

International Communication Link

Letter from the Director



As I sit at my desk writing this message, I cannot help but reflect how life comes full circle. I am humbled by the fact that as an alumna of SIS-AU and as a scholar-educator who now occupies the program director's office, I stand on the shoulders of giants; those scholar-educators, alumni and community partners who have worked tirelessly to build, nurture and strengthen a program that was the first of its kind in the US.

Some 40 odd years later our program is poised once more to help address major issues and challenges confronting life in the 21st century. This calls for the recommitment of all—the faculty, students, alumni and partners in the public and private sectors. For the faculty, this is affirmation of the multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives that continue to distinguish your respective research agendas and publications, as it also encourages meaningful engagement with students inside and outside of the classroom. For current students who have embarked on intellectual journeys with one another and with the faculty, it means explorations and debates of new and different ways of thinking, knowing and engaging with the changing environments. To be sure, this requires courage and courage comes from the conviction that you will help contribute in different ways to improving the human condition. For alumni who are 'ambassadors' of IC and SIS, through your work and engagement in communities you bring us along with you as you bring the world back to us. For community partners in the public and private sectors, this is a program committed to identifying, examining and helping to creatively problem solve challenges on local, national and global arenas.

At the program level, recommitment first and foremost entails the creation of physical place and space for community building. The IC commons lounge is open to all. I invite you to take the time to visit and help build community here on the second floor of the new SIS building. We also are working on community-in-cyberspace: a newly revamped IC website soon will be operational as will a LinkedIn site, and we welcome alumni participation. Second, IC faculty have worked hard in their review and restructuring of the curriculum to better reflect needs of the time. Emanating from the core of culture and communication, there now are four major tracks: global-social media, technology and policy; global health communication; intercultural relations; and public-cultural diplomacy. Last but not least, we would like to hear from alumni and community partners here in the US and from around the globe. Your input and feedback matter. IC's potential and promise for the next 40 odd years is ours to realize collectively. I look forward to working with you all.

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Important Upcoming Dates:

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| 11/4 | Prof. Hayden Book Discussion |
| 11/23-11/27 | Thanksgiving Break |
| 12/12-12/19 | Fall Final Exams |
| 12/23-1/2 | Winter Break |
| 3/15-16 | IMI Conference on Intercultural Relations |

April 6 Leaders Come to AU



It is not every day that you have the opportunity to meet individuals that played a significant role in shaping history. However, this October, students had the opportunity to have a conversation with Ahmad Maher and Waleed Rashid, co-founders of Egypt's April 6th Movement.

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Student and Alumni Updates

Alumni Profiles

Do you ever wonder what the world holds for graduates of the IC program? Are you curious to get advice from those who have graduated before you and make connections with IC Alumni? This column will provide you with helpful information and insight, and share stories of how they found their present opportunities.

- Najla Haywood, MA IC, May 2010

Tessa Winkler

Degree: IC Graduation Date: May 2011
Currently Living: Washington, DC

IC Alumna Tessa Winkler '11 was given a full-time position at the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, following her previous years of commitment to the organization as an intern. When she began her internship, Tessa worked primarily in the advocacy center for immigration reform. Eventually, her proclivity for professionalism was recognized, and she was offered a permanent position as the web contact coordinator and communication officer. She made connections between media and advocacy throughout her internship, and worked to make herself a valuable asset to the company—an effort in which she clearly succeeded. As of June 2011, Tessa has been managing social media, writing annual reports, public speaking opportunities, supporting media events, and providing web content for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network.

Tessa recalls that her education in International Communication has translated to leadership assets in the professional world. She utilized her experience in researching the interplay between agencies of refugee resettlement in her interview for the position, and will be presenting her SRP to the CIN for funding research in the near future. She is proud to say that many of her communication skills were developed in IC classes, and public presentations, for which she was terrified at the time, made her more comfortable with the process. Teamwork in class gave her great experience for interacting with other professionals, something she is constantly doing now.



Tessa Winkler MAIC '11 was a committed board member of ICSF, the graduate student organization within the International Communication Program.



Gayatri Murthy MAIC spoke on behalf of her class at Commencement Ceremonies in Spring of 2009.

Gayatri Murthy

Degree: IC Graduation Date: May 2009
Currently Living: Washington, DC

I am currently working at InterMedia Global Research and Counsel. I began working there as soon as I graduated from the IC MA program in the spring of 2009. Initially, I analyzed communication and media data from many developing economies in Asia and Africa, created reports, and published web articles for the international community. Although related to what I had studied, I yearned to travel and observe fieldwork while actually designing some of these research studies. I often felt impatient, though I was encouraged by Professor Chin's challenge that I was part of an "entitled generation not willing to do your time."

