familiar. Instead, in an academy that is filled to the brim with different majors and new knowledge, this situation is impossible and renders it necessary for students to broaden the meaning of quotations in order to make their examples applicable. Nevertheless, while Aristotle's work recommends the deductive style of organization used by most speakers, it discourages speakers from using examples that are only loosely related to the subject.

Second, this approach to generating examples based on metaphorical relationships is an approach partially influenced by the fact that coaches and judges are usually previous competitors and academics. Analogies and relatively simple metaphors are easy for philosophers and academics to grasp. While we should not patronize the general public by suggesting that they are all incapable of this kind of thought, it seems obvious that mainstream media do not employ complex metaphors to justify the positions they hold. Instead, they use examples that are directly related to the arguments at hand. Aristotle writes: "the ignorant [are] more persuasive than the educated in the presence of crowds... for the educated use commonplaces and generalities, whereas the ignorant speak of what they know and of what more nearly concerns the audience (Aristotle, trans. 1926, II.22.3)." While it is easy to dismiss Aristotle as patronizing the 'ignorant' the point is clear: it is easier for most people to understand examples that are directly related to the point being made. Thus, we should view the use of metaphorical topoi and analogous examples as a characteristic of rhetoric that is academic and not rhetoric that is easily applicable in the world outside the academy. This consideration should also encourage us to remember, that despite what Boone (1987) argues, the goal of impromptu is not always to generate creative examples. Sometimes the goal is to generate relevant examples because creativity and clever tricks should be no substitute for creating speeches that are understandable to the audiences listening to them. Moreover, it is clear that judges regard relevancy as important, because a study carried out by Harris (1986) showed that the interpretation's relation to the topic was among the most important concerns judges had about impromptu speeches.

Coaching Strategies and Implications for the Event

Based on these conclusions I generate two coaching strategies that I believe should be employed and one implication for the event and tournaments that offer it. First, creativity should be regarded as equally important to relevance when teaching students how to generate examples. In fact, beginning students probably should be taught to generate examples using the metaphorical approach as a shortcut to prevent their having nothing to say because they have thought too literally about the quotation. Then, as students become more advanced, they can be taught to generate examples that are more appropriate to the topic. They can still use the metaphorical approach as a means of brainstorming, but steadily begin to employ more rel-

evant examples over the course of their career with the event. This would prevent students from plateauing at a point where they only use metaphorical examples and encourage them to continue to develop their skill at invention as they continue participating in the event.

Second, instead of rigidly adhering to the common, deductive organizational pattern, speakers should be taught the use of inductive patterns as well. An inductive pattern would involve placing examples first and after explaining the two examples, deriving a conclusion from them. This pattern might uniquely benefit speakers in a variety of ways. It could help them to generate relevant examples and arguments by allowing them to re-center their attention on the concrete examples suggested by the quotation rather than the broad arguments that might be generated from it. Whereas the deductive pattern broadens the meaning of the quotation as it goes along by proving the interpretation, an inductive pattern would show how the quotation is true in specific instances and leads to other statements being true as well. At the heart of this move is a renewed emphasis on the quotation itself rather than the student's interpretation of it. This shift toward an inductive structure presupposes that the quotation means something by itself and does not have to be interpreted. If carried out correctly, it has the potential to improve the quality of the student's literary analysis. Such a move would also suggest the placement of the thesis at the end of the speech, because inductively it would only be true after examples of it had been given.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, if students in the academy were all from one cultural background there would be no real need to worry about using quotations with which they were familiar. But this is not the case; the university is an increasingly diverse place and not all students share the same knowledge of cultural documents. If tournament directors really do want to place an equal emphasis on teaching creative thinking and the ability to generate relevant examples, both of which are important, there is a case for pre-releasing themes or other categories that quotations will fall under before the tournament. This practice is already the case with other events that involve limited preparation. A student who is not familiar with the debt crisis or the Arab spring is unlikely to succeed in extemporaneous speaking or debate. And most coaches teach their students to become familiar with such topics by reading periodicals, watching the news and discussing issues together. Where the events of the day create a broad context for extemporaneous speaking and debate, impromptu has no such context. The principle behind it is that students should be familiar with culture, but as I have already suggested, this is too broad a context when students originate from a variety of cultural backgrounds. And I cannot imagine anyone being opposed to students reading great books and discussing them in preparation for a tournament.

