**Culture & Social Interaction**

The UMass Communication Department has a vibrant group of faculty and students working in ethnographic and cultural approaches to social interaction. Topical foci of our research include intercultural communication, cultural versions of news reporting, mediation, personhood, ethnic and racial identity, environmental communication, power in discourse, and interaction in talk radio. Faculty in this area of our graduate program vary in background and specific research interests, but we are united in addressing questions of social interaction, culture, and meaning:

* How is meaning jointly constructed in interaction?
* How are meaning-making processes culturally and contextually embedded and variable?
* What are the shapes, forms, and roles of power in interaction?
* How do theoretical perspectives on communication which integrate culture, nature, identity, performance, morality, and politics help us to understand interactional processes and relationships?

We emphasize qualitative methods, particularly ethnography and discourse analysis, in our approach to these problems. The overall strengths of the Communication department in qualitative methods, social theory, and issues of representation complement these approaches to culture and social interaction.

**Courses**

Courses with the following titles have been offered in recent years, some regularly, most on a revolving basis:

* Social Uses of Language
* Theories of Social Interaction
* Qualitative Research Methods in Communication
* The Ethnography of Communication
* Cultural Discourse Analysis
* Field Research Methods in Social Interaction
* Language, Power, and Social Identity
* Intercultural Communication
* Rhetoric and Performance
* Gender and Communication
* Discourse Analysis
* Environmental Communication

**Faculty with Expertise in Social Interaction and Culture**

* [Benjamin Bailey](http://www.umass.edu/communication/faculty_staff/bailey.shtml) (PhD, Linguistic Anthropology, UCLA 1999) - Ethnic and racial identity, social interaction
* [Donal Carbaugh](http://www.umass.edu/communication/faculty_staff/carbaugh.shtml) (PhD, Communication, Washington, 1984) - Ethnography of communication, cultural discourse, pragmatics
* [Leda Cooks](http://www.umass.edu/communication/faculty_staff/cooks.shtml) (PhD, Communication, Ohio, 1993) - Performance, power, and culture
* [Vernon Cronen](http://www.umass.edu/communication/faculty_staff/cronen.shtml) (emeritus as of Fall 2011) (PhD, Communication, Illinois, 1970) - Moral action, pragmatism, and Coordinated Management of Meaning
* Gonen Dori-Hacohen (PhD, Communication, University of Haifa, 2009)—Media and interaction, media talk and the public sphere
* Alena Vasilyeva (PhD, Communication, Rutgers University, 2012) – Mediation, Dispute Resolution, Language.

Currently, Professor Dori-Hacohen is Vice Chair of the Language and Social Interaction Division of the International Communication Association. Also, currently, Professor Vasilyeva is Incoming Vice Chair of Language and Social Interaction Division of the National Communication Association.

Faculty with allied interests in communication, culture, and social interaction are in Anthropology, Education, Comparative Literature, and elsewhere.

**Graduate Student Achievements**

Seven dissertations written in our program have received Distinguished Dissertation Awards from the National and International Associations including the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association.

Support for graduate student work has been supplied not only by our department, but also by:

* The American Jewish Archives
* IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunity Grant
* The Finnish Ministry of Education
* The Fulbright Foundation
* The Jacob Javits Foundation
* The National Endowment for the Humanities

Work based upon our graduate student studies has been published in various books and in journals including:

* *Research on Language and Social Interaction*
* *Communication Theory*
* *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*
* *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*
* *Communication Yearbook*
* *International and Intercultural Communication Annual*
* *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*
* *Journal of Communication*
* *SKY Journal of Linguistics*
* *Great Plains Quarterly*

**Graduate Student Placement**

Our recent graduates have been placed in various academic settings including the following:

* Baruch College of the City University of New York
* California State University Channel Islands
* University of Colorado Boulder
* University of Central Florida
* Fitchburgh State University
* University of Helsinki, Finland
* New Mexico State University
* Rutgers University
* United States Air Force University
* University of Hartford
* Westfield State University
* Mount Saint Vincent College

**Titles of Recent Graduate Student Dissertations in Communication, Social Interaction, and Culture:**

* Silencing non-traditional identities through communication: Situated enactments of sexuality in Japan
* “Hate speech” in Hungarian Public Discourse
* [Finnish cultural discourses about mobile phone communication](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3289237/)
* [Mass media appropriations: Communication, culture, and everyday social life](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3289210/)
* [Strategies of the self: negotiating cultural identities in anglophone and allophone Montreal](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3136779/)
* [Deliberation and democracy: ethnography of rhetoric in a New England town meeting](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3136786/)
* [Recovering trauma: an ethnographic study of women's storytelling within contemporary support group environments](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3096271/)
* [Communicating environment: cultural discourses of place in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3096271/)
* [Women's ways of speaking about menopause and hormone replacement therapy: an American discourse on personhood](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3056283/)
* [Communicative practices of Yiddish-speaking Jewish elders on South Miami Beach](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3000342/)
* [Recovery culture: the promotion of depression and consumption of mental health technologies in contemporary social practices](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3012131/)
* [The Black, Jewish, Other video dialogue: a case study of the social construction of transformative discourse](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3012157/)
* [Exploring the meaning of work: a CMM analysis of the grammar of working among Acadian-Americans](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI3000351/)
* [A social constructionist perspective on the Chinese lian/mian (face) practices](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI9960762/)
* [Popular belief in gender-based communication differences and relationship success](http://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations/AAI9988802/)