

### Priority #3: Launch a Center for Civic Debate

The bedrock of a liberal arts education is to prepare students to be engaged, thoughtful leaders who can evaluate competing world views and assess the value of ideas on the basis of their merits. In collaboration with other departments, we propose a Center for Civic Debate that would cultivate that culture in our communities, and engage faculty, students, and the community with a broad range of ideologies and perspectives.

It would be a place where ideas are tested and democracy flourishes through rigorous and respectful dialogue and debate. Activities would include round-table discussion with high-profile people on the state of civil liberties; public forums on core public policy issues; and activities led by our highly-ranked and award-winning debate and forensics teams, which could invigorate and lead campus discussion.

The vision for this Center and the mission of Communication Studies are practically synonymous, which makes our department its ideal home base for this multidisciplinary effort as a hub for research and community engagement, a forum for different models of debate, and a center for resident scholars and practitioners.

#### Gifts to launch the Center for Civic Debate will be used to:

- Endow the center's **directorship** to recruit a world-renowned scholar or practitioner to shape and lead the program
- Create an endowment that provides steady revenue for Center **programming** like public debates, seminars, conferences, workshops, and lectures, and to hire a full-time **coordinator** to manage center activities
- Establish a **mini-grants program** to fund competitive research awards for faculty across disciplines who wish to engage with the Center's central themes
- Provide for **graduate fellowships and post-doctoral fellowships** to encourage the next generation of scholars
- Offer **scholarships** to Minnesota Forensics Team participants, debate contest winners, and for students to conduct research alongside resident scholars

## SHATTERING EXPECTATIONS

The Campaign for Liberal Arts

## DEPARTMENT of COMMUNICATION STUDIES

### CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES



For more than a century, the Department of Communication Studies has prepared skilled communicators who have assumed leadership roles in diverse fields, shaped research as scholars in multiple academic and corporate positions, and taken their places as active contributors to their communities.

Our department is an outsized presence in the field, with a tradition of distinguished national leadership in communication research as well as a firm commitment to an undergraduate program that prepares students who can articulate clearly, think critically, and advocate ably, whatever their post-graduate career paths.

As our students prepare for a world in which information flow is increasingly complex, media is continually more diverse, and leaders are called to be ever more adept at bridging areas of deep disagreement, we are committed to creating a coherent, synchronized undergraduate curriculum that aligns career readiness with faculty research expertise.

Such a curriculum not only prepares students for jobs, but also calls on our department's strengths in areas such as rhetorical studies, persuasion, and intercultural communication, which promote civic strength, engagement, and change.

No undergraduate curriculum can be detached from the research excellence of its faculty. That's why we're shifting resources toward creating a more complementary relationship between our research-rich areas of strength and a forward-looking undergraduate program.

**In this exciting time for our department, we invite you to join us in bringing our goals to life.**

## Priority #1: Transform the undergraduate curriculum

We anticipate expanding our curricular offerings to include areas such as debate and dialogue in social-problem solving; argumentation and advocacy, including possible classes for students outside the department; and innovative areas such as communication design, an emerging field that emphasizes the role of environment as part of the communication model. We also are proposing new tracks in debate and competitive speaking; communication instruction; and digital (media) production.

Your gifts will help recruit leading scholars in these emerging fields. Through **endowed chairs and professorships** and **flexible funding** for research and reciprocal community engagement, you'll help us transform our faculty and our curriculum to meet the increasing demands of our students and our society.

Your gifts can also provide critical **teaching fellowships** to help shape, promote, and deliver undergraduate courses. With the third-largest number of bachelor's degrees awarded over the last ten years in the College of Liberal Arts, our department's instructional demands are heavy. To meet this need, we have embraced the role of professional and academic staff who are teaching classes, have become primary actors in course delivery, and will continue to deliver crucial components of our curriculum.

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**Professor Mark Pedelty** is using music to connect communities to environmental issues.

“Music has often been an important catalyst for social change, but few music scholars have applied their research to communicate and frame critical environmental questions, says. Pedelty. He asks, “How might music actually promote and inspire the sort of collective action needed to make our towns, cities, and nations more sustainable?”

With funding from Humanities Without Walls—a program of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—Pedelty and a team of five graduate students from the University of Minnesota and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are conducting a project called “Field to Media: Applied Musicology for a Changing Climate.” The team is traveling outside the US to organize music video projects in British Columbia, Brazil, Tanzania, India, and China, where they'll look at environmental concerns unique to each nation. This interdisciplinary project draws on the fields of ecomusicology, praxis-based applied ethnomusicology, and communication studies to create synergy between participatory research, community action, and scholarly publication.

## Priority #2: Increase experiential learning opportunities

Our undergraduates need real-world experience, as well as opportunities to develop and maintain relationships with external communities, develop entrepreneurial skills, and expand post-graduation job prospects.

Your gifts will provide **scholarships** for students to take advantage of internship opportunities in the Twin Cities and around the world.

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First-generation student **Tigana Vãn Lê** had a hard time finding his niche on campus as an undergraduate student. After getting involved in the Asian Pacific American Resource Center (APARC), Lê found not only a home but a passion for leading and inspiring others. After serving as an education policy intern for the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC) this past summer, Lê is eager to use his interest in higher education and policy to make an enduring impact.

As an education policy intern for SEARAC, Lê worked on major projects that incorporated analyzing budget proposals, interpreting data, and applying that information to different demographics and communities. “It was really eye-opening to see how communication within the framework of what I was learning in the classroom was different in different regions.”



“As a young professional, knowing how college was a practice ground for what I want to do post-graduation reconceptualized how important it is for me to be engaged in my education.”

