

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Eileen Conrad

UCSB's Communication Department Ranks High in Research Productivity

UC Santa Barbara's Communication Department has been ranked No. 3 in the nation in terms of research productivity, according to a recent analysis of scholarly articles that have appeared in eight academic journals sponsored by the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association.

With just 11 current tenure-track faculty members and 22 graduate students, the UCSB department produced 11 percent of the research articles published in the journals between 1999 and 2004.

Only two other major research universities—the University of Wisconsin, Madison and Michigan State University, each with more than 40 faculty members—were more prolific.

Of the 349 articles published by 125 authors from 85 universities, UW Madison contributed nearly 12 percent, and Michigan State was responsible for 30 percent.

UCSB's Communication Department was also distinguished by its commitment to collaborative research by faculty members and graduate students.

Two of the three most published graduate students during that period were UCSB students.

Michael Stohl, chair of UCSB's Communication Department, attributed the department's research productivity to "the combination of extraordinary people working extraordinarily hard and well together."

He said UCSB's accomplishment is particularly impressive in light of the small size of the department's faculty.

"We don't try to be all things to all people," Stohl added.

"We are a small, focused department built from a core group of scholars who had a vision of excellence with an experimental social science model committed to theory building as its underlying value.

We are committed to hiring the best faculty members who are collaborative and collegial, and we engage graduate students as members of research teams and have them directly involved in every aspect of the research process from the start."

Melvin L. Oliver, dean of the social sciences, said, "The Communication Department is one of the gems in the Division of Social Sciences at UCSB.

While relatively small when compared with other communication programs, UCSB's department fosters a culture of excellence, collaboration, and engaged scholarship that this recent ranking so richly rewards."

The article, "Publish or Perish: A Limited Author Analysis of ICA and NCA Journals," by Ulla Bunz, assistant professor of communication at Florida State University, appeared in the December 2005 issue of *Journal of Communication*.

It investigated some of the communication discipline's publication conventions to provide information that can shape hiring, promotion, and/or tenure practices, particularly at research-intensive universities.

The analyses focused on authors, their gender, academic rank, and university affiliations. Results show that more full professors have significantly higher rates of productivity than either associate or assistant professors, even though assistant professors as a group are associated with the most manuscripts.

In a national survey of graduate programs conducted by the National Communication Association in the 2003-04 academic year, UCSB's Communication Department was ranked first in interpersonal and small group communication and in

intercultural/international communication, second in organizational communication, fourth in communication and technology, and 17th in mass communication.

It is one of the most popular undergraduate majors at UCSB.

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