In the last six months, things have changed- I now work on a study on behalf of the US Embassy in Kabul to evaluate the impact of their Cultural and Educational grants throughout Afghanistan. They are also interested in insights into the conduct and impacts of the different funded activities to determine an overall sense of how their civil society building is working or not.

I have been working on a team where I have contributed to designing the study, project management and coordination, conducting the training for the fieldwork and the final analyses. In fact, just recently I traveled to Kabul to observe field training and pilot the field work. The training was in Dari and Pashto and my knowledge of Urdu allows me to understand every 4th word, so I am getting by fine. Most of them speak Urdu/Hindi thanks to Bollywood movies, and I have been able to communicate with some of them quite easily. While this is an evaluation for the US embassy in Kabul, it is also an evaluation of how successful the civil society rebuilding in Afghanistan is progressing. If done well, it can actually guide US strategy and decisions in this country and ensure that what is needed is indeed what is delivered. When conveyed this way, the field staff seemed to find greater motivation for their field work.

All in all, it has been a fascinating journey in the past few months- and I am finally beginning to feel that I am truly able to apply all the cross cultural training that I learned at SIS, though I certainly have much more to learn. Though my job search was arduous and often frightening, I was able to utilize the ICSF listserv and the opportunities extended to me by SIS and the IC program and find a job I truly enjoy. I am happy to say that my time at SIS opened up wonderful doors for me, and I would like to give this advice to all future IC graduates: if life gives you lemons (internships and not jobs), make lemonade (you know where I am going with this)!

Egypt's April 6 Movement Founders Visit with IC Sponsorship

The march to Tahrir Square began several years before the now familiar images of the Egyptian Revolution were beamed around the world. As Ahmad and Waleed described to a standing room only audience in the Abrams Family Founder's Room, the April 6th Movement was and remains a work in progress. While here at AU they detailed the evolution, strategies and tools their movement employed in engineering the removal of Hosni Mubarak. Moderated and organized by Prof. Loubna Skalli-Hanna, the format of the program was entirely question and answer, giving students, faculty and community members the opportunity to raise a wide range of issues with the pair.

In response to the audience's questions, the young activists emphasized a number of themes that parallel subjects addressed in our courses here in the IC program. The guest speakers presented a mini-seminar on how to create a revolution, they noted that the first step in your planning is to know the mentality and culture of your people. Once you have carefully examined these aspects, only then can you craft an effective strategy for collective action. As Maher explained, the movement studied non-violent struggles around the world, but could not just take what other groups did and apply it in Egypt. Instead, the first step was to change the mentality of Egyptians to overcome their fear and realize it was not Mubarak's country, but their country.

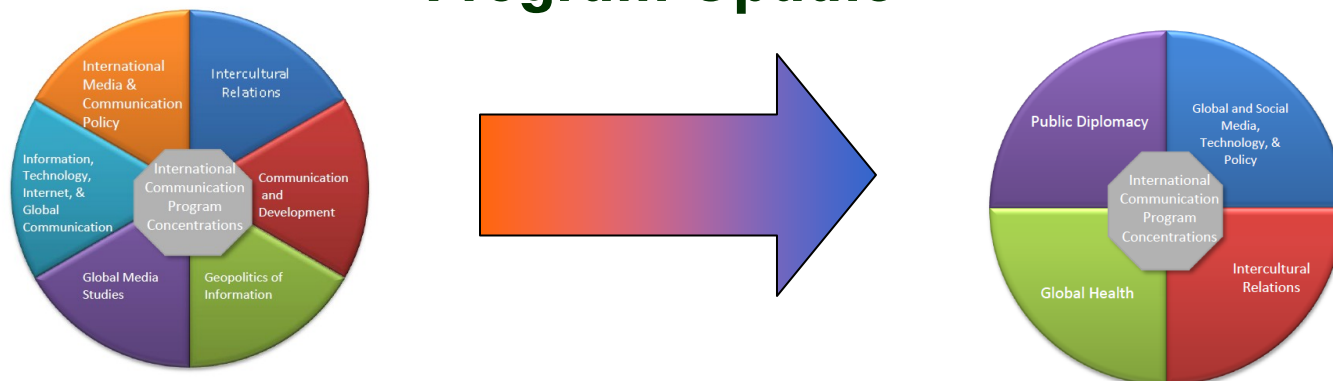


In order to achieve this change of mentality, the organizers and their fellow activists used tools such as Facebook, Twitter and cell phones, as well as sustained demonstrations, to pursue their specific goal of removing Mubarak from power. However, they would not call their movement a 'Facebook Revolution'; instead, they characterized it as a people's movement that used Facebook. As Rashid argued, you have to become a salesperson for your ideas and present them in a way that makes sense for your audience, including using social media.

