We Want To Hear From You!

In an effort to save paper and money, we have set up your e-mail address as the preferred method of communication.

If you wish to receive this newsletter via postal mail instead of the electronic version, please respond with your name and complete mailing address to the following e-mail address: comm_news@gustavus.edu.

If you received only a hard copy of this newsletter, however, please forward this notice to your classmates in an informative speech aired on public access television.

Students and interviewees claimed they helped others gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. Video Representation is an introduction to the world of multimedia communication, using digital film and editing to tell some very human stories.

Students get the opportunity to explore all types of public address, from modern technology to tell some very human stories.

In Visiting Professor Martin Lang's Video Representation class conducted their own form of community work. Video Representation is an introduction to the world of multimedia communication, using digital film and editing to reach a wide audience.

For a final project, the class broke into groups of two or three students to present the story of a marginalized person or group within the Gustavus or St. Peter communities. In essence, students used the media of digital film to give voice to a community member or group that often goes unheard.

Students leap at the opportunity to do some concrete social work. Groups chose everything from Gustavus custodial workers to community members with AIDS as their subjects for the projects. The students spent hours interviewing dozens of people on camera, followed with countless hours in the Confer digital arts lab, editing and re-editing film.

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Projects
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The Communication Studies Department at Gustavus welcomes two new faculty members in the 2005-06 academic year: Martin Lang and Sarah Wolter.

Martin Lang, hired to replace Mark Braun, recently earned his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and taught Media and Society, Video Representation, Media Criticism, and Gender and TV and Film (Interim Experience—a.k.a. January term—course) for the 2005-06 academic year. Lang says he chose Gustavus because, as an alumnus, he was familiar with the institution. He also notes his experience as a student provided a fair model for the teaching style he wanted to portray.

Lang’s research interests revolve around the relationship between media and the societies in which they operate, particularly the representations of identity that the media offer to their audiences. In addition, he studies the influence society has upon the media, especially the impact of commercial motivations on media organizations and the context they produce. His dissertation is a highly contextualized central text analysis of representations of Americans in mainstream and Indian-produced newspapers. Guided by poststructuralist theories of language, critical race theory, and feminist perspective, he argues that the bulk of the mainstream representations—and even some of the Indian-produced representations—commit a kind of “incognizant racism” by silencing Indian voices and adopting a non-Indian, “white” perspective as the default portal to understanding gaining in Minnesota and its various social and economic impacts.

Originally from Oakdale, Minn., Lang cites his interests and hobbies as making stained glass pieces, playing soccer, riding his mountain bike, reading clever satire, baking, watching documentary films, building hot rods, and shopping for skirts (yes, he said skirts).

Sarah Wolter, hired as Leila Brammer’s sabbatical replacement, recently completed her master of arts degree in speech communication from Minnesota State University, Mankato. She taught Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication as well as the Interim Experience course The Social Impact of Media on Adolescent Girls in the 2005-06 academic year. Wolter teaches at Gustavus this year in order to fill course gaps due to Mariangela Maguire’s appointment to the Dean of Faculty’s Office.

Wolter’s research interests are centered about communication and feminist theory with concentration on representations of female athletes in the media and identity as it is constructed in interaction. Wolter’s thesis examined the influence of student, colleague, and administrative governing relational communities on the formation and maintenance of professional identity of women assistant professors in the colleges of Arts & Humanities and Social & Behavioral Sciences at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Originally from Red Wing, Minn., Wolter cites her interests and hobbies as playing golf and tennis, walking her dog Lucy, spending time with family and friends, and watching reality television.

2005-06 Faculty (l to r): Sarah Wolter, Martin Lang, Patricia English, Phillip Veight, Mariangela Magazine, Kristafer Kracht, Terry Morris, Jay Leightner

The results of the project were phenomenal. Lang and his students organized a film gala to debut their films, attracting a wide range of students and community members. Most who saw the series of films learned something new and heard at least one story with which they had previously been unfamiliar with.

These are just a couple of the ways in which current students in the department are working to improve Gustavus and the surrounding community. With the continued effort of students and faculty, the longstanding tradition of service in the department will live on.

Potential Grows with Evan Anderson Forum Film Gala Program

by Kalynne Roachelt

As a very young team including six competing freshmen, the Evan Anderson Forum Forensics Program had a very successful 2004–05 season. Competition highlights include placing second at the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament and propelling Rebecca Kuehl (class of 2006) to All-American status in Pi Kappa Delta and in the American Forensics Association, both historical accomplishments. Andrea Castillo represented the team at the Interstate Oratory Competition, claiming honors as the first Gustavus student in over twenty years to attend the world-renowned event.

Momentum gained from the team’s success last season was definitely not lost for the 2005–06 season. Additional team trophies and individual awards have made for a very rewarding season. One especially significant not lost for the 2005–06 season. Additional team trophies and individual awards have made for a very rewarding season. One especially significant accomplishment has been a food drive in which the team accumulated over 2,400 food items for the St. Peter Area Food shelf. The team will participate in “Relay for Life” this spring, where it will walk to raise money for cancer research.

After all of the success that the Evan Anderson Forum Forensics Program has had this year, the future of the program looks promising.