



Organizational Communication (Org Com) is the study of the way people interact within organizations, businesses, government, education and non-profit groups. This definition may provide some information about the major, but to help gain a better understanding a handful of students were interviewed to find out why they became Org Com majors. Students were also asked what they love about their program.

“I have always been an organizer!!” Senior Kendra Scott explains this is what first drew her to the Org Com Major. “I’ve always wanted to go

into the event planning or the organizational training field. Learning about it has been enjoyable.” Scott continued to praise her professors for the hard work they put into their classes and her fellow students for the community they have developed within the major.

Everyone in the Org Com major has something they wished other students were aware of. Danielle Garrigan wished her fellow JMU classmates were aware of the work Org Com students do for clients in the Harrisonburg area. “Every Org Com class I have taken has worked with outside clients. It is a great thing to tell potential employers.”

Much like Scott and Garrigan, Junior Kate Sautter also praised her professors and the hands-on learning they provide her.

Senior Jacqueline Weisbecker explained that she wished more employers knew that Org Com truly does prepare JMU students for a variety of career opportunities! She

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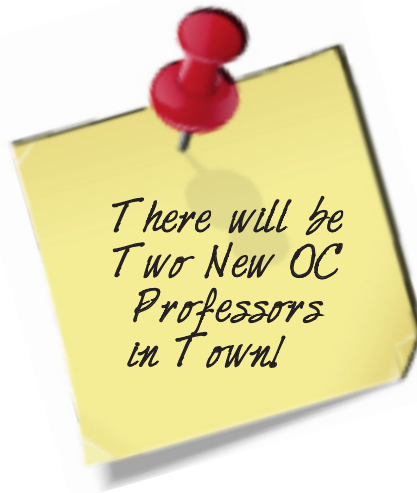
went on to explain that, “for a period of time I was really interested in event planning, and I had great experiences in my service-learning projects for class, so I felt well equipped for this occupation. However, now I am entering the consulting field and the different projects I have worked on for SCOM 449 and SCOM 450 have given me a firm understanding of how crucial communication is to this field.” She’s very grateful to be an Org Com major.

Senior Jessica Brown says that she loves how practical this major is. “While many of my peers are struggling to write resumes, search for jobs and stress about their future, I feel that I am as prepared as I can be because that is what I study!” Brown disagrees with fellow students who say SCOM is an easy major. She believes that students do well because they enjoy the material, making it easier to understand.

Since it was not evident from the definition, it can be understood now that the Organizational Communication program is fun, exciting, and a useful major which students really enjoy. The major prepares students for the workforce with valuable experience and skills through the amazing professors, wonderful clients and challenging service-learning projects.

**Organizational Student
of the Year**

Jacqueline Weisbecker



Two new professors are arriving to JMU in the Fall of 2010. Both Janell Bauer and Lori Britt will be joining the Communication Department as Organizational Communication professors from University of Colorado at Boulder.

Janell Bauer went to University of the Pacific in Stockton, California where she earned her Bachelor’s in English and Communication and her Master’s in Communication with an emphasis in organizational communication. Professor Bauer is currently researching for her dissertation on the experiences of grieving workers and how they negotiate their personal experiences and work commitments. She is very interested in how relationships with work influence very personal experiences like grief. In addition, she is also working on a paper about the television series “Mad Men” and what it teaches society about the history and future of the women’s movement.

In her spare time Professor Bauer enjoys yoga, dance, playing with her puppy Olive, and going to movies and concerts. Some of her favorite artists include: “Death Cab For Cutie”, “Black Eyed Peas” and “Ciara.” In the fall, Professor Bauer will be teaching SCOM 358 Business & Professional Communication



Janell Bauer



Lori Britt

and SCOM 261 Writing for PR.

Lori Britt went to the University of Pennsylvania for her Bachelor’s in Mass Communication and Distinguished Certificate of Journalism, and earned her Master’s in Communication Studies at the University of North Carolina. She is currently completing her dissertation, which looks at how courses that use a service-learning approach are communicated to and made sense of by students.

Professor Britt is very excited about joining the JMU community and says her favorite aspect of JMU is, without a doubt, the people. Professor Britt will be teaching GCOM, SCOM 358 Business & Professional Communication, and SCOM 425 Leadership Communication this fall. Professor Britt loves to ski and play golf as well as read.



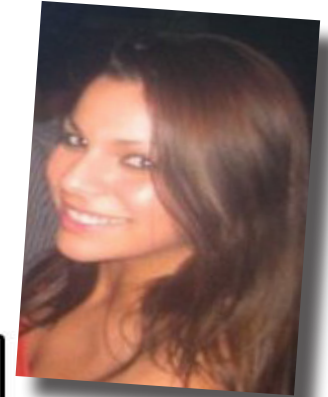
As many seniors are about to set out on the journey called life, some may be wondering what to expect after graduation. To gain a better understanding of the future, two Organizational Communication graduates were interviewed for advice on life after JMU.

