



UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Department of Communication & Journalism

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COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM NEWSLETTER

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COJO DEPARTMENT SAYS 'GOODBYE' TO FOUR FACULTY MEMBERS IN ONE YEAR



Retirement is bittersweet – bitter for departments losing their most treasured faculty members, but sweet for those entering into the world of relaxation after a long, accomplished career.

Within a one-year span, the Communication and Journalism Department at the University of Wyoming will have said goodbye to four faculty members.

COJO professors Mike Brown and Ken Smith parted ways with the department at the end of the school year, following former faculty members Conrad Smith and Eric Wiltse who entered into retirement in 2016.

BROWN TO RESEARCH IN RETIREMENT

When asked what the first thing COJO Professor Mike Brown would do when he retired he said, “That’s easy. Take a nap!”

Brown, a Wyoming native, has taught at UW for almost 25 years.

“One of my most treasured memories is the day I got here,” Brown said. “I was finishing my Ph.D. and it was one of those beautiful fall days. I can remember experiencing the joy of just knowing I get to spend my working life at such a nice place – especially being from Wyoming. It was just an ideal set up.”

Although his teaching career at UW has come to an end, he will continue to

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BROWN TO RESEARCH IN RETIREMENT



use his research skills in other areas.

"I am planning to continue my research but it is not going to be in media," Brown said. "Around World War II, all of the Germans in Russia were sent to Kazakhstan or Siberia and I'm trying to find them."

His interest in this field was initially driven by his media research completed in Kazakhstan in 2012, but what drove it even more was his family heritage.

"In August, I'm going to be giving a presentation to the International Conference of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia," Brown said. "This research was from a previous trip where I was trying to find names of relatives that are in the area. So it's part historical, part genealogical."

His time spent at UW had much to do with research and teaching, but even more so with the graduate program.

"I spent about 12 years or more as the graduate director here so those students who came through the graduate program really anchor my memory," Brown said. "There are students I still stay in contact with today and watching where they've ended up is impressive. That will be the one thing I am really going to miss."

He was granted emeritus status, so he will still have a tie to the university.

WILTSE REMEMBERS STUDENTS' STORIES

Before retiring last year, Wiltse dedicated 26 years of his career to the COJO Department. He served as an academic professional specializing in journalism.

"When I started, I was in charge of the Medicine Bow Post, a weekly newspaper covering the town of Medicine Bow that was run as an internship for journalism majors," Wiltse said. "The Post became one of the best small weeklies in the state and won numerous Wyoming Press Association awards."

Although the Medicine Bow Post is no longer functioning, his success with the paper evolved.

"We replaced the Post in 1995 with Laramie Online, the first online news site in Wyoming," Wiltse said. "That effort evolved into a class, Online Journalism, which is still required for journalism majors."

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COJO DEPARTMENT SAYS 'GOODBYE'

WILTSE REMEMBERS STUDENTS' STORIES

Since retiring, he has spent his time enjoying recreational activities like fishing, hunting, and skiing. He has also traveled to visit family and friends.

The memories cherished most from teaching in the COJO Department stem from the students.

"One young man said he wouldn't be able to turn in an assignment on time because his dog ate a bag of weed and ran off and he was up all night looking for the dog," Wiltse said. "You couldn't make this stuff up."

He will return to UW to teach an investigative reporting class in the fall.

DR. CONRAD SMITH TO CONTINUE RESEARCH IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Student interaction is a constant theme remembered by previous COJO faculty members.

As with Wiltse, former COJO Professor Conrad Smith has fond memories of his students.

"I miss interacting socially with students and colleagues," Smith said. "My most treasured memories at UW was having a positive impact, some of the time with some of my students, on their careers after graduating."

Smith began his career at UW in 1996 as the COJO Department Chair – a position he held for five years.

"My primary goal was to function as best I could as an administrator – a position for which I have little native talent," he said. "Dealing with people was easy, but the required bureaucratic paper trail is, for me, a nightmare."

When asked about his accomplishments at UW, he said that hiring respectable faculty members that worked well together was a highlight.

"The Communication and Journalism Department has been able to focus on the needs of students without the dueling egos and petty infighting that I've seen on other campuses," Smith said.

He has spent some of his free time continuing research of historical photography in the Rocky Mountains.

