



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

Department of Communication

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January 29, 2009

Dr. J. David Johnson, Dean
College of Communication and Information Studies
Grehan Hall 132
Lexington, KY 40506

Dear Dean Johnson:

Enclosed please find my curriculum vita and a two-page statement outlining my vision for the graduate program in the College of Communication and Information Studies. I am providing these items in response to your invitation for applications to serve as Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

As my curriculum vita indicates, I have good deal of administrative experience, in general, and in graduate studies, particularly. As I mention in my vision statement, I believe the graduate program is in good standing. If selected, my goal is to continue this level of excellence while working with the faculty to maintain an innovative and collaborative curriculum.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Timothy L. Sellnow, Professor
Department of Communication

A Vision for Continued Excellence

Timothy L. Sellnow

The next Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in the College of Communication and Information Studies will inherit a well-organized and wisely integrated program with a national reputation of high regard. Maintaining these attributes is absolutely essential. In the following paragraphs, I clarify my vision and the actions I believe are vital to the quality our graduate program.

To begin, my vision for the graduate program in the College of Communication and Information Studies focuses on recruiting high quality graduate students who fit well with our program. Once these students are in the program, we must provide a challenging curriculum, in a supportive environment, that empowers our graduates to fulfill their career ambitions. Challenging programs ask students to gain expertise in methodology and theory, while engaging in cutting edge research. In doing so, students must be encouraged to develop close working relationships with the faculty. In tandem, supportive programs create an atmosphere where cooperation and opportunity prevail over competition and exploitation. In short, the goal of our program should be to attract the best students and give them every opportunity to succeed at the University of Kentucky. Vital to this process are student recruitment and support, maintaining healthy collaboration among our faculty, and cooperatively evaluating an evolving curriculum.

Visibility, recruitment, and retention are essential for maintaining and enhancing the high quality of the graduate program. Visibility is achieved, on a basic level, through promotional materials and participation in recruitment events and various conferences. On a higher level, visibility is heightened by faculty and student publications and presentations as well as national rankings. The next Associate Dean must combine both forms of visibility by maintaining current and compelling promotional resources, encouraging faculty and students to work together in producing high quality scholarship, and emphasizing these scholarly achievements to potential applicants. A vital component of this recruitment effort includes continued commitment to and perseverance in expanding the diversity of the graduate student population. Recruitment, however, extends beyond visibility. Once students are aware of our program, the Associate Dean must work diligently to advocate for the program, encourage student application, efficiently coordinate all aspects of the application procedures, and facilitate the selection process.

The demand for graduate students to publish in refereed journals and present their scholarship at regional and national conferences is rising. As such, the Associate Dean should work with faculty and graduate students to encourage graduate students to submit their work and to secure funding for travel to conferences. This effort is essential to keeping our students highly competitive with their cohorts at our peer institutions. Dedication to publication and visibility at relevant conferences helps to assure that our students are competitive for whatever types of positions they seek.

The Graduate Student Association in the College of Communication and Information Studies plays an integral part in communicating on behalf of our graduate students to the administration and faculty. Indeed, this group allows the College to maintain a positive, responsive, and supportive relationship with the graduate students. The next Associate Dean should maintain and encourage the continued interaction between the College and the Graduate Student Association. Doing so provides immediate and ongoing feedback on recruiting, course offerings, procedures for qualifying examinations and doctoral committees, and other forms of interaction with the faculty.

The integration of the Communication and Journalism and Telecommunication faculty in the graduate program is an appealing benefit that is admired by faculty in other graduate programs throughout the country. In fact, this incorporation is one of the attributes that first attracted me to the University of Kentucky. The harmony between the two programs at the graduate level creates an opportunity for graduate students to establish well-balanced supervisory committees that provide the reach and flexibility needed to undertake innovative projects. The next Associate Dean should dedicate considerable time and effort to maximizing the relationship between the two programs at the graduate level. For example, familiarity with each other and with each other's research is essential and must be encouraged. Method and theory courses should continue to rotate among faculty in both areas and graduate students should be encouraged to take courses from a variety of faculty. In doing so, the graduate program will maintain and expand one of its major strengths.

Communication programs at all levels continue to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Naturally, this evolution will demand an ongoing need for changes in the graduate curriculum. The faculty, however, should lead these changes. The next Associate Dean must work directly with the faculty to shepherd review of the curriculum, advance recommendations for change, and facilitate faculty discussion that leads to consensus. This attention to curriculum is an ongoing process in all high quality graduate programs. My hope is that the existing curriculum will be expanded to accommodate growing interest in such areas as health-related organizational communication and instructional communication.

