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Research is an integral part of faculty and student activities at Boston University. Researchers at COM use the most advanced theory and methods to examine communication phenomena. Addressing theoretical and applied problems through a range of quantitative and qualitative perspectives, faculty and students engage in the most cutting-edge developments in communication research that provide an extraordinarily fertile ground for innovation and science.

The CRC was established in 1959 and reorganized, rebuilt, and relaunched in 1994. The CRC pioneered the use of television as a research tool, conducting systematic analyses on the effects of television on children and measuring political opinions and voting intentions. This early beginning led the CRC to develop a specialty in survey research methodology.

Today, the CRC has 40 research fellows specializing in advertising, critical cultural studies, health communication, human-computer interaction, international communication, journalism studies, media entertainment, political communication, and public relations.

The CRC has recently updated several research tools such as the iMotions biometric research platform, which allows faculty and students to examine physiological responses to games and other media. Other recent additions include a virtual reality system that aids faculty and students in investigating issues related to psychological presence, empathy, and immersive storytelling.

In 2009, the CRC established the Communication Research Colloquium Series consisting of monthly research presentations that highlight current and original research of faculty in COM. This forum provides an intellectual exchange of ideas and perspectives and features several methodological traditions. It fosters discussions among faculty and students about a variety of research topics in communication.

In 2011, the Dr. Melvin L. DeFleur Distinguished Lecture Series was established. Each year two distinguished scholars from outside the university are invited to share their outstanding scholarship, expertise, and experience with the BU community. In recognition of the pioneering and inspirational contributions of Dr. Melvin L. DeFleur to the field of mass communication research and his service as a venerable and inexhaustible member of the CRC, the faculty members named this series in his honor.
The end of the semester is always a busy time at COM. I write these words on May 1, 2023, with the coming week being the last week of classes for the spring semester. I have been acting as Interim Director of the CRC while the CRC Director, my colleague Dr. Michelle Amazeen, was on sabbatical. As some of you might have heard, Michelle got recently recognized for being a top ranked BU researcher based on the year 2021.

And our colleague Dr. James Katz was also recognized as a top ranked BU researcher based on career-long data. Congratulations to Dr. Amazeen and Dr. Katz! https://www.bu.edu/ciss/2023/03/29/bu-social-scientists-rank-among-top-2-of-highly-cited-scholars/

This semester we were fortunate to have three of the CRC Fellows deliver presentations to packed audiences. The February CRC colloquium was delivered by Dr. Chris Su who presented “Decoding the dynamics of media platforms”. In March, Dr. Katy Coduto presented “Romantic and Sexual Expression in Mediated Communication Contexts”, and in April Dr. Pablo Mino presented “Global and Critical Approaches to Public Relations”. This semester’s Melvin DeFleur Distinguished Lecture was presented by Dr. Deen Freelon, who is based at the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, and whose talk centered on “Analyzing social media information quality with PIEGraph”. All presentations were video recorded and are available for viewing in case you missed attending in person.

This week also brings the end of my Interim Director role at the CRC, a position which gave me the opportunity to reconnect with the CRC and its fellows. As some of you know, the CRC holds a special place in my heart. The CRC was a social science research center established at COM in the 1950s, but for reasons that are too complicated to trace, disappeared from existence sometime in the 1980s.

When I arrived to BU in 1993, after learning about the CRC’s demise, I took the initiative to bring it back to life in 1994. I was fortunate to be allowed to build the CRC’s physical space from scratch on two separate occasions and in two separate locations including the current one and run it from 1994 until 2015. By contrasting where we were 29 years ago to where we are now, I can tell you that, without a doubt, the CRC today is in great shape. The CRC currently enjoys great visibility within and outside BU, thanks to Michelle’s prominent research program on disinformation and misinformation and the scholarly work of the CRC’s various Fellows. The level of CRC activity and productivity today surpasses by far what these were 29 years ago, and this is due to the contributions of the CRC’s numerous Fellows and the doctoral students who are buzzing around collecting data for various ongoing experiments. And many thanks go to Lindsy Goldberg who has single-handedly been managing the day-to-day operations of the CRC and overcoming the many challenges that are associated with this task. The trajectory that the CRC is currently on is very reassuring and promises that a bright future for this center lies ahead.