Conclusion

Impromptu as an event is difficult to pin down. Aside from guidelines related to time there is very little that remains the same. And yet, in practice a whole set of norms has emerged that informs how the event is performed. These norms need to be carefully considered through more scholarship on the event. As the event is coached now, we are teaching students habits that might not be useful outside the world of academia. If, in returning to the original metaphorical example with which I began this essay, we are to make a dress for an ever-changing body, or theorize about an event that changes from round to round, we must start with an expert dress-maker, a theorist of rhetoric whose work both informs and critiques current practices. We must begin with Aristotle.

REFERENCES

Aesop. (trans. 1912). *Aesop's Fables*. V.S. Jones (Trans). London: Heinemann.

Aristotle. (trans. 1926). *The Art of Rhetoric*. J.H. Freese (Trans). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bartanen, M. (1981). Are new events needed to enhance a laboratory experience in argumentation? In Ziegelmuller, G and Rhodes, J. (Eds). *Dimensions of argument: Proceedings of the second summer conference on argumentation* (405-414). Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association.

Billings, A.C., & Billings A.C. (2000). Understanding impromptu: Pedagogical and practical applications of coaching a limited preparation event. *The Rostrum, 76*(1), 31, 38, 67.

Boone, G. (1987). The use of metaphorical topoi in impromptu training. *The National Forensic Journal, 5*(1), 39-47.

Bury, J. (1999). Memoria: Necessary adjunct to impromptu speaking. *The Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta, 84*, 29-39.

Bytwerk, R. (1985). Impromptu speaking exercises. *Communication Education, 34*(2), 148-150.

Carroll, R. (1998). Organizing an impromptu speech using unified analysis. *The Rostrum, 72*(9), 13-14.

Compton, J. (2005). Rising to the challenge or cracking under pressure? Time scarcity and effects on performance in limited preparation events. *The Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta, 90*, 1-15.

Dean, K. W. (1987). Time well spent: Preparation for impromptu speaking. *Journal of the American Forensic Association, 23*(4), 210-219.

Gage, J. (1983). Teaching the enthymeme: Invention and arrangement. *Rhetoric Review, 2*(1), 38-50.

Grimaldi, W. (1957). A note on the pisteis in Aristotle's rhetoric. *The American Journal of Philology, 78*(2), 188-192.

Harris, E. (1986). Judge demographics and criteria for extemp and impromptu at N.F.A. nationals. *The National Forensic Journal, 4*(2), 135-147.

Horace. (trans. 1712). *The Satires and Epistles of Horace, done into English, with notes*. S. Dunster (Trans). London: M. Jenour.

Preston, T. (1990). Literal and metaphorical advocacy: Differentiating the limited preparation speaking events. *Argumentation and Advocacy, 27*(1), 14-25.

Reynolds, C., & Fay, M. (1987). Competitive impromptu speaking. *The National Forensic Journal, 5*(3), 81-94.

Turnipseed, I. (2005). Understanding limited preparation events. *The National Forensic Journal, 23*(1), 37-44.

Williams, D., Carver, C., & Hart, R. (1993). Is it time for a change in impromptu speaking. *The National Forensic Journal, 11*(1), 29-40.

Teaching the Foundations of Media Literacy in the Basic Communication Course

LINSAY M. CRAMER, BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract: Media literacy is necessary to understand communication, as media is the most powerful transmitter of attitudes, values, and beliefs in contemporary society. Focusing on the Media Education Foundation's Circle of Empowerment as a definition of media literacy, a rationale for why media literacy should be incorporated into the basic communication course is provided. Through a summary of the state of the basic course, the current standards for media literacy in K-12 education and undergraduate media and communication programs, and Len Masterman's (1985) seven reasons for media literacy education, an argument for media literacy standards for higher education is also developed.