Besides these techniques, the movement also used creative social institutions to spread their message, such as taxi drivers. While convincing a taxi driver to join the revolution directly would not be an effective tool for this movement, the co-founders devised a method of promoting their events in a culturally innovative way. The organizers would talk on their cell phones and describe upcoming events so that the drivers could overhear their conversation. The "human tape recorder in the next seat" would then spread the word around to the next passenger and the next and so on. The end result being that the drivers would relay information about upcoming events because they are "incapable of remaining silent" while driving. As Waleed told the story, within a few days, he got back in a taxi only to be informed about a demonstration they were organizing from the taxi driver.

Using these and other strategies, Maher, Rashid and their numerous collaborators built a movement that deposed a dictator. But, they could not have done it without the help of....Hosni Mubarak. The two credited the imprisoned former leader with tactical errors that precipitated his downfall, and each predicted similar fates for other regimes in the region, including the Assad regime in Syria. However, they also noted that their revolution was far from over. In fact, according to the movement's co-founders, getting rid of Mubarak was only phase one in long road that will take many more years. How their movement adapts and continues to evolve will be one force at work in the changing dynamics of contemporary Egypt.

Program Update



Starting this semester, International Communication Program is condensing its concentrations offerings. Students can now choose from Public Diplomacy, Global Health Communication, Intercultural Relations and Global & Social Media, Technology and Policy, as well as create a self-designed option. This new configuration represents the strengths of the faculty and course offerings while encouraging students to craft a specialization that fits their interests and career aspirations.

Announcing the Thirteenth Annual IMI Conference

The Thirteenth Annual IMI Conference on Intercultural Relations is an accessible, affordable, professional development opportunity for those in the field of intercultural relations, cross-cultural and diversity training, and education. The conference will be held at the School of International Service of American University on Thursday, March 15 & Friday, March 16 with a Pre-Conference Symposium on Wednesday, March 14.



Since the Annual Conference launched in 2000, IMI has worked to bring together a diverse audience of over 200 intercultural relations professionals from various sectors to share their knowledge and practices with colleagues and like-minded individuals in the field. Combined with our focus on experiential learning, participants leave with a toolkit of resources to bring back and apply to their own work. The IMI conference combines a focus on dialogue and learning with networking opportunities in an open, community-oriented atmosphere. IMI's conference showcases over thirty dynamic sessions, over fifty presenters at the head of their fields, and two inspirational keynote speakers.

Graduate students have several options for attending the conference. They can apply for our Education and Development Fund (EDF) Scholarship, attend the Conference as a skills institute participant and gain credit, volunteer, or register on their own to attend at the AU discounted rate. In addition, two credits can be gained in four days by registering for the *Gaming Simulations and Experiential Exercises for Intercultural Training* skills institute on March 14 and 17 or the conference. For more information, check out our conference website (<http://www.american.edu/sis/imi/conference/index.cfm>), contact Mary Margaret Herman, Program Coordinator, at mmherman@american.edu, or stop by Watkins G10!



IC Program Visits the Newseum



On October 8, the IC Program continued a recent tradition of visiting the Newseum at the start of the Fall semester. First and Second Year students within both International Media and International Communication met up in downtown DC to visit one of the city's premier museums. Between browsing the daily headlines from around the world, examining international press freedom, and viewing an exhibit on the Annual Photography Award winners, students received firsthand experience with past and present media. This social and educational experience was an excellent way to kickoff the Fall semester. We look forward to next year's trip!



Faculty and Research News

Robert Albro's edited book will be released in November 2011, entitled *Anthropologists in the Securityscape: Ethics, Practice and Professional Identity*. The book explores how as the military and intelligence communities re-tool for the 21st century, the long and contentious debate about the role of social scientists in national security environments is dividing the disciplines with renewed passion. *Anthropologists in the Securityscape* affirm that it is essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand or influence the relationship between anthropology and security in the twenty-first century.

Gary Weaver spoke at Butler University on October 14 on "Growing Up Cross-Culturally: Broadening Horizons for Academic Research." Prof. Weaver also spoke at Rosemont College on October 7 concerning the status of Iranian third-culture children.