"I've continued a project begun in 2013 using photographic techniques to identify the exact



vantage point for the first known drawing in the Rocky Mountains," Smith said. "By comparing how shadows change over five-minute intervals, I'll be able to ascertain what time of day each part of the drawing was completed and how long it took to complete the sketch."

Since retiring, Smith said it has taken the last year to figure out how to spend his leisure.

"It's nice to have the option to sleep in rather than getting up first thing in the morning," he said.

COJO DEPARTMENT SAYS 'GOODBYE'

DR. KEN SMITH TO KEEP ROOTS IN WYOMING

Moving away from Wyoming isn't something Ken Smith is too fond of. He has spent the last 40 years in the state and has taught at UW for 26 of those years.

"The toughest part of retirement is realizing that I'd probably have to leave Wyoming," Smith said. "So I'm trying to find a way to keep my foot in the state."

Smith's wife currently resides in Illinois, so he will be relocating once his time is finished at UW.

"I'm going to become a gardener – and that against my will," he said with a laugh. "My wife and I have two acres and she wants to put every bit of it to work in plants."

Luckily, Smith will have multiple ways to keep some roots in Wyoming. He is an emeritus representative for the Wyoming Press Association.

"The board meets four times a year, so I hope to keep coming back to Wyoming at least for the board meetings if not more," Smith said. "I like to hike, I like to canoe. You do that better in Wyoming than anywhere else."

Although he conducted research in visual communication while at UW, his time spent as the COJO department head put it on hold.

"I was department head for 15 years and I really enjoyed it," Smith said. "I was always happy with the research I did, but I was more interested in the teaching aspect. I feel fortunate in what I was able to teach."

Along with Brown, Smith has received emeritus status through UW. If possible, he hopes to continue teaching.

"I thought one of my biggest accomplishments was when I had to teach law last year because law is an area I've never had any grounding in," Ken said. "I keep saying, 'I don't want to retire, I want to teach these cases again!'"



COJO STUDENTS NOMINATED FOR A&S TOP-20, SPITALERI AWARD

Meghan Kent and Sydney Stein were both named Top 20 Graduates from the Arts and Science College and were both finalists for the Rosemary Spitaleri Award for the top graduating female at UW.

Kent is an anthropology and communication major from Laramie. She has minors in environment & natural resources, outdoor leadership, business, and the honors program. She was also an important member of the UW Nordic Ski Team.

Stein is a communication major from Breckenridge, Colorado. She has minors in history, gender & women's studies, and the honors program. She was a founder of the RSO Real Women, Real Bodies among other activities.



Stein (center) is pictured with her nominators, including Dr. Cindy Price Schultz and Dr. Tracey Patton (both to the right of Stein), members of the Communication and Journalism faculty.

Kent is pictured with her parents at the annual Tobin and Spitaleri Awards Banquet held on April 28 at the Gateway Center.



GRAD STUDENTS ENJOY ASSISTANTSHIPS IN VARIOUS UW DEPARTMENTS

Being a graduate assistant as a Communication and Journalism student doesn't always require teaching. Graduate assistantships are offered in multiple departments at the University of Wyoming and many COJO students have taken advantage of the opportunities.

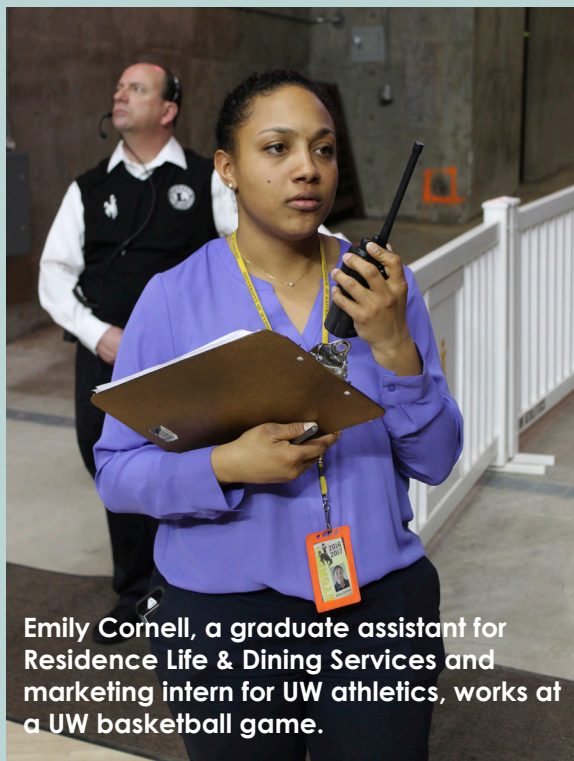
COJO graduate students Emily Cornell, Maddi Haak, Dylan Hall and Tim O'Flannigan have worked in these unique assistantships at UW for the last two years.