A worldwide movement in media literacy has been growing for the past forty years; however, as the leading exporter of media in the world, the United States lags behind all English-speaking countries in formal media education at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels (Kellner & Share, 2005; Kubey, 1998). In the United States, media literacy is usually associated with K-12 education; therefore, existing media literacy research, media literacy programs, and debates are directed towards K-12 education (Christ, 2004; Hobbs, 1998; Martens, 2010; Christ & Potter, 1998). While media literacy is often associated with K-12 education, students entering higher education are often limited in their media literacy skills beyond media access (Schmidt, 2012; 2013b). Because students are entering post-secondary education with limited media literacy skills, this essay examines the need for communication programs to incorporate media literacy objectives into the basic communication course. In doing so, students will develop the necessary knowledge and skills required to assess the profound impact of mediated messages and the media's institutional power. Currently, no U.S. communication or media association has developed standards for media literacy in higher education that communication programs can refer to for developing media literacy objectives for the basic course. However, the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's (ACEJMC) accrediting standards, the National

LINSAY CRAMER (M.A., Western Michigan University, 2008) is a Ph.D. student in the School of Media and Communication at Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, OH). An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2014 annual conference of the National Communication Association in Chicago, IL. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Linsay M. Cramer, School of Media and Communication, 302 West Hall, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403, USA. Email: lcramer@bgsu.edu

Communication Association's (NCA) media literacy standards for K-12 education, and the Hope College Conference Report (Rosenthal, 2002) provide starting points for developing media literacy standards for communication programs in higher education (Christ, 2004). The need for such standards is necessary so that communication programs can move forward in developing course objectives that incorporate media literacy into the basic course, and subsequently assess the progress of their program in reaching these standards.

In the following, a proposed definition of media literacy and the five stages of the Media Education Foundation's (MEF) "Circle of Empowerment" is presented. Following this, a rationale for why media literacy should be taught in communication programs is examined using Len Masterman's (1985) seven reasons. An overview of the current standards for media literacy education in K-12 and undergraduate media and communication programs and the current state of undergraduate communication courses in U.S. universities is then presented. Lastly, a discussion of future directions for media literacy in communication programs is provided.

A Definition of Media Literacy

There have been ongoing efforts throughout the world since the 1980s to focus and define the concept of media literacy. Scholars and educators draw from various educational philosophies, theories, frameworks, practices, settings, methods, goals, and outcomes (Erstad, 2013; Hobbs, 1998). Numerous scholars agree that media literacy is an educational process in which students become informed and equipped to engage in media activism, which allows students to use media for social and political expression (Denski, 1994; Frechette, 2002; Lewis & Jhally, 1998; Kellner, 1995; Kavoori & Matthews, 2004; McLaren et al., 1995; Potter, 2013; Robb, 2004). This is embodied in the Media Education Foundation's definition found in the media literacy Circle of Empowerment, which was adopted from the National Eating Disorder Association's GO GIRLS! Curriculum (Robb, 2004). It is similar to the Center for Media Literacy's definition (Thoman & Jolls, 2005) and the Media Literacy National Leadership Conference's definition that states that a media literate person "can decode, evaluate, analyze, and produce both print and electronic media" (Aufderheide, 2001, p. 79). This concept, however, is furthered by MEF's Circle of Empowerment to emphasize that media literacy requires awareness of why those messages are there and the development of motivation and skills to advocate for change in the media system and society (Lewis & Jhally, 1998). The MEF's Circle of Empowerment states that media literacy is a cyclical process including the following stages: awareness of media, analysis of content, activism, advocacy, and access to media (Robb, 2004).

Awareness

This first step involves gaining an awareness of media's pervasive-

ness and the saturation of media in students' lives (Robb, 2004). In this stage students become aware of their exposure patterns and become conscious that media influences their identity, attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors, all of which are foundational concepts in the understanding of communication. Awareness also includes the development of understanding how media are historically situated, and how political, economic, social and cultural decisions have influenced the kind of media available in the U.S. and around the world (Denski, 1994).

Analysis

Analysis of media content involves discussing the forms and contents of media's messages as well as the intent of most media, including film, television, radio, magazines, newspapers, and websites to persuade an audience (Beach, 2007; Robb, 2004). For example, active use of the web and production of web-based media texts allows students to learn how to critically examine the effectiveness and usability of a specific medium. It also allows them to understand the ideological assumptions inherent in and institutional forces behind ideas presented on these sites. Learning to critique and analyze media also involves an understanding of the larger economic and institutional forces (or contexts) that shape the media (Beach, 2007).

Activism and Advocacy

Activism comprises of students developing their own opinions about negative and positive effects of media and deciding to act upon those opinions. In this stage, students choose to praise healthy media and/or protest unhealthy media (Robb, 2004). Similarly, advocacy means that students learn how to develop their own media to publicize messages they feel are healthy, constructive, and too often ignored. Media literacy should empower students to become effective agents of change, to make rational decisions, and to communicate effectively through active involvement with media (Masterman, 1985). This is the "highest" level of media literacy which results in gaining power to use media to achieve students' own goals, rather than allowing media to achieve its own goals (Potter, 2013).

Access

Access to media technology involves students gaining access to media such as television, newspaper, radio social networking, and websites to create and share their own messages, which were developed in the previous stage. By creating and sharing their ideas and opinions through media, students engage in advocating for their own causes. Upon access, students develop a deeper understanding and awareness of media and how it operates. This leads to the beginning of the circle, deeper analysis (Robb, 2004). Next, an overview of who is receiving media literacy education within the U.S. educational system is provided.

Who is Receiving Media Literacy Education?

Media literacy programs in K-12 education are currently in place around the U.S. and the world; however, the U.S. lags behind various English speaking countries such as Canada, England, and Australia, who have centralized ministry that distributes media education resources and training (Kellner & Share, 2005; Tyner, 1998). Examples of media literacy programs in action include Britain (Buckingham, 1998); Australia (Tyner, 1998); Ontario, Canada's mandated and funded element for grades 7-12 within language arts programs; and Germany's media competency program for grades 5-10 (Aufderheide, 2001).

Scholars and foundations suggest there is a need for more media literacy education in the U.S. educational system, specifically for K-12 education (Aufderheide, 2001). While there is no current national policy in the U.S on media education, there are various policy makers who endorse media literacy programs to teach children about media, which has assisted media literacy in K-12 education in making great strides (Kellner & Share, 2005). Currently, all fifty states have at least one element of media literacy as part of their educational framework. Individual states, districts, schools or teachers, and professional organizations set the standards for media literacy curricula, incorporating it into English, language, communication arts, social studies, civics, or health classes (Henry J. Kasier Foundation, 2014; Kellner & Share, 2005). Various independent projects, such as foundations and organizations, also seek to enhance media literacy among students. For example, the Media Education Foundation provides resources such as videos and study packets for educators to use in their classrooms to build media literacy (Thoman & Jolls, 2005).

Although various efforts have supported incorporating media literacy into K-12 education, the application of media literacy into higher education or undergraduate communication courses has received little scholarly attention or research (Schmidt, 2012). There currently are no uniform standards for media literacy in higher education and no media or communication organization has addressed media literacy standards for higher education in the U.S. Attention has been given to incorporating media literacy into media production undergraduate programs, which is one component of the communication field (ACEJMC, 2013).

There is limited research on media literacy's implementation in higher education (Schmidt, 2012); however, research by Schmidt (2013b) found that students entering post-secondary education are limited in their media literacy education. Schmidt (2013b) found that educators at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels perceive that students are most competent regarding media access; however, they are less competent regarding mediated message communication, and least competent regarding media analysis, one of the foundational steps of media literacy. In general, educators perceive that while students are often viewed as technologically savvy,

students' knowledge and skills in moving beyond media access is limited. Further research by Schmidt (2012) also indicates that students report their high school education emphasizes media access and production, while their post-secondary education emphasizes media analysis. Students report that their post-secondary education neglects all other aspects of media literacy beyond analysis. Schmidt (2012) states

> ...while there is clearly a new emphasis on media literacy education at the K-12 level, evidence suggests that such competencies are often not built on or addressed further at the college level. Thus, despite the efforts of educators at the K-12 level to promote media literacy and engage students in the type of new media creation that will be important for the future, these competencies may be lost by students who are not encouraged to use them during their college years. (Schmidt, 2012, p 66)

Based on current research, while media literacy education is growing in K-12 schools, and many students entering college have received some form of media literacy education, there are limits to their education. Furthermore, once students reach college, they rarely receive opportunities to utilize and expand their obtained abilities in media production and rarely receive media literacy education beyond media analysis (Schmidt, 2013a; 2013b). This is problematic because MEF's Circle of Empowerment indicates that media literacy is an on-going, lifelong process. Students must be engaged, therefore, in media literacy education beyond K-12 education to continue to build their skills and keep up with the influence of ever-changing technology. Next a description of current basic undergraduate communication curricula and majors is provided.

Basic Undergraduate Communication Programs and Curricula in the U.S.

Until the mid-1960s, writers in the field of speech communication considered "usefulness to society" a major goal of speech communication. This dates back to Aristotle and Cicero, who suggested that students should learn to speak well and value responsibility of society. Emphasis then shifted in the 1970s from the relationship of individuals to society to the relationship of individuals to other individuals, namely, interpersonal communication. Toward the end of the 1970s, communication competence was emphasized and began to influence curricula and course content. In the 1980s, a National Communication Association-sponsored Task Force on Sophomore Exit Level Competencies developed speaking and listening competencies for college sophomores. These competencies were considered essential communication competencies for college sophomores and also served as the cornerstone for developing communication curricula (Morreale & Buckland, 2002).

Currently, the communication discipline emphasizes reaching communication competencies; however, there has been a shift on

what these competencies focus. The National Communication Association (NCA), federal government agencies, and research centers identify important core communication (speaking and listening) competencies necessary for undergraduates and graduates to operate effectively in the workplace and society (Rubin & Morreale, 2000). According to Rubin and Morreale (2000), one of the most influential moments in the development of communication curricula and these expected competencies occurred in 1990 when President George H. W. Bush and the U.S. government declared that by the year 2000, every American adult will be literate and have the knowledge and skills required to contend in a global economy and accomplish the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). One objective within this goal identified the importance of communication and stated that all college graduates should demonstrate an advanced ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and solve problems. Based on workshops as a result of this government mandate, NCA members identified three skill categories for college students to obtain: informing, persuading, and relating. These skill categories helped to shape communication curricula in universities, colleges, and community colleges around the U.S. (Morreale & Buckland, 2002).

Description of communication majors. In 2000, NCA worked with the disciplinary societies that make up the Council of Communication Associations (the Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication, the Broadcast Educators Association, The International Communication Association, the Public Relations Society of America) to provide the U.S. Department of Education with a description of communication majors for inclusion in the Department's latest publication, *Classification of Instructional Programs 2000* (CIP-2000) (Morreale & Buckland, 2002).

First, CIP-2000 states the expected student outcomes for speaking and listening that are obtained from basic communication courses and general education. These outcomes include: speaking competencies, delivery competencies, interpersonal skills, and listening competencies. Second, CIP-2000 states the basic and advanced skills necessary communication for college graduates. These include essential skills for a variety of contexts, including basic communication skills, speech communication skills, interpersonal and group communication skills, understanding of communication codes, and oral message evaluation. This list also includes basic skills for persuading, informing and relating, as well as advanced skills for speaking and listening (Morreale & Buckland, 2002).

Hope College Conference Report. Undergraduate faculty at the Hope College Conference on Designing Undergraduate Curriculum in Communication in 2000 created goals for an undergraduate communication curriculum (Rosenthal, 2002). These goals can be met by a specific course, a significant assignment component within required courses, significant topic coverage within required courses, or a cap-

stone experience/senior thesis, portfolio, or scholarly service learning. These goals include the following (see Table 1):

Goal #	Goals for Undergraduate Communication Curriculum
1	Understanding of multiple theoretical perspectives and diverse intellectual underpinnings in communication as reflected in its philosophy and/or history
2	Competency in effective communication with diverse others
3	Competency in presentation, preferably in more than one form
4	Competency in analysis and interpretation of contemporary media
	Competency in reflective construction and analysis of arguments and discourse intended to influence beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices
6	Competency in systematic inquiry (the process of asking questions and systematically attempting to answer them, and understanding the limitations of the conclusion reached)
7	Competency in analysis and practice of ethical communication
8	Competency in human relational interaction
9	Competency in analysis and practice of communication that creates or results from complex or social organization

Table 1. Goals for undergraduate communication curriculum developed at the Hope College Conference on Designing Undergraduate Communication Curriculum. Adapted from "Report of the Hope College Conferences on Designing the Undergraduate Curriculum in Communication," By A. Rosenthal, 2002, *Communication Education, 51*, p. 19-25.

NCA reasons for why learning about communication is important. *The Journal of the Association for Communication Administration* published an article, "Why Communication is Important: A Rational for the Centrality of a Discipline" (Morreale et al., 2000). This publication presents a bibliography divided into five themes for the importance of the study of communication in contemporary society. These themes include that communication is vital to: (1) the development of the whole person; (2) the improvement of the educational enterprise; (3) being a responsible citizen of the world, both socially and culturally; and, (4) succeeding in one's career and in the business enterprise. The fifth theme emphasizes that communication education should be provided by communication specialists.

Within the first theme, "The Development of the Whole Person", the authors provide seventeen resources that support communication education's role in developing the individual. These resources demonstrate that communication is a discipline that emphasizes relationships with an individual's self, others, and society. It improves communication skills, such as the ability to engage in critical thinking, media literacy and criticism, leadership skills, and family relational developments.

The authors also provide nine resources under the section "Communication Education is Vital to Society and Crossing Cultural

Boundaries." NCA suggests that communication education is "vital to the continuation of our society and the erasing of cultural boundaries" (p. 11). Communication education provides the skills that enable us to speak and participate in public life, as well as engage in effective family communication, and understand individuals from multiple cultures.

Then, for the theme "Communication Education is Vital to Career Success and the Business Enterprise," NCA provides 49 resources that demonstrate the importance of communication education in career success and the entire business enterprise. It emphasizes the obtainment of communication skills that are essential in multiple professional careers.

As indicated in NCA's publication on why communication is important, the communication discipline places greater emphasis on communication skills for the workplace than communication skills for the development of the individual and their participation in society. Forty-nine resources are provided for the development of skills in the workplace, while seventeen resources are provided for the development of the individual, and seven resources are provided for the development of an effective and informed citizen in a multi-cultural society. Clearly, the communication discipline's focus has changed since the days of Aristotle from an emphasis on individuals' performance in society to a focus on individual performance in the workplace. Developing media literacy is necessary and beneficial for both skills in the workplace and in society, and therefore, would enhance both of these categories of resources and bring them into the contemporary context. In the following, a description of the basic communication course is provided.

The Basic Communication Course

The basic communication course in U.S. universities was recently explored and described by Morreale, Hugenberg, Lawrence, and Worley (2006). To understand the current state of the basic communication course, the findings of this research, as well as findings from past research on the basic communication course is described next.

Definition of the Basic Communication Course

The basic communication course is defined as "that communication course either required or recommended for a significant number of undergraduates; that course which the department has, or would recommend as a requirement for all or most undergraduates" (Morreale et al., 1999, p. 3). This course either focuses on one subject, or a combination of communication contexts or subjects, such as a hybrid course, which addresses two or more topical areas. The basic course takes primarily a theoretical or a performance approach, or a combination of both. Overall, the course seeks to introduce students to the discipline of communication's content and fundamentals (Morreale et al., 1999; Morreale et al., 2006).

Approaches to the Basic Communication Course

A study by Morreale et al. (2006) found the most popular approach to the basic course is public speaking, followed by a hybrid course, interpersonal communication, and small group communication. A study by Wardrope (1999) found interpersonal communication to be the most current, expected, and desired course offering in communication departments around the U.S.

Students in the Basic Course

Approximately 90% of institutions indicate that the basic communication course is completed by students within the first two years of study; over half other respondents (50.2%) reported that their basic course is required in their institution's general education requirements (Morreale et al., 2006).

Basic Course Content

According to Morreale et al. (2006), the most important topics taught in the basic communication course, as ranked by respondents, include those mostly related to public speaking, since this is the most popular basic course. Topics included: 1) extemporaneous speaking, 2) speaking to persuade, 3) critical thinking, 4) speaking to inform, 5) audience analysis, 6) interpersonal relationships, 7) speech anxiety, 8) group communication, 9) listening, and 10) delivery.

Innovation in the Basic Course

Recent research shows that instructors are seeking steps to implement a fresh approach to teaching the basic course. Instructors in the Morreale et al. (2006) study indicated that they implement pedagogical strategies including service learning, critical pedagogical approaches, the use of video, websites, software programs, and e-books for either assignments, instruction, or evaluation, problem-based or active learning, a variety of group-based activities, and using the traditions of classical rhetoric to provide a basis for public speaking instruction. This is consistent with the three dominant trends in higher education identified by Stunkel (1998): a stress on interactive learning and instruction, growth in the use of teams and groups, and the growth of computer technology use for instructional purposes.

Technology and Media in the Basic Course

The use of computer technology in the classroom, and the use of the Internet specifically, has been embraced by undergraduate communication programs. In 1994, *Communication Education* dedicated an entire issue to "the Internet" to demonstrate this support (Shelton et al., 1999). Basic course instructors indicate in the Morreale et al. (2006) study that the amount of instructors who use e-mail, the Internet, and presentational software for instructional purposes has nearly tripled since 1999. Furthermore, Blackboard and WebCT are

used as Internet support in the basic course. Computer presentation technologies are also used by 79.1% of instructors in the classroom. These presentation technologies are used so that PowerPoint and the Internet can be utilized in the classroom.

Through the description of communication programs, curriculum, basic courses, and majors presented, there is evidence that little direct emphasis is placed on incorporating media literacy in undergraduate communication programs. While NCA indirectly suggests that media literacy is important, by suggesting that critical thinking and analysis of communication messages is necessary to communication education, which are part of media literacy, it does not explicitly say that communication students should be aware of and be able to critically analyze *media's* influence in society and in their individual lives as it relates to communication.

The Hope College Conference report, however, explicitly states the importance of media analysis in its goals for undergraduate communication curriculum. The conference report states in Goal 4 that students should be able to analyze and interpret contemporary media. While this does not emphasize media awareness, the first stage in the Circle of Empowerment, it does emphasize media analysis, which is the second stage. The conference report directly implies media literacy as a goal for students in Goal 5 which states students should reflect a competency in the construction and analysis of arguments and discourse that are intended to mold attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices.

Overall, while NCA has not completely emphasized media literacy in undergraduate communication programs, the educators at the Hope College conference were on target in suggesting that instructors and administration place media literacy as a goal in undergraduate communication programs. This serves as a starting point for creating media literacy standards in higher education. To support the Hope College conference report's goals, a rationale for why media literacy should be taught in the basic communication course is presented next.

A Rational for Media Literacy Education in the Basic Communication Course

The reasons for media literacy education, and media education in general, have lagged behind the fast-paced developments in media (Masterman, 1985). To synthesize the main reasons why media literacy is urgent and important, Len Masterman (1985) summarized these reasons into seven main points.

We Live in a Media-Saturated Society

First, individuals consume media at high rates and contemporary societies are media saturated. Individuals are immersed in media from the instant they are born (Kellner, 1995), and most individuals under-

estimate the amount of media that they consume, both actively and passively (Masterman, 1985). Nielsen Media Research (2006) found that college students consume on average, 225 minutes of television daily and seventy-two percent of college aged students use Facebook (The Nielsen Company, 2014). These statistics do not include students' consumption of the Internet, social networking, magazines, radio, newspapers, and other forms of media. Therefore, gaining media literacy is important so that students can cope with the media-saturated environment in which they live (Kellner, 1995).

