia training and teaching presentations)	1%	7%	92%	35%	40%	25%
20. Macromedia Contribute (web site updating for multiple users)	1%	6%	93%	34%	40%	26%
21. Macromedia Dreamweaver (web design)	9%	27%	64%	47%	37%	16%
22. Macromedia Director (multimedia CD and DVD products)	7%	12%	81%	43%	40%	17%
23. Macromedia RoboHelp (online and electronic help documentation systems)	2%	5%	93%	26%	42%	32%

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## Appendix C

### Survey of Local Employers (N = 33)

#### Profit status of employer

For profit: 66%      Not for profit: 34%

#### Number of employees

1-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-500	500+
31%	19%	3%	22%	6%	19%

#### Oral and Interpersonal Communication

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful or N/A
1. Interviewing Techniques: Information gathering, interviewer and interviewee preparation, sales and marketing interviews, employee performance appraisals	73%	21%	6%
2. Group Decision Making and Team Building: Creativity and critical thinking, leadership and teamwork, conflict mediation, computer-mediated group work, motivation	79%	18%	3%
3. Corporate Persuasion and Sales Effectiveness: Theories and strategies of persuasion, listening and body language, communication channels, presentation techniques and technologies	76%	21%	3%
4. Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication: Cultural differences in communication styles and strategies, globalizations, cross-cultural communication problems and approaches	39%	52%	9%

#### Writing, Document Design, and Editing

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful or N/A
5. Document Design and Production: Theories and strategies of document design, use of computer software and hardware to design and produce professional/technical documents	46%	39%	15%
6. Publications Issues and Management: Development of organizational, editorial, and authorial voice; editorial policies; audience analysis; budget and distribution issues	33%	52%	15%
7. Professional Communication Genres: Understanding distinctive features of such practices as proposal writing, science writing, computer documentation, nonfiction prose, etc.	39%	49%	12%
8. Professional and Technical Editing: Advanced issues in grammar, mechanics, style, format, and organization of manuscripts for trade, journalistic, and other professional publications	46%	36%	18%

## Marketing, Advertising, and Public Relations

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful or N/A
9. Theory and Practice of Public Relations: Role of public relations in society and within organizations, impact on various publics, history of public relations concepts and strategies	44%	44%	12%
10. Theory and Practice of Advertising: Consumer behavior, target markets, advertising and media strategies, product development, marketing research, pricing, distribution issues	71%	23%	6%
11. Marketing Communications: Promotional aspects of marketing decisions such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling	77%	19%	4%
12. Marketing Management: Planning and implementing marketing approaches, market analysis, integration of the marketing function with other business activities	58%	39%	3%

## Other kinds of knowledge or skills

Employers mentioned several kinds of knowledge or skills they would like to see offered by a Professional Communication MA program, such as: public speaking (2), active listening, negotiation, interview skills, speech and telephone skills, leadership communication, problem solving, organizational skills, ethics for business, grammar and sentence structure, writing for results, business plans, media relations, marketing proposals, crisis communications.

## Employee writing and communication practices

How many of your employees...	> 80%	61-80%	41-60%	20-40%	<20%
13. ...write regularly to people within your organization?	28%	13%	19%	12%	28%
14. ...write regularly to people outside your organization?	25%	12%	16%	19%	28%
15. ...communicate in other ways within your organization? (e.g., interviews, presentations at meetings)	28%	0%	28%	28%	16%
16. ...communicate in other ways outside your organization? (e.g., interviews, sales, meetings)?	29%	13%	13%	23%	22%
Among your employees who communicate regularly...	> 80%	61-80%	41-60%	20-40%	<20%
17. ...how many are very skilled?	13%	19%	19%	23%	26%
18. ...how many are somewhat skilled?	3%	13%	19%	29%	36%
19. ...how many need significant improvement?	15%	7%	15%	22%	41%

Employers interested in subsidizing employee tuition: Yes: 44%, No: 56%

Employers who would consider offering students internships: Yes: 81%, No: 19%

If yes, employers who would consider paid internships: Yes: 84%, No: 16%

## Appendix D

### Faculty Bios

#### Communication Studies

**Rebecca Curnalia** (Ph.D., Kent State University) is currently pursuing research interests in the informational effects of news use and advertising. She has peer reviewed publications in the *Review of Communication* and *Ohio Communication Journal*, both on topics related to political communication, and has articles in press in two communication journals on subjective knowledge resulting from biased processing of news content. In addition to publication, she has presented original research the Eastern Communication Association, the Central States Communication Association, and the National Communication Association conferences. Her research has produced four Top Paper awards from regional and national associations, and earned her a Doctoral Research Fellowship during her time at Kent State. She is currently on the editorial board for the *Ohio Communication Journal* and reviews papers in political communication and media for the National Communication Association conferences and Eastern Communication Association conferences. Curnalia is currently an Assistant Professor.

**Adam C. Earnhardt** (Ph.D., Kent State University) is Assistant Professor and Basic Course Director in the Department of Communication. Earnhardt was appointed executive director of the Ohio Communication Association in 2008. He serves as book review editor for the *Journal of Communication Studies* and publications editor for the Mass Communication Division of the National Communication Association. Earnhardt wrote *Judging Athlete Behaviors* (VDM Verlag) based largely on work related to his dissertation. His recent publications include *The Modern Communicator: Applications and Strategies for Interpersonal Communication, Small Group Communication, and Public Speaking* (w/ D. O'Neill) and *Sports Mania* (co-edited w/ P. Haridakis and L. Hugenberg). More recently, Earnhardt co-authored an article on Internet search evaluations (w/ M. Earnhardt & R. Rubin) and introduced a new measure of Internet search competencies. He is on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Communication Studies*, *Social Science Computer Review*, *Basic Communication Course Annual*, and the *Ohio Communication Journal*.