I wish you a smooth end of semester and hope that your summer will be productive but also beautiful. See you around the BU campus!
AEJMC 2023
Fostering Freedom and Defending Democracy

Washington, DC
August 7-10, 2023

CRC FELLOW PRESENTATIONS

Amazeen, M.A. Research University versus Teaching University: Which one is Right for You? [Panelist]

Amazeen, M.A. Is “Mother” on the Cover? Should You “Look Up”? Science and Health Journalism [Panelist]


Miño, P. Strategic Communication and Critical Branding Research: Examining Issues of Race, Gender, and Culture. [Panel organizer and panelist]


Huang, J. Public Engagement of Corporate Social Media Strategies: Functional Interactivity, Vividness, and Social Presence [student project]

Longo, E. “How Fossil Fuel Companies Use Native Advertisements to Shift Environmental Narratives in U.S. Media” [student project]

Prena, K. What I Wish I’d Known: Maximizing your time as a graduate or teaching assistant [Panelist]

Shore, A. Governing the Screenshot Feature: Fighting Interpersonal Breaches of Privacy through Law and Policy

Shore, A., Prena, K. Communication Technology Division Platform Rules as Privacy Tools: The Influence of Screenshot Accountability and Trust on Privacy Management
CRC FELLOW PRESENTATIONS (CONTINUED)


Su, C.C., Liu, J. Digital Nationalistic Activism in Comparative Perspective: Trump Blaming China on Social Media in the U.S. and China

Trifiro, B., Shaughnessy, B., Conro, K., & Stewart, K. “I Think There’s Been a Glitch”: A content analytic approach to understanding Twitter discourse surrounding Ticketmaster’s mishandling of ticket sales for The Eras Tour

Trifiro, B. Research University versus Teaching University: Which One is Right for You? [moderator]

ISHS is a scholarly and professional organization dedicated to the advancement of humor research. Many of the Society’s members are university and college professors in the arts and humanities, biological and social sciences, and education. The society also includes professionals in the fields of counseling, management, nursing, journalism, and theater.

The society is interested in humor’s many facets, including its role in business, entertainment, and health care as well as how humor varies according to culture, age, gender, purpose, and context.

For more information on the conference, including registration head here.

For more information on the ISHS, visit the official ISHS website.
LOOKING AHEAD AT THE CRC - FALL 2023

Changes to Facility and Equipment Reservations

Beginning in September, the CRC will no longer be using QReserve as our platform for equipment and facility reservations in the center. We are transitioning over to WCO, which is the platform used by students to reserve other spaces and equipment across the college.

Changes to Requests for Center Services

In order to better accommodate the increasing volume of requests for center resources, we are implementing a new research request form that faculty, students and staff will be directed to beginning in the fall. This will help us keep track of your needs and ensure we are meeting them as requested. More information to come in the coming months.

Changes to Social Listening Software

COM leadership has decided to end our contract with Brandwatch, our current social listening software, in September. We will be transitioning to Meltwater, their competitor. If you are a Brandwatch user, communication about this switch will be frequent as we begin this transition.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall 2023 CRC Colloquium Speakers

September 2023: TBD
October 2023: TBD
November 2023: TBD

Fall 2023 DeFleur Distinguished Lecture:

TBD - if you have nomination recommendations, please let us know via the annual CRC survey that was disseminated via email earlier in May.
WE ASKED SOME OF THE EMERGING MEDIA STUDIES DOCTORAL STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE IN THE CRC THIS SEMESTER. HERE'S SOME INSIGHT ON STUDENT USES OF THE CENTER:

KATYA NOVOZHILOVA
PH.D. STUDENT, EMERGING MEDIA STUDIES

What type of involvement do you have in the CRC?
I used CRC facilities for the project for Dr. Cummings’ class EM755 Measuring Media Effects. Our project explored participants’ interactions with chatbots, and how peoples’ perceptions vary depending on chatbots’ design. We used the multipurpose research room and naturalistic research area for our study. For our study, we were collecting facial expressions data via Affectiva software embedded in the iMotion laptop and skin conductance data using shimmer GSR.

What skills have you gained from utilizing the CRC?
I learned a lot about how to conduct in-person experiments. Before that, I only did online experimental studies, and the in-person lab experiment was drastically different from what I did before. I learned a lot about the overall procedure of an in-person experiment, for instance, how to write up a researcher’s manual with a precise indication of every step of the study, how to navigate a researchers’ team in terms of scheduling data collection slots, or how to reserve equipment via QReserve. I also learned how to use iMotions equipment and software and how to troubleshoot technical issues. Finally, I learned how to use the Sona system for recruiting participants, creating study slots, and granting participants credits.
WE ASKED SOME OF THE EMERGING MEDIA STUDIES DOCTORAL STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE IN THE CRC THIS SEMESTER. HERE'S SOME INSIGHT ON WHAT RESEARCHING IN THE CRC IS LIKE:

DANNY YIHAN JIA
PH.D. STUDENT, EMERGING MEDIA STUDIES

What type of involvement do you have in the CRC?
I've mostly been using the lab space and some biometric sensors for a class project. We're conducting an experiment on the psychological impact of immersion. To collect data, we've been using Shimmer sensors that help us measure GSR, which is an indicator of physiological arousal. It's been fantastic working with such cutting-edge equipment. I'm looking forward to seeing where this project takes us.

