CDC hailed as center of excellence anew

In one word, perhaps, it’s “three-peat”. For the third time, the College of Development Communication (CDC) was recognized as the Center of Excellence (CoE) in Development Communication by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This is effective on January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018 based on CHED Memorandum Order No. 38 series of 2015.

CoE and CoDs
Meanwhile, Batangas State University and Visayas State University are Centers of Development (CoD). As CoE, CDC may “avail of financial assistance on a project proposal basis geared towards the development or improvement of the programs.” CDC has been the CoE for development communication in 2012-2014 and the CoE for communication in 1999-2002.

2016-2018 Planning Workshop
To prepare for 2016 to 2018, CDC conducted its annual planning workshop last November 25 to 28, 2015 at Ramada Manila Central. The event was entitled, Review of the BS, MS, and PhD Development Communication Curricula Towards Outcome-Based and K to 12-Ready Programs and Planning Workshop for 2016 and Beyond.

Under the helm of Dean Ma. Theresa H. Velasco, 19 CDC faculty, REPS, and administrative staff took part in the workshop. CDC revisited its vision, mission, and goals to be realigned to UPLB’s vision of being a “globally competitive graduate and research university contributing to national development.” The College also reviewed the progress of its undergraduate

Devcom constituents join int’l comm for social change confab

Six constituents from the College of Development Communication (CDC) joined the Communication for Social Change: Intersections of Theory and Praxis last January 6 to 8 at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The conference was organized by the Center for Culture-Centered Approach to Research and Evaluation (CARE) of the Department of Communications and New Media (CNM) of NUS. Four paper presentations from UPLB were part of the conference. As part of the panel for Theoretical Articulations of Social Change, Rikki Lee Mendiola

The place of Devcom in communication for social change. CDC constituents and alumni get together at the CARE Conference as presenters and participants. (From L-R) John Mervin Embate, Department of Humanities, UPLB; Rikki Lee Mendiola, DEC-CDC; Dr. Pamela Custodio, DJJ-CDC; Ms. Dazzelyn Zapata, CNM-NUS; Christele Amoyan, senior UPLB BSDC student; Paoloregel Samonte, Mekong Institute; and aProf. Lester Ordan, DDBT-CDC. (Photo courtesy of RLBMendiola)
In preparation for the upcoming 2016 elections, the College of Development Communication (CDC) organized the first meeting for Bantay Halalan 2016 last January 13 at the CDC building, UP Los Baños. Eleven participants representing seven organizations from the academe, local media, and youth sector attended the event.

Bantay Halalan 2016 is a multi-sector collaborative project spearheaded by the Department of Development Broadcasting and Telecommunication (DDBT) with aProf. Lester Ordan at the helm. During the partners’ meeting, the Bantay Halalan 2016 committees, with aProf. Sherwin Felicidario, presented the initial plans and solicited comments and inputs from the participants. (RBVillar)

 CDC hailed as ...

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and Dr. Pamela Custodio co-authored a paper on self-reflexivity in DevCom research. Two UPLB presenters joined the panel on Open Dialogue on Subalternity. John Mervin Embate, CDC alumnus and UPLB faculty, presented his paper on the concept of kapwa in examining compassion for Violence Against Women (VAW) victims among healthcare providers from the Philippine General Hospital.

Paoloregerel Samonte, a CDC alumni, shared his media ecology study on values communication between migrant parents and their children. Christele Amoyan and aProf. Pamela Custodio presented a paper on (unheard) voices of the fisherfolks in Calancan Bay, Marinduque as part of the panel on Culture-Centered Approach to Social Change.

Academics from various fields and development practitioners from all over the world attended the conference – gathering around 70 participants. Aside from the paper presentations, the three-day conference showcased different expressions and articulations of social change such as performances and visual arts (photography and film).

Last January 18, Dr. Custodio, aProf. Ordan, Mr. Embate, Ms. Mendiola, and Ms. Amoyan led an informal meeting at the CDC building with their CDC colleagues. Dubbed “brown bag session”, CDC’s CARE representatives shared their learnings from the confab. Among which include how the conference emphasized Paolo Freire’s concepts on communication research and how the confab provided a space for CDC participants to reflect on “what the vulnerable parts of Devcom...
Devcom profs talk on 74th seminar on college teaching

Three faculty from the College of Development Communication (CDC) were invited as resource speakers at the 74th UPLB Seminar-Workshop on College Teaching (SoT) on January 11 to 16 at the CEM Function Hall.

On January 11, Dr. Serlie B. Jamias, Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs and professor of CDC’s Department of Development Journalism, talked about the university’s community engagement initiatives. Dr. Jamias tackled topics on campus security, staff housing, UPLB Foundation, Inc., University Health Service (UHS), and various projects with the local government of Los Baños.

aProf. Mark Lester M. Chico gave an overview of the UPLB Learning Resource Center (LRC) and its programs. He shared how LRC’s programs can help new students adjust to university life. He also shared projects that aid students who are struggling with academics and finances. aProf. Chico is the Director of LRC and a faculty from CDC’s Department of Development Broadcasting and Telecommunication.

aProf. Lynette B. Carpio-Serrano from the Department of Educational Communication, served as one of the resource speakers on January 14. She handled topics on enhancing oral presentation skills in the context of classroom instruction. She also discussed visual design.

Organized by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the six-day SoT was attended by 50 participants and 20 resource speakers. (MRFSRolle)

1st Public lecture of CDC visiting prof
Bessette leads lecture on participatory devcom

Participatory in every way: During his talk on Participatory Development Communication (PDC), Dr. Guy Bessette engages the audience with questions and stories last February 1 at the CDC Lecture Hall. (Photo by MBManingas)

"Why is communication important in development?"
Dr. Guy Bessette threw this question to BS Devcom students during the forum entitled Participatory Development Communication: An Introduction last February 1 at the College of Development Communication (CDC) Lecture Hall. Sharing the stage with Dr. Bessette as resource persons are Dr. Ma. Celeste H. Cadiz, former dean of CDC and now Knowledge Management program head, and Joel Chester Pagulayan, councilor of the CDC Student Council.

CDC Dean, Dr. Ma. Theresa H. Velasco, opened the activity by introducing the UPLB Visiting Professor Program of which Dr. Bessette, a consultant for international development, is a part of.

Four phases of PDC
Dr. Bessette, author of Involving the Community: A Guide to Participatory Development Communication, will be in CDC from January 18 to February 29 as visiting professor.

During the forum, he presented an overview of Participatory Development Communication (PDC). Dