

Westminster's School of Communication Sees Major Changes Exploring the New Majors and Changing Faculty

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Editor-in-Chief



Credit: Sydney Roach

The School of Communication at Westminster College is facing major changes starting next semester.

Communications faculty and staff from the School of Communication called a meeting for all students in the department on Tuesday, Feb. 18 to discuss the new changes. These faculty members included Dr. David Barner, Bradley Weaver, Kandice Hartner, Dr. Brittany Rowe-Cernevicius, Dr. Keith Corso, Gary Swanson and Dr. Colleen Merrick.

The majors and minors within the program are going through significant changes, the various faculty members explained. Come fall 2020, the majors and minors will all have different names and different requirements. However, there will be three common courses required for each major. These courses are COM 203-Media Writing, COM 205-Mass Communications and COM 430-Audience Research and Analysis.

The current broadcasting and media production major will change into "broadcasting and sports communication."

There will be a new major within the School of Communications: creative media production. This major is entirely new at Westminster and will be offered beginning next semester.

"Our School of Communication students and alumni have won national awards—including Emmys—for music videos, documentaries and public service announcements," Barner, professor of broadcast communications and outgoing chair of the School of Communication, said. "We're excited to launch another major that will provide an even wider range of career options and opportunities to succeed."

"Creative media production is an exciting area of growth and opportunity right now," Dr. Jeffrey Coker, vice president for academic affairs and enrollment and dean of the College, said. "The new major in our School of Communication will serve current and future Westminster students very well."

The public relations major is changing to "strategic communication and social media," while the communication studies major is changing to "public communication and leadership." The multimedia journalism major is dissolving. While these changes do not affect students currently in the School of Communication, underclassmen can shift into one of these new majors starting next semester when the new classes will be offered.

Most of the classes currently offered in these majors will still be taught, but they will have different prefixes. For example, the current public relations courses have a "PR" code, but under the new major, they will instead have an "SCSM" code. The communications faculty at the meeting said that this should not impact registration.

There will be several faculty changes within the School of Communication, as well. Barner, the current chair of the School of Communication, is retiring after this semester. He will continue as an adjunct professor and director of broadcasting. Prestien, a public relations professor, is also retiring. Hartner, currently an adjunct faculty member, is going to become a full-time lecturer of communication to help teach courses in the new creative media production major.

"I am excited and thankful for the opportunity to continue working in the School of Communication at Westminster. The Creative Media Production major focuses on storytelling, hands-on learning, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with students to build on these concepts," Hartner said.

Merrick, communications professor, is stepping up as the new chair of the department.

"I think every good department is always changing, so to have ours make a change, I think it's going to bring in a lot more students and be a positive thing," junior broadcasting and media production major Maddie Keenan said.

Barner emphasized multiple times throughout the meeting that students currently enrolled in the School of Communication will still be able to finish their degrees.

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Credit: westminster.edu



Quote of the Week:

Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.
— Michael Jordan

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That's Outrageous!



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WEEKEND WEATHER

FRIDAY



Clouds and Snow

High: 28°
Low: 18°

SATURDAY



Very Cold

High: 27°
Low: 15°

SUNDAY



Cloudy

High: 35°
Low: 26°



Garvey Biggers

Correspondent



The baseball season is starting this weekend with the first games of Spring Training beginning on Saturday, and yet there is still plenty of talk going on about the Houston Astros and their cheating scandal. For those that do not know, the Houston Astros were caught stealing signs electronically from the 2017 and part of the 2018 season, attesting that they did not use their previous methods in last season. They used a method where they set up a camera in centerfield and peaked in to the catcher's signs, telling the pitcher what to throw and relaying it in real time to a person banging a trashcan within earshot of the batter at the plate to swing on a particular pitch. In baseball, stealing signs has always been a part of the game, but the method they used was beyond the code of ethics for this sport, rooted in tradition and edict.

Now, a reasonable person that isn't a baseball fan would think, "Okay, get the guys out of the game for a year or so, let serve a punishment that should tell the rest of the league this is unacceptable." That's not how the commissioner of baseball, Rob Manfred, or as many baseball fans call him, Uncle Manfred. Uncle Manfred gave amnesty to the players that came forth and told the the league's officers of their cheating, in return, they would not face further punishment. This alone is outrageous, a team that has supreme talent on the offensive side and on the mound, they used this cheating method to win a World Series and a MVP, Jose Altuve in the 2017 season. On top of that, the apologies by star players like the aforementioned Altuve and Alex Bregman have been hollow and unforgiving of their cheating.

But it doesn't stop there, no. Uncle Manfred has gone on to implement a rule regarding hit batsmen and the intention if they were being thrown at, "completely separate from the Astros' situation". Although, Alex Bregman said in a podcast last year, Pardon My Take, "I like the way the game has always policed itself, if you do some stupid stuff on the field, you or your teammates is going to get hit."

If you look at any national baseball writer's Twitter, it is flooded with Astros headlines and players takes. A couple takes that stood out to me were that of LeBron James and Mike Trout. James said, "Listen I know I don't play baseball but I am in Sports and I know if someone cheated me out of winning the title and I found out about it I would be *****irate! I mean like uncontrollable about what I would/could do! Listen here baseball commissioner listen to your players speaking today about how disgusted, mad, hurt, broken, etc etc about this. Literally the ball is in your court(or should I say field) and you need to fix this for the sake of Sports!". Manfred has shown not only incompetence, but what the players think. The quote from James is a credit to NBA commissioner, Adam Silver, known best for understanding players needs, complaints and a willingness to work out any grievances. Then, you have Mike Trout, the star of the game today, who rarely says anything and shies away from national media attention even when it's due. Trout said, "They cheated...I don't agree with the punishment...I lost respect for some of those guys." going on to say, "Going up to the plate knowing what's coming...that would be a lot of fun.". For a guy who stays mum under most circumstances, this should come as a shock to the commissioner as a call to action to reopen the case and find the punishment; take it into your own hands that this can't happen again and make these players an example.

Almost as egregious, but sticking to the point that Manfred is out of touch with players, he was quoted saying the Commissioner's Trophy was "just a piece of metal". He has since backtracked what he said, but the point still stands and hasn't paid enough attention by the national media. This quote set off a siren in my head when I saw it, proving Uncle Manfred has

never played a competitive sport in his life, or at least, not at a level where he honestly had to try at it. I know for a fact, that “piece of metal” is all I ever work for when I have to wake up at 6am when I have to get up for my lifts, when I’m sore and tired, the time I sacrifice talking and being around loved ones, nights of fun I give up, and injuries I face come to raise that “piece of metal” at the end of the year as a symbol of what I gave up to

earn that title. This atrocity that has taken over our game for the last two or three months has disgusted me and so many more because unlike the steroid era that took place in the 90s and early 2000s, these were the only known players to have used this method to win and diminish the career achievements of those who played the game clean. For this, they got away with murder, able to put on their resumes they won a World Series, a MVP and two division titles. THAT IS ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGEOUS!

The players of the Astros have come out with the normal tagline of, "We're going to win the World Series and this will all blow over." Which could be argued is still a possibility, but it will never be blown over, they will forever be held in the books with an asterisk by their name for their two, possibly three years of involvement in this scheme to become title holders. There was so much more I could have laid out in this article of this debacle, but I'm only allowed so many words. So if there is anything to take away from this, it is: justice is blind and there will be a deserved punishment for these Astros players whether it's from the league office or on the field.

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