Media Shapes Our Perceptions, Identities, and Ideas

Second, the media is ideologically important, as it constructs and mediates individuals' realities (Aufderheide, 2001; Beach, 2007; De Zengotita, 2005). Denski (1994) suggested media is the single most powerful and concentrated source for the "transmission, reproduction, and maintenance of the values of dominant culture" (p. 65), thus shaping individuals perceptions, identities, and ideas. Media influences how individuals think, believe, perceive, behave, feel, and desire. Given the enormous influence of the media, students benefit from an examination of how media shapes self-perceptions and perceptions of others, especially in terms of race, class, and gender (Beach, 2007). Kellner and Share (2005) explain that media representations help construct our understanding of the world, and ultimately reinforce stereotypes, misunderstandings, inequities, and injustices within society regarding gender, race, and class.

Communication courses teach students that attitudes, values, beliefs, social realities, identity, self-perception, and perceptions of others, among other aspects of individuals' identities, influence how people build and maintain relationships, interact with different cultures, and in general, communicate with others. Because these factors influence communication, the entire communication field and topic of study, then students should learn how these factors are formed. It is not enough to teach students that their families, experiences, and upbringings influence perception and identity, which then influence communication. Rather, students must learn about media's influence on these factors so they can become aware and eventually gain control over media's influence in their lives.

Media is Not Always Truthful

Third, media manufactures information and suppresses information that is in the public's interest to know. Masterman (1985) suggests "The media tell us what is important and what is trivial by what they take note of and what they ignore, by what is amplified and what is muted or omitted" (p. 5). Because meaning is produced by representation in media, facts are not truth, nor are they neutral. Meaning is entangled in culture, and therefore, determining meaning is a continuous struggle (Masterman, 1985). Students need to be aware of these agendas and selection processes through media educa-

tion. In doing so, students will not only become aware of how media influences attitudes, values, and beliefs, which ultimately influences communicative interactions, but also, they will understand why media influences these factors. This level of understanding is critical to fully understanding media's role in society and individual lives, which then leads to further motivation for media advocacy or activism.

Media Influences Democracy: Our Government and Mode of Associated Living

Fourth, media has penetrated the heart of democracy. This has resulted in numerous issues. Most importantly, public opinion is informed and created by media content. Individuals who do participate in democracy are participating based on knowledge obtained from media, so individuals need to be able to critically analyze the political messages that they absorb from media. Kellner (1995) suggests that there is a decline in democracy in the U.S., and this is partially a result of a media saturated society in which individuals passively consume media and fail to actively participate in their social lives. To overcome this, Kellner suggests that institutions commit to democratic debate that allows for the articulation of a variety of voices to be heard. This also requires that citizens actively seek out information and apply it to the process of democratic participation.

Media Images Need to be Read Critically

Fifth, the most influential and widely disseminated modes of communication are visual or nonverbal; therefore, students need to learn how to read visual or nonverbal texts critically, as previously discussed in the Circle of Empowerment (Masterman, 1985; Alvermann et al., 1999) Goldfarb's (2002) states in *Visual Literacy* "To focus exclusively on language literacy and speech is to overlook the visual graphic means of knowledge production and reproduction that played a major role in strategies of resistance and social transformation" (p. 2). It is not just the words in media that influence the formation of people's ideologies, but it is the visual aspect of media that communicate messages to the audience as well.

Students learn from both print and visual material within the classroom, and the use of technology and media as learning tools in the classroom continues to increase (Stunkel, 1998; Morreale et al., 2006). However, beyond analyzing the credibility of internet and library sources for papers and presentations, very little emphasis is placed on the need for students to critically analyze the mediums they are taught to use and the content they are taught to seek out (Frechette, 2002). For instance, students should understand how to determine whose voices, such as which races, genders, and socioeconomic statuses, are represented in their media choices, and whose voices are absent. Therefore, students must learn how to read both visual and print materials critically (Masterman, 1985).