Wayne Moore, May 2008 graduate, replied, "Life after graduation is one that is best characterized as the best of times and the worst of times. Yes it is a pain to go to work from 9-5 pm everyday, but then again your body gets in a routine and you get accustomed to it. One of the best things about being in the real world is that you don't have homework, after you get off work, unless of course you are studying for some sort of certification or designation that will help you with your job." Wayne is currently employed at Computer Sciences Corporation in Columbia, SC as a Business Analyst Professional. His daily responsibilities range from meeting with the client (insurance companies) to gather software requirements and developing test case scenarios and plans for certain phases of the software. Wayne's advice to graduating seniors is, "apply, apply, and apply to jobs. Don't wait until the end of your senior year--the job market is tough right now."

Ashley Barnett, May 2009 graduate, replied in a similar manner, "Life after graduation is great! I moved to the Hampton Roads area and got a job with nTelos Wireless. I am the Marketing & Public Affairs Coordinator for nTelos in both the Richmond and Hampton Roads markets." Ashley also was quick to offer a word of advice to graduating seniors, "**DO NOT GIVE UP!**" Ashley started looking for a job in January of her graduation year, and did not find anything until the end of June. She contemplated accepting a position that had nothing to do with her major, but held out and loves the job she is at now.

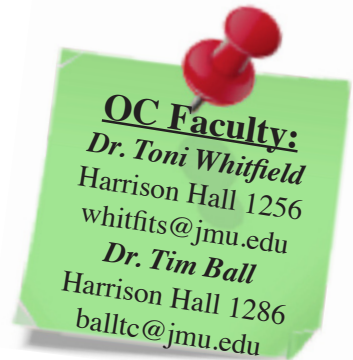


Wayne Moore



Ashley Barnett

Org Com Word Search



- Clients
- Consulting
- Feedback
- Interactions
- Internships
- Janell Bauer
- Lori Britt
- Misunderstandings
- Org Com
- RJP
- SCOM
- Service Learning
- Socialization
- Tim Ball
- Toni Whitfield
- Amber Messersmith

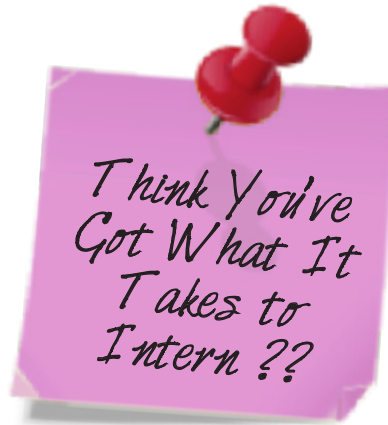


Amber Messersmith



*Stephanie Graves (right)
Amanda Slade (left)*

Org Com professor Amber Messersmith will be leaving JMU at the end of this semester and returning home to teach Business Communication at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Since this is her undergraduate alma mater she is very excited to return home! However, she will miss many aspects of JMU such as the school pride, shown by the abundance of proudly worn JMU apparel, and more deeply by the way people talk about this institution. This stands out for her because she has never known an academic institution where student members are more dedicated to upholding its strong reputation and where seniors are actually sad to leave when they graduate. Dr. Messersmith has been very impressed with JMU students' creativity and their professionalism. She has had the opportunity to review many resumes, and was impressed with students' out-of-class accomplishments, many of which "demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to helping others." Dr. Messersmith is very thankful to have had the opportunity to teach at JMU and wishes her students all the best in their college and professional careers. She invites anyone to keep in touch via email: ambermessersmith@gmail.com. Good luck in your endeavours and we will miss you.



Internships provide students with the opportunity to gain valuable experience and knowledge in their field of choice. They also help build your resume and skill set. Amanda Slade and Stephanie Graves both shared their internship experiences.

This past summer Stephanie had the opportunity to intern for the Great Aspirations Scholarship Program, non-profit organization in Glen Allen, Virginia, which focuses on helping high school students map out an academic plan of action post-graduation. She helped plan a silent auction and talent show. Her responsibilities included compiling and soliciting possible donors for the silent auction as well as planning the event portion in which she recruited principals from participating high schools to sign up for a talent show.

The winner of the talent show would then receive scholarship money for their high school. She said, "a lot of my time was spent on the phone trying to sell the program to people and get them on board with the program's mission. Enthusiasm, credibility, and poise all came into play. I really had a chance to hone my public relations and event planning skills."

Amanda Slade also had an internship this past summer at the Norfolk Foundation. She was responsible for editing the annual newsletter as well as updating the grants awarded by 29 different Community Foundations in Virginia. She also incorporated seven different client interviews on the foundation's website as well as designed fliers for the monthly webinar meetings. She said her internship experience was very worthwhile and a great resume builder.