"My assistantship provided a great platform to learn and better my skills before going out into the workforce," said Cornell, a graduate assistant for Residence Life & Dining Services. "It's made me really think about the college experience for students holistically."

Not only was she busy with her graduate assistantship with RLDS, she was also a marketing intern for UW athletics.

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GRAD STUDENTS ENJOY ASSISTANTSHIPS



Emily Cornell, a graduate assistant for Residence Life & Dining Services and marketing intern for UW athletics, works at a UW basketball game.



Maddi Haak, a graduate assistant for UW athletics, works in the video production booth at a UW basketball game.

"Interning for the athletic department presented an opportunity to interact with students, who I already saw because I worked in the residence halls," Cornell said. "Essentially, each commitment created an opportunity to build and grow relationships with people at UW."

After receiving her master's degree, her goal is to work in sports marketing.

"I'm really grateful that I had the opportunities of my graduate assistantship, graduate program and internship," Cornell said. "Each opportunity has helped me grow personally and professionally."

Her experience in the COJO Department has encouraged her to be an advocate for social change.

"Dr. Tracey Patton was my committee chair and her classes have really taught me how to think critically about addressing social issues," Cornell said. "No matter what field I go into, social issues in our country will somehow come into play. Knowing how to be an advocate is important."

In addition to internships, the UW athletic department also offers graduate assistantships.

Maddi Haak, a graduate assistant with athletics, said she joined the COJO program after being unsure of what to do after receiving her bachelor's degree.

"My favorite part of the COJO graduate program was the sense of closeness within the department," Haak said. "We are a close-knit group and I think that has helped me and comforted me throughout the past two years. I know I can go to any of the professors and get help or just discuss life, if needed."

COJO's strong support system has aided Haak in her work at the Athletic Department.

"The COJO Department has provided me with flexible class schedules and has helped me improve my communication skills so I can connect with anyone and everyone that I need to at my job," Haak said.

Haak's assistantship with athletics has been focused on sports broadcasting. She said learning video editing and other videography skills will help her with her future endeavors.

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GRAD STUDENTS ENJOY ASSISTANTSHIPS

“Starting in May, I will be the volunteer manager and off-site adoption coordinator for Black Dog Animal Rescue,” Haak said.

“This is a passion of mine in addition to videography. I hope to use the knowledge I have learned in my assistantship and schooling to add a media and communication aspect into my new position.”

The COJO Department has been influential in Haak’s graduate career and has prepared her for the future.

“I do think the COJO Department has helped me come out of my shell and learn to be a better communicator in general,” Haak said.



Tim O'Flannigan, a graduate assistant for UW men's basketball, looks on while assistant coaching a game this past season.

On the other side of sports marketing lies the action of a sport being played – and coached.

Tim O'Flannigan, a graduate assistant for UW men's basketball, feels privileged to have been able to work in his future career field all while getting his master's degree.

“In the immediate future, I

got an entry-level job with the Weber State men's basketball team,” O'Flannigan said. “Long term, I would love to be an assistant coach where I am making a meaningful impact on student-athletes daily.”

Having received his bachelor's degree from the COJO Department, he decided to continue his studies in the

same field. The classes he took as an undergraduate influenced his interest in mass media and encouraged him to further his education.

“The COJO Department has prepared me immensely for my future career,” O'Flannigan said. “While communication permeates pretty every aspect of my aspirations, the COJO

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GRAD STUDENTS ENJOY ASSISTANTSHIPS

graduate program has taught me how to better manage my time, organize and properly research, and how to carry myself in a professional manner.”

The knowledge gained through the graduate program has also translated into his coaching ability as a whole.

“The ability to apply communication and journalism to the athletic environment made the graduate experience increasingly valuable and helped me grow as a student and an aspiring coach,” O’Flannigan said.