On Friday, Nov. 4 at 3 pm in Room 115 of Bender Library, Craig Hayden discussed his findings from his forthcoming book, *The Rhetoric of Soft Power: Public Diplomacy in Global Contexts*. He will illustrate the comparative communication strategies inherent across a variety of public diplomacy and strategic communication programs -including China, the U.S, Venezuela, and Japan. Hayden will examine the ways in which a "soft power" strategy is localized and embodied in the expectations of media effect, technological platforms, and audience conceptualization in public diplomacy programs.

Special Update: New Face in 235B



The International Communication Program would like to welcome Eric Eggleston as our new Program Coordinator. Eric, a graduate student in International Development concentrating in Democracy and Governance, joined the IC Team in September, and we are excited to have him on board. Eric has a long history of exploring international ventures. As an undergraduate at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, Eric received his degree in Sociology and Religious Studies, augmenting his studies with an abroad experience at Oxford University in Great Britain. After graduating, he received a Fulbright to conduct research in India and later spent one year at the American University of Cairo participating in their intensive Arabic program.

Eric received his MA from Notre Dame University in International Peace and Conflict Studies, completing an internship with the Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information in Jerusalem. Eric also has experience with national and local American politics, having worked on everything from New York State budget reform to Presidential campaigns. Before coming to the IC Department, Eric worked as a Program Assistant for developing a simulation with the collaborative Mass Atrocities Program. When he is not traveling the world or refining his studies, Eric enjoys learning to play the fiddle, listening to bluegrass music, skydiving, and cliff jumping—nurturing his appetite for adventures and new experiences. His adaptability will surely serve him well within IC, and we are thrilled to welcome Eric to the program. Feel free to stop by IC Office to say hello, or contact him via email at ICISIS@american.edu.

Maria De Jesus' research proposal entitled "The Role of Technology in Health Communication: A Culturally Appropriate Approach for Uptake of Mammography Screening among Hispanic Women Using Tailored and Empowering Text Messages" was approved by the Department of Health and Human Services this fall. The project is a collaboration between Prof. De Jesus and Nueva Vida (NV), a community-based nonprofit organization that provides culturally appropriate breast cancer outreach and screening services to Hispanic women in the tri-state area. The project seeks to develop, implement, and evaluate a mobile health (m-Health) communication strategy employing text messages to promote uptake of mammography screening.

Four representatives from the Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) and the Center for Research on Collaboratories and Technology Enhanced Learning Communities (COTELCO) served as official rapporteurs to the Secretariat at the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. COTELCO director Derrick Cogburn called the conference the most important international gathering of people and organizations involved in the issue.

Nanette Levinson chaired a discussion entitled "Just Do It!: Parties and Groups Ride the Web" with the American Political Science Association on September 4th. Prof. Levinson was also appointed to a three-year term on the APSA's Committee On Organized Sections.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that Nanette Levinson and Derrick Cogburn were inducted as Senior Fellows to the Information Technology and Politics section of the American Political Science Association.

Keeping Up with the International Communication Student Forum

Continuing ICSF Board:



Stephanie Eng



Kate Fenner



Katie Leasor



Mariam Samsoudine



Alison Ring



Taria Thomas



Danielle Sleeper



Willow Williamson

To contact the ICSF, send an email to ICSF@american.edu

Keep Connected to the ICSF!
Subscribe to the ICSF-Listserv

The International Communication Student Forum (ICSF) is the IC student organization facilitating Program plans, student academic contributions to the field, and IC community events on campus and off.

ICSF is Packing the Fall and Spring Semesters with Great Events!

It has been a very productive semester for ICSF. Many exciting new events for IC/IM students brought us closer to faculty and other students in SIS. This semester we have held three faculty tea time chats with Professors DeJesus, Venturelli, and Wigfall-Williams. The purpose of these events has been to not only learn about the professors' research interests, but also to learn how their upbringings and past studies have brought them to the IC program. In addition to getting to know faculty better, we also partnered with the International Development program for a forum on the use of Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D). The forum featured two SIS alumni and illustrated how International Communication transcends boundaries. In terms of informal events, the fall potluck was a fun gathering for IC/IM students to share lots of food and play games—a nice break from studying! Soon we will be saying good-bye to several ICSF members as the first year students get their chance to make a difference in the program and leave their mark. We will miss all of our departing board members, but we will welcome the new ones with open arms! While the semester is winding down ICSF still has some great events, including a finals study break, an SRP info session with our alumni (and pizza!), and something in the works to spread a little holiday cheer! So look for our emails and updates on the Facebook page- we hope to see you all at our events in the future!

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Looking for another way to support the Program? Purchases of ICSF tote bags, water bottles, and travel mugs go directly to programming for the International Communication and International Media community!

For info about prices and how to pick up yours, contact ICSF@american.edu