In short, an unwavering focus on long-term student success will assure that the graduate program is positioned well in the greater Communication discipline. We are fortunate to have a program that currently draws excellent students, is highly regarded in our discipline, and is respected within the University of Kentucky. Nurturing the synergy of the program, attracting the best students, and providing an exceptional learning environment for our graduate students will assure that our graduate program remains a source of pride for our faculty, students, and alumni.

Timothy L. Sellnow
Curriculum Vita

PERSONAL

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Lexington, KY 40515

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Wayne State University, Department of Speech Communication,
Theatre and Journalism, June, 1987

M.A. North Dakota State University, Department of Speech and
Drama, May, 1984

B.S. Saint Cloud State University, Department of Speech
Communication, May, 1982

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

Risk Communication Theme Leader, National Center for Food Protection and Defense, A
Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence, 2007-present. (Oversee
collaborative research focusing on risk communication at six universities.)

Editor, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 2006-2008

Department Chair, Department of Communication (Including Communication and Mass
Communication) 1994-1997 and 1997-2000 (elected to two consecutive terms,
voluntarily declined third term)

Initiated and received approval of Ph.D. program in Communication at North Dakota
State University, 1997-2000

Director of Graduate Programs in Communication, Department of Communication, North
Dakota State University, 1991-1994

Director of Internships in Communication, North Dakota State University, 1991-1996

EMPLOYMENT/TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Kentucky

Professor 2007- present

North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND

Professor 2000-2006

Associate Professor 1993-2000

Assistant Professor 1988-1993

Department of Speech Communication, University of Mary, Bismarck, ND

Assistant Professor 1987-1988

Department of Communication, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Part-time Instructor 1984-1987

RISK/CRISIS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH, PUBLICATION, AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

Grants and Contracts

National Center for Food Protection and Defense: Center of Excellence
2007-20009

Department of Homeland Security

Robust Case Study Research and Translational Research

\$481,827.00

Theme Leader for Risk Communication, Principal Investigator and Risk Communication Activities and Advisory Board Member

As principal investigator I oversee a project in collaboration with systems strategists at the University of Minnesota and Louisiana State University designed to better understand the correlation between media coverage of food-related crisis events and consumer confidence. A portion of this project also involved collaboration with event modelers from Rutgers University and Wayne State university to determine key communication points in the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis periods associated with a food-related crisis.

As Theme Leader for Risk Communication I oversee risk communication projects sponsored by the NCFPD. Projects are currently underway at North Dakota State University, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Howard University, University of Kentucky, University of Southern Mississippi, and Wayne State University

National Center for Food Protection and Defense: Center of Excellence

Department of Homeland Security

\$15,000,000

2004-2007

Co-Principal Investigator and Risk Communication Activities and Advisory Board Member

As co-principal investigator of the Risk Communication Project (3 years, \$1.1 million), I oversaw risk communication projects at six different universities. As a member of the Advisory Board, I represent North Dakota State University in the four university consortium (University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Michigan State University, and North Dakota State University).

Intentional Food Safety Risk Assessment of *Salmonella* on ready to eat meats.

USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

\$5,808,670

2002-2007

Co-Project Director of Food Safety Risk Assessment grant.

As co-project director, I wrote and directed the risk communication research segment of the grant. Other components include Microbiology, Economics, Psychology, and Epidemiology. The risk communication segment included individual projects involving employee training, risk perception, and crisis message testing. Overall, the project sought to develop a comprehensive, interdisciplinary model for risk assessment, crisis planning, and policy development.

Risk Communication Segment funding: \$527, 607

2006-2007 (\$137,592)

2005-2006 (\$127,015)

2004-2005 (\$95,500)

2003-2004 (\$95,500)

2002-2003 (\$72,000)

Agrosecurity: Disease Surveillance and Public Health

USDA

\$3,000,000

Co-Project Director and Communication Activities and Advisory Board Member
Communication is one of eight sub-projects under the Biosurveillance Program.

As co-project director, I oversaw the risk and crisis communication segment of the project. Specifically, the project involved crisis planning for a disease outbreak, either intentional or unintentional, in cattle. The crisis communication project focused on overcoming innovation diffusion constraints related to animal trace-back technology that were perceived by ranchers in the Great Plains.

