

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

SUBJECT: Department of Communication Studies

ACTION REQUESTED: Rename as the Department of Communication and Media

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2019

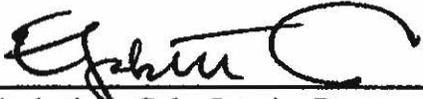
The dean and the Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts request approval to rename the Department of Communication Studies as the Department of Communication and Media, effective September 1, 2019.

The faculty of Communication Studies have carefully considered a name change and voted on January 11, 2019 to request permission to adopt the new name. Communication and Media reflects the scholarly identity of the department. While they are a diverse group of scholars spanning social science and humanities and investigating a myriad of topics, the departmental faculty share a common scholarly orientation in that they all study aspects of mediated communication via traditional and/or digital media channels. In fact, the department's strength is in studying the effects and processes of mediated communication via traditional and/or digital media channels, processes of media, writ large, in sub fields that include media psychology, critical-cultural media studies, media and politics, and media industries. Faculty searches this academic year pertain to these four areas. Because communication studies departments in the discipline typically focus on interpersonal speech communication, such as rhetoric, organizational communication, and small-group conversation, they often have to explain to prospective graduate students that their department's mission is to study media and mediated communication.

The faculty of the department have recognized for some time the discrepancy between their scholarly identity and the name of the department and have taken actions to strengthen their scholarly identity. Communication and Media will engender longevity and clarify to graduating seniors and employers alike the department's academic mission. The new name will demonstrate to their students the curriculum's alignment with the career trajectory going into media industries, including journalism, public relations, advertising, digital and social media, broadcasting, sports media, entertainment media, and other media jobs. Some department alumni no longer feel like Communication Studies refers to them, particularly those who are in journalism and other fields of media. Communication and Media is a bridge that spans the entire history of the department. Alumni commitment is critical to the undergraduate experience, as they bolster the curriculum with experiential opportunities.

We are very pleased to submit this request for approval to rename the Department of Communication Studies as the Department of Communication and Media, effective September 1, 2019.

Recommended by:



Elizabeth R. Cole, Interim Dean
Professor of Women's Studies, Psychology,
and Afroamerican and African Studies
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Recommendation endorsed by:



Martin A. Philbert
Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs

July 2019