What skills have you gained from utilizing the CRC?
Utilizing the resources from the CRC has been really beneficial for me. I learned how to use various state-of-the-art equipment, and it was amazing to incorporate these tools into my research. Working on my study design helped me refine my approach to research and think critically about addressing research questions. Overall, my time at the CRC has been a great learning experience and has equipped me with practical skills that I can apply to future research projects.
COURSES UTILIZING THE CRC

Over the last few years, we are proud to have welcomed courses from across COM to the center for exposure to research. Students are encouraged to look into the following courses if they are interested in getting involved with the center.

EXPOSURE TO FOCUS GROUP DESIGN AND METHODS
- COM CM 321* - Communication Research Methods (Undergrad)
- COM CM 539 - Health Campaigns
- COM CM 557 - Media Effects
- COM CM 722* - Communication Research Methods (Grad)
- COM CM 724 - Design Sampling & Measurement
- COM EM 757 - User-Producers 2.0 - Developing Interactivity

EXPOSURE TO BIOMETRICS
- COM JO 205 - Visual Storytelling
- COM CM 280 - Persuasion Theory
- COM CM 321* - Communication Research Methods (Undergrad)
- COM FT 552 - Fundamentals of Interactive Media
- COM CM 557 - Media Effects
- COM CM 718 - Advertising Strategy and Consumer Insights II
- COM CM 722* - Communication Research Methods (Grad)
- COM EM 755 - Experimental Design & Measurement

EXPOSURE TO CLIENT RESEARCH
- COM CM 585: AdLab
- COM CM 580: PRLab
- COM EM 777: Masters Collaboratory Project (EMS only)

Courses with an asterisk(*) indicate only some sections utilize the center. In these cases it is best to verify with the instructor. This list is only a guide. Course content is always subject to change at any time at the discretion of course instructors.
The Communication Research Colloquium Series at Boston University was established in October 2009. This series consists of monthly research presentations that highlight current and original research of faculty in the College of Communication. This forum provides an intellectual exchange of ideas and perspectives, features scholarship in several methodological traditions, and fosters discussions among faculty and students about a variety of research topics in the field of communication.

Decoding The Dynamics of Media Platforms: An Interdisciplinary Exploration and Two Alternative Approaches

Dr. Chris Su
Assistant Professor, Emerging Media Studies.
February 2023

This talk will examine the dynamics of media platforms through two interdisciplinary research projects. In the first project, a content analysis approach is employed to investigate the citation and co-citation network behind fact-checking content, revealing the selective manner in which online fact-checking content cites sources. The second project analyzes the value and regulation systems embedded within the public-facing policies (community guidelines) of media platforms through lexical analysis and network analysis. Using digital datasets that are not commonly employed in communication research, the results of these projects provide insight into the complexity of media platforms and their impact on society. This talk will discuss the results of these two empirical research projects, providing a unique and valuable perspective on the dynamics of media platforms.
Global and Critical approaches to Public Relations: Theoretical Insights from Latin America

Dr. Pablo Miño
Assistant Professor, Public Relations
April 2023

Research at the intersection of critical-cultural branding and public relations has consistently developed over the past 20 years. However, Latin American perspectives to this conversation remain scarce. This presentation examines the expansion of nation branding in Latin America, understood as an economic development strategy focused on the promotion of exports, investment, and tourism offerings in the region. This presentation conceives nation branding as an expression of “modern colonialism” in Latin America, engaged with self-stereotyping strategies to lure the interest of investors and tourists in the Global North.

