Last semester, Erin Ellis and I attended the National Communication Association’s annual convention where Erin presented an original manuscript plus a teaching idea and participated in two panel discussions. We also published one chapter, two essays, and two journal articles. This semester, there are many things that are new around here and some that remain the same.

**NEW**

*We are developing interpersonal communication programming to be launched both for the residence halls and student employees in the fall.*

*Our web page has an updated look. We continue to update the content.*

**NOT NEW**

*We do not have a one-size-fits-all perspective. We are open to your new ideas in supporting oral communication at UNCG.*

*We continue to offer public speaking, group, and interpersonal communication consultations.*

*We provide a safe place for non-native English speakers to practice conversation with native speakers.*

*Speakers who need to be recorded when they come to practice can be recorded on their own electronic device or we can use ours. If we record on one of our devices we’ll share by Google Drive before the consultation ends.*

*Due to the process nature of our work and space limitations, we require appointments. It is never too early to call for an appointment. It can, however, be too late. Appointments need to take place two or more days before the final presentation date.*

*We are taking requests for our interactive oral communication workshops.*

*During a consultation, speakers work one-on-one with a communication consultant trained to offer guidance and feedback. Each individual session lasts 30 minutes while a group session lasts 60. We can assist you at any stage of your presentation, from discovery to organization to delivery.*

*Our services are open and available to the entire campus community and, through our community outreach, to not-for-profit off-campus communities as well.*

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**Student Presentation Rubrics**

**By: Erin Ellis**

In many classes across the campus, faculty and staff find themselves assigning presentations to students. This means that faculty must not only listen to presentations but must also evaluate students on their oral communication competencies.

Recently, I attended the National Association of Communication Centers’ annual conference held in Pittsburgh, PA. I was surrounded by colleagues and their suggestions for how to evaluate student presentations. Some faculty used narrative rubrics, others used numerical rubrics, while others used no rubric but relied on student peer evaluations.

There are so many different ways to assess student speaking, but which one will students benefit from the most? While there is no single correct way to evaluate presentations or one single rubric that can be used across every discipline, a simple internet search for rubrics specific to one discipline will yield tremendous results from universities across the nation. You can research the rubric that you think would work best as it pertains to the learning outcome(s) to be assessed.

There are two organizations in particular that can help with understanding rubrics and selecting one particular to your course. The National Communication Association (www.natcom.org) outlines the purpose, rationale, scoring procedure, and characteristics of an effective speech evaluation form. The Association of American Colleges & Universities (www.aacu.org/value-rubrics) has a list of 16 rubrics that you might also find useful.

Whichever rubric you find calls your name, remember that students need oral communication instruction, practice, and feedback if they are to improve. The more instruction we can give students on what an effective speech looks, sounds, and feels like, the easier it will be for faculty to evaluate those speeches.

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**VITAL STATISTICS**

Location: 3211 MHRA

Phone: (336) 256 1346

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 10am to 7pm

Friday 9am to 12pm

Sunday 5pm to 8pm

Web: http://speakingcenter.uncg.edu

Email: UNCGSpeaking

Summer: Check Web for hours

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**Our Awards**

Essma Boucteb won the Weiss Top Undergraduate Research Paper award for the communication center research she conducted under the direction of Dr. Schwartzman in Communication Studies.

Speaking Center students Anastasia Shymonovich, Katie Haynes, Essma Boucteb, and Karen Boger have all been inducted into UNCG’s Golden Chain Honor Society.

Anastasia Shymonovich was also inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.

Karen Boger is our spring 2016 Pete and Joan Allan Student Research Fellow.

Taylor Williams, our Graduate Consultant and Communication Studies MA candidate, has been nominated for the National Communication Association’s top Communication Center Graduate Tutor award.

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**Becoming a Consultant**

Students interested in becoming a Consultant first complete CST 390. To apply for CST 390 admission, you’ll need to provide proof of a 3.0 GPA or higher, a faculty recommendation letter, and a letter of personal interest that indicates (after you complete CST 390) a minimum of a one-year commitment to a part-time paid position or a one-semester, 90-hour internship (CST 412). Learn more at: http://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/staff/index.php
If you’ve ever attended a Speaking Center workshop, orientation, or just stopped by the Center on a weekday afternoon, chances are you’ve run into Taylor Williams—an energetic, focused graduate student who’s quick with a joke and a smile. Armed with markers and a white board, she’s always ready to unleash her massive store of communication knowledge on students and strangers alike.

After graduating from UNCG with a BA in Communication Studies, Taylor has returned to the department to pursue her MA. Taylors first sessions she had with core members were “very tense,” she said of the project. “It has taught me about myself is the power of being resilient regardless of the obstacles you are facing—persevering is very important, and perseverance is very important, and I’ve learned that through my work at the Speaking Center.”

The Making of Master Communicators

By: Mitchell Byers

While we have always worked to support the voices of communities off campus, we had never done so on a farm! We have been spending Friday afternoons at Peacehaven Community Farm since the start of the 2015-16 academic year, forming a partnership that gives a voice to the adults with special needs who live on the farm by way of a self-paced certificate program.

Currently living at the Peacehaven Farm are four core members: Jeff, Anne, Molly, and Jake. The Speaking Center takes trips to the farm to support the core members in improving their interpersonal and social communication skills. Last April, three of our undergraduate team members joined our director at the 14th Annual Excellence at the Center Conference to share their work, what impact the outreach activities, specifically engaging with a Peacehaven Community Farm. She has pioneered programs for them with the help of the Speaking Center precisely designed to fit the communication needs of this often overlooked group of people. “It was something that was built from the ground up, and it’s been really impactful because we’ve been able to include the [speaking center] staff as well,” she said of the project. “It has taught me a lot about being adaptable and flexible in communication pedagogy, particularly in diverse communities.”

This work has become the foundation of her future goals, as Taylor plans to continue developing sound curriculum for Peacehaven that can not only be duplicated for Beyond Academics students on campus, but published as well. “I would really like to be part of the reason our services are expanded and able to reach to people with all different communication skills,” she said earnestly.

When Taylor is not out spreading communication love to the masses, she can often be found at home, listening to music and hanging out with her laid-back pup Dupree. Even in those calmest of moments, however, the art and importance of communication remains imprinted on her mind. “I want to eliminate the frustrations of miscommunication, which can be destructive to relationships,” she reiterated. “We can develop models, strategies, and tools to reduce those frustrations to their most minimal points.”

As is abundantly clear to anyone that knows her, Taylor will undoubtedly meet the goals she has set for herself, using in part the skills she has learned here at UNCG: “One thing this job has taught me about myself is the power of being resilient regardless of the obstacles you are facing—we persevere is very important, and I’ve learned that through my work at the Speaking Center.”