He credits his graduate assistantship experience to the COJO Department.

“The professors were incredibly supportive, personable and always willing to help no matter the issue,” O’Flannigan said. “None of this would have been possible without assistance from the COJO program.”

Communication skills taught in the COJO Department translate into any skill set.

Dylan Hall, a graduate assistant for the Outdoor Program, has spent the last two years as a COJO graduate student.

“Part of my assistantship is to teach classes, and with the communication focus I have with outdoor leadership, this has lead me to introduce new information to students,” Hall said.

“Working and understanding conceptual and language-based theories has also helped me as an instructor for teaching programs and providing feedback to students and my staff.”

Hall received his bachelor’s degree in the communication field and wanted to continue his education in the same area.

“I met the director at a national outdoor education conference and was able to speak to him about the graduate assistantship position,” Hall said. “I wanted to be in Wyoming for the opportunity to work in the west and also work with a great program.”



Dylan Hall

Hall also teaches two classes at the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources.

“I run the operations here at the program as the second year graduate assistant,” Hall said. “Working with students and staff in and out of the field has allowed me to further my skills – interpersonal, conceptual, and technical – to which the theories and concepts I have learned have greatly influenced my teaching.”

As with Cornell, Haak and O’Flannigan, Hall said one of his favorite parts of being in the COJO program has been the closeness of his graduate class.

“Graduate school in general is all about resiliency,” Hall said. “Being allowed to make mistakes, learn and move forward enables someone to pick up and keep going.”

His career goals focus on making an impact on individuals and mentoring others to be successful.

“I highly value the time I have spent here at UW and the effort the faculty and staff put forth for the COJO program as well as the Outdoor Program,” Hall said.

SPRING 2017 COJO FACULTY KUDOS

DR. MIKE BROWN

Mike plans to meet with former Governor of Wyoming, Jim Geringer, about his research in Kazakhstan. He also presented his Kazakhstan research at a Russian conference via Skype or video and presented on March 3.

DR. TRAVIS CRAM

Travis announced that debate met its goal of qualifying for the National Debate Tournament for the 14th year in a row. This tournament is equivalent to the NCAA March Madness basketball tournament.

DR. KRISTEN LANDREVILLE

Kristen's sabbatical was approved and she is submitting a science communication grant proposal and hoping to travel to the University of Florida in Fall of 2017 to learn more about their science initiative.

She was published twice in the *Mass Communication and Society* journal, with former Master's students Sarah Staggs, "The Impact of Pretrial Publicity on 'Eye for an Eye' Retributivist Support and Malicious Preceptions of Criminal Offenders," and Dyann Diercks, "The Indirect Effects of Partisanship and Partisan Media on Knowledge About Same-Sex Marriage Policy: Exploring the Knowledge and the Belief Gap Hypothesis."

DR. LEAH LEFEBVRE

Leah participated in the University of Wyoming-Shanghai University Exchange Program in May where she lectured on the various topics in interpersonal communication.

She also was invited to guest lecture at the University of Montana in April.

She was published in the *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* with former Master's student Ryan Rasner. The publication is titled, "Adaptations to Traditional Familial Roles: Examining the Challenges of Grandmothers' Counter-Life Transitions."

DR. TRACEY PATTON

Tracey was appointed by President Nichols to serve on the Black 14 presidential committee. The appointment entails coordinating with the Black 14 members, taking their narratives, working with the media, etc. This will likely garner national media attention and is timed for the 50th anniversary of the racist incident that became a national and international issue.

Tracey was the keynote speaker for the "Social Activism: The History of Organizing and Activism in Wyoming through the lens of Gender and Race" with The Forward Wyoming Grassroots Institute on April 19.

Tracey gave a presentation on Quentin Tarantino at the Intersectional Inquiries Conference. Tracey also had a paper accepted for a conference in England this summer, "Momentary Flashes of Agency: Hair, Racism, and Marginalization in the 'Equality State'." Tracey is going to continue her film series.

DR. CINDY PRICE SCHULTZ

Cindy was appointed to the editorial board of the *International Journal of Media Management*.

Cindy and her co-author Myrtle Jones were published in the *International Journal of Media Management*. The publication is titled, "You Can't Do That! A Case Study of Rural and Urban Entrepreneur Experience."