Also Principal Investigator on the following grants:

Cooperative agreement with USDA-APHIS focusing on communication dimensions of a risk-based staffing model, 2002	\$52,800
Cooperative agreement with USDA-APHIS focusing on organizational communication channels for risk management, 2001	\$51,000
Contract for Strategic Planning Sessions, Dakota Heartland Health System, 1999-2000	\$1,200
Central States Communication Association Federation Prize for Research, Crisis Communication Study of the 1997 Red River Valley Flood Recovery, 1999-2000	\$2,500
Institute for Regional Studies, Community presentations regarding crisis communication and the Red River Valley Flood Recovery, 1999	\$1,450

Books on Risk/Crisis Communication

- Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R., Seeger, M. W., & Littlefield, R. S. (2009). *Effective risk communication: A message-centered approach*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC.
- Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R. (Eds.) (2008). *Crisis communication and the public health*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Ulmer, R. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M.W. (2007). *Effective crisis communication: Moving from crisis to opportunity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (2003). *Communication and organizational crisis*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Refereed Journal Articles on Risk/Crisis Communication

- Novak, J. M., & Sellnow, T. L. (in press). Reducing organizational risk through participatory communication. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*.
- Reierson, J. L., Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (in press). Complexities of crisis renewal over time: Learning from the case of tainted Odwalla apple juice. *Communication Studies*.
- Veil, S. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (in press). Organizational learning in a high-risk environment: Responding to an anthrax outbreak. *Journal of Applied Communications*.

- Veil, S., Reynolds, B., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2008). CERC as a theoretical framework for research and practice. *Health Promotion Practice* 9(4), 26S-34S.
- Ulmer, R. R., Seeger, M. W., & Sellnow, T. L. (2007). Post-crisis communication and renewal: Expanding the parameters of post-crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*, 33, 130-134.
- Streifel, R., Beebe, B., Veil, S. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2006). Significant choice and crisis decision making: MeritCare's public communication in the Fen-Phen case. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 69, 389-387.
- Littlefield, R. S., Sellnow, T. L., & Attansey, M. (2006). Mysticism and crisis communication: The use of ambiguity as strategy by the Roman Catholic Church in Response to the 2004 Tsunami. *KB Journal*, 3. <http://kbjournal.org/mysticism>
- Lyonga, A. N., Nganje, W. E., Sellnow, T. L., Venette, S. J., & Kaitibi, S. (2006). Characterizing human factor risks in food processing. *Food Protection Trends*, 25, 593-600.
- Novak, J. M., Sellnow, T. L., Venette, S. J., & Nganje, W. E. (2006). Perceptions of risk communication messages: Applications in a food processing environment. *Food Protection Trends*, 26, 236-243.
- Veil, S. R., Liu, M., Erickson, S. L., & Sellnow, T. L. (2005). Too hot to handle: Competency constrains character in the Chi-Chi's green onion crisis. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 50, 19-22.
- Seeger, M. W., Ulmer, R. R., Novak, J. M., & Sellnow, T. L. (2005). Post-crisis discourse and organizational change, failure and renewal. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 18, 78-95.
- Spence, P. R., Westerman, D., PSkalski, P. D., Seeger, M., Ulmer, R. R., Venette, S., & Sellnow, T. L. (2005). Proxemic effects on information seeking after the September 11 attacks. *Communication Research Reports*, 22, 39-46.
- Venette, S. J., Veil, Shari, & Sellnow, T. L. (2005). Essential communication resources for combating bioterrorism: Some practical and generalizable recommendations. *Communication Research Reports*, 22, 29-37.
- Johnson, C. E., Sellnow, T. L., Seeger, M. W., Barrett, S. M., & Hasbargen, K. (2004) Blowing the whistle on Fen-Phen: An exploration of MeritCare's reporting of linkages between Fen-Phen and valvular heart disease. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 41, 350-369.
- Venette, S. J., Sellnow, T. L., & Lang, P. A. (2003). Metanarration's role in restructuring perceptions of crisis: NHTSA's failure in the Ford-Firestone crisis. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 40(3), 219-236.