Romantic and Sexual Expression in Mediated Communication Contexts

Dr. Katy Coduto
Assistant Professor, Media Science
March 2023

Numerous social media platforms are utilized in the search for romantic connection as well as the expression of sexual interest and engagement. The studies covered in this talk will consider the technological affordances that support these behaviors, as well as user perceptions of their actions in these spaces.
"Analyzing social media information quality with PIEGraph"

Dr. Deen Freon
Associate Professor at UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media

May 2023

Quantitative social media research has traditionally been conducted from what might be called a platform-centric view, wherein researchers sample, collect, and analyzed data based on one or more topic- or user-specific keywords. Such studies have yielded many valuable insights, but they convey little about individual users’ tailored social media environments—what I call the user-eye view. Studies that investigate social media from a user-eye view are relatively rare because of the expense involved and a limited number of suitable tools. This talk introduces PIEGraph, a novel system for user-eye view research that offers key advantages over existing systems. PIEGraph is lightweight, scalable, open-source, OS-independent, and collects Twitter data viewable from mobile and desktop interfaces directly from APIs. The system incorporates an extensible taxonomy that allows for straightforward classification of a wide range of political, social, and cultural phenomena. The presentation will focus on how our research team is using PIEGraph to examine the extent to which high-(academic/scientific/journalistic) and low-quality (disinformation/hyperpartisan) information sources populate users’ personalized information environments across lines of gender, race, ideology, and conspiracy belief.


**BOOKS**


**BOOK CHAPTERS**


INVITED TALKS


INVITED TALKS (CONTINUED)

Krishna, A. (2023, May 3). Disinformation and Misinformation: How are these affecting society? Boston University College of Communication. [Remote panel].


Trifiro, B. (2023, February). Social Media and Society’s Wicked Problems. Invited lecture at Bryant University’s Honors College Speaker Series.

MEDIA APPEARANCES


CRC FELLOW PRESENTATIONS

Cummings, J. J. "Immersed or interrupted? Cognitive factors associated with virtual reality usage in the age in media multitasking."

Cummings, J. J. "In the message vs. in the message system: The cultivation potential of immersive technology."

Chaikulngamdee C. "Predicting expression about Black Lives Matter on social media --How users’ embraced values, issue importance, perceived opinion climate, and personality type influence their online engagement."


Deng, F., Su, C. C. Social media news consumption and cognitive dissonance on China’s social credit system among overseas Chinese students.


Hong, T., Cabrera, J., & Beaudoin, C. E. A serious video game: Testing the independent and relative influence of real-world and virtual-world social norms. [Game Studies division]


Kim, S., Miño, P., Gaither, B. M., Austin, L. Perceptions of Corporate Social Advocacy at an International Scale: Evidence from Chile, South Korea, and the United States.

Krishna, A., Amazeen, M.A., & Eschmann, R. Vaccine Misinformation and Susceptible Publics: Understanding the differences between Disinformation-Immune, -Vulnerable, -Receptive, and -Amplifying Publics’ Perceptions and Behavioral Intentions.
CRC FELLOW PRESENTATIONS (CONTINUED)

Li, Y., & Su, C. C. Comparing online incivility expressed about the Russian-Ukraine war in China and the United States.


Prena, K. Death in Video Games: Considering Character Death and other Mechanics, and their Relationships with Memory.

Trifiro, B. Breaking Boundaries: How Privacy Concerns Dictate Online Information Disclosures.

Trifiro, B. Keeping it Real: Contested Meanings of Authenticity on Social Media. [Invited panelist]

Strickland, S., & Cummings, J. J. Don’t threaten me with a bad time: The impact of climate change message framing and source on intention to act.

Su, C. C. & Zhang, R. Anti-vaccine or not: The effects of source and affordance-based credibility on misinformation sharing behavior and vaccination intention.

Zhang, Y., Guo, L., Cummings, J. J., & Paik, S. Does awareness of personalization algorithms invalidate the agenda-setting effects? Evidence from an online experiment in the U.S. and China.
**Top Faculty Paper Award (First Place), Public Relations Division, International Communication Association**


**Funded Grant: Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication**

Dr. Yi Grace Ji

"How Should U.S. Companies Communicate about Geopolitical Issues? Toward a Normative Model of Corporate Prosocial Communication"

**Inaugural Nelson Undergraduate Research Award in Communication, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), Summer 2023**

Emma Longo, mentored by Dr. Michelle Amazeen

"How Fossil Fuel Companies Use Native Advertisements to Shift Environmental Narratives in U.S. Media"
AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Executive Leadership Team, Go Red for Women, American Heart Association, Greater Boston, 2023

Dr. Traci Hong

Junior Faculty Fellow of the Boston University Rafik B. Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering, 2023-2024

Dr. Chris Chao Su

Emerging Media Studies PhD Graduate

Dr. Jiaxi Wu

Fellow Tenure and Promotion

Associate Dean of Research, Dr. Michelle Amazeen
Associate Professor, Film & Television, Dr. Charlotte Howell
Associate Professor, Public Relations, Dr. Arunima Krishna
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Research Publicity Coordinator

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