**Cary W. Horvath** (Ph.D., Kent State University) is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication at Youngstown State University. Her current research interests involve the nexus of media use and interpersonal communication; her former research helped to spawn the Communibiology paradigm. She is the author of book chapters on varied topics such as communication and biology, use of media during 9/11, reality television, and business communication. She also co-authored the textbook *Competent Communication*. Her research is published in *Communication Quarterly*, *the Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, and *Communication Research Reports*. She serves as editor of the *Journal of Communication Studies*, is on the editorial board for *Communication Teacher* and the *Journal of the Ohio Communication Association*, and has reviewed for *Communication Reports*, *Communication Research*, *Communication Research Reports*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, and *Mass Communication and Society*. She regularly reviews, presents, chairs, and responds at

conventions of the National, Eastern, and Ohio Communication Associations. She has held leadership in the Mass Communication division of NCA and the Media Interest Group of ECA.

**Daniel J. O'Neill** (Ph.D., Michigan State University) has been teaching at Youngstown State University for forty one years, and he is currently a tenured Full Professor in the Department of Communication. Dr. O'Neill has served at various times as the Chair of the Communication and Theater Department for some 14 years in addition to his continuous years of service as a professor, as well as Director of Forensics. Dr. O'Neill has published a number of books and articles and he has been a presenter of academic information at numerous state, regional and national conferences. Professor O'Neill's books include: *Speeches by Black Americans*, *Concepts in Communication*, *Public Speaking: Planning, Preparing, and Presenting*, and *"The Modern Communicator."* Dr. O'Neill's research focus has been on argumentation and the teaching of basic communication skills. He has written and presented ideas about the application of argumentation as a way to teach critical thinking skills to communication students and he has proposed that students study critical issues in their preparation and presentation of speeches. Finally, Dr. O'Neill has maintained a life long interest in parliamentary procedure and he has served as a parliamentarian to several voluntary organizations as well as the Youngstown State University Academic Senate.

**Jeff Tyus** (Ph.D., Ohio University) is an Assistant Professor of communication. His research agenda is heavily influenced by race, class and gender studies, especially the study of underrepresented groups in American society, such as the images of African Americans in television sitcoms, the experiences of women in corporate management, and the experiences of Americans of Middle Eastern descent in post-9/11 America. Recent work involves public relations efforts in grassroots political campaigns. Dr. Tyus is highly involved in a variety of professional organizations: the National Communication Association (NCA), Eastern Communication Association (ECA), Public Relations Society of America (representing the Akron Chapter), Northeast Ohio Communication Advocates (NOCA), and the Ohio Communication Association (OCA). He was President of OCA from 2004-2006 and currently serves as Director of Student Chapters for PRSA Akron Chapter. He has a passion for doing charity work and working on behalf of various animal shelters and variety of other organizations. In January 2009, he completed a half-marathon and raised money to benefit the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Northeast Ohio.

### **English (Professional Writing and Editing)**

**Julia M. Gergits** (Ph.D., University of Minnesota), Professor, has taught professional writing and editing and literature in the Department of English at Youngstown State University since 1990. Her relevant publications include four edited collections of critical biographies on British travel writers co-edited with Barbara Brothers, the volumes of which form part of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*; a technical-writing textbook, co-written with James Schramer, used by the College Network for distance learning and exam preparation; articles in such journals as *Advanced Composition* and *The Writing Instructor*. In addition, she manages production of the majority of documents used by YSU's English Festival, an event that draws 3,000 students a year; the production includes the *Information Booklet*, *Program*, and *Festival of Writing*. Because these documents exercise all aspects of professional writing, they directly relate to teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate level at YSU.

**Jay L. Gordon** (Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon) is an Associate Professor of English. He is interested in technical communication, technology, and connections between visual and verbal rhetoric. He has published articles on these topics and others in *Technical Communication Quarterly*, the primary, national scholarly journal for the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, and has an article to appear later in 2009 in *Programmatic Perspectives*, a new, national journal for directors of technical and professional writing programs. His teaching includes both undergraduate and graduate courses in the PWE program. Recently, he was selected to be a plenary speaker at the Fifth Annual Conference on Knowledge, Technology, and Society, in Huntsville, Alabama.

**James J. Schramer** (Ph.D., University of Minnesota), Professor, has taught professional writing and literature at Youngstown State University since 1988; he now serves as the graduate director and has served in the past chair of the professional-writing program. His publications span both literature and professional writing. With Julia Gergits, he co-wrote *Technical Writing for the College Network*, where it has been used extensively. With Donald Ross, University of Minnesota, he edited two volumes on American travel writing for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, and he has published articles in collections such as *American History in Literature, 1820-1870*, and such journals as *Advanced Composition*, *American Literature*, *Arizona Quarterly*, and *The Cooper Society Newsletter*.

### **Marketing**

**Mark Toncar** (Ph.D., Kent State University) has taught a broad range of undergraduate and graduate courses including Advertising and Promotion Management, Marketing Management, Marketing Research, Marketing Concepts and Practices, International Marketing, Strategic Marketing, and Global Business Operations. His research has been published in a variety of marketing, advertising and international business journals including the *Journal of Advertising*, the *International Journal of Advertising*, the *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, the *Journal of Management*, the *Journal of Contemporary Business Issues*, the *International Journal of Chinese Culture and Management*, the *Multinational Business Review*, *Direct Marketing: An International Journal*, the *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, the *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, and the *Journal of Marketing Education*. Toncar is an Associate Professor.