- Sellnow, T. L., Seeger, M. W., & Ulmer, R. R. (2002). Chaos theory, informational needs, and natural disasters. *The Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 30, 269-292.
- Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2002). Crisis management and the discourse of renewal: Understanding the potential for positive outcomes of crisis. *Public Relations Review*, 28, 361-365.
- Cowden, K., & Sellnow, T. L. (2002). Issues in advertising as crisis communication: Northwest Airlines' use of image restoration strategies during the 1998 pilot's strike. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 39, 193-219.
- Sellnow, T. L., & Brand, J. (2001). Establishing the structure of reality for an industry: Model and antimodel arguments as advocacy in Nike's crisis communication. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 29, 278-294.
- Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2001). Exploring the boundaries of crisis communication: The case of the 1997 Red River Valley flood. *Communication Studies*, 52, 153-168.
- Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2000). Consistent questions of ambiguity in organizational crisis communication: Jack in the Box as a case study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 25, 143-155.
- Williams, S. L., & Sellnow, T. L. (1998). Chilling effect and significant choice: A case study of the National Cancer Institute and the screening mammography guideline controversy. In M. W. Seeger (Ed.), *Free Speech Yearbook*, 36, (118-133). Washington, D.C.: National Communication Association.
- Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (1998). Communication, organization, and crisis. In M. E. Roloff (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook*, 21 (pp. 231-276). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R., & Snider, M. (1998). The compatibility of corrective action in organizational crisis communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 46, 60-74.
- Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (1997). Strategic ambiguity and the ethics of significant choice in the tobacco industry's crisis communication. *Communication Studies*, 48, 215-233.
- Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (1995). Ambiguity as advocacy in organizational crisis communication. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 31, 138-150.
- Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (1995). External agencies as advocates in organizational crisis communication: The Bismarck Wood House as a case study. *North Dakota Journal of Speech and Theatre*, 8, 56-64.
- Johnson, D., & Sellnow, T. L. (1995). Deliberative rhetoric as a step in organizational crisis management: Exxon as a case study. *Communication Reports*, 8, 54-60.
- Sellnow, D. D., & Sellnow, T. L. (1994). John Corigliano's 'Symphony No.1' as a communicative medium for the AIDS crisis. *Communication Studies*, 44, 87-101.

Sellnow, T. L. (1993). North Dakota's 1989 tax referral as organizational crisis: The response of Governor George Sinner. *North Dakota Journal of Speech and Theatre* 8, 38-54.

Sellnow, T. L. (1993). Scientific argument in organizational crisis communication: The case of Exxon. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 30, 28-42.

Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (1990). Crisis messages: Wall Street after the fall. *Speaker and Gavel*, 26, 9-19.

Book Chapters on Risk/Crisis Communication

Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R., Novak, J. M. (in press). Applied communication ethics: A summary and critique of the research literature. In L. Frey and K. Cissna (Eds.). *Handbook of applied communication research*.

Seeger, M. W., Reynolds, B., & Sellnow, T. L. (2009). Crisis and emergency risk communication in health contexts: Applying the CDC Model to Pandemic Influenza. In Heath, R. L., & O'Hair, D. H. (Eds.), *Handbook of risk and crisis communication* (302-322). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Ulmer, R. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2009). Post-crisis communication and renewal: Understanding the potential for positive outcomes in crisis communication. In Heath, R. L., & O'Hair, D. H. (Eds.), *Handbook of risk and crisis communication* (302-322). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R., Seeger, M. W., & Veil, S. R. (2008). Terrorism as chaos: A chaos model for managing random acts of terror. In O'Hair, D., Heath, R., Ayotte, K., & Ledlow, G. (Eds.), *Terrorism: Communication and rhetorical perspectives* (pp. 411-424). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Sellnow, T. L., Seeger, M. W., & Ulmer, R. R. (2005). Constructing the "New Normal" through post-crisis discourse. In H. D. O'Hair, R. L. Heath, & G. R. Ledlow (Eds.), *Community preparedness and response to terrorism: Communication and the media* (pp.167-189). West Port, CT: Praeger.

Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (2003). Ambiguity as an inherent factor in crisis communication. In R. L. Heath & D. Millar (Eds.), *Crisis communication: A rhetorical approach* (pp. 251-262). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Seeger, M. W., Venette, S., Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2002). Media use, information seeking, and reported needs in post crisis contexts. In B. S. Greenberg (Ed.), *Communication and Terrorism: Public and Media Responses to 9/11* (pp. 53-64). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.

Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (2001). Public relations and crisis communication: Organizing and chaos. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Public Relations Handbook* (pp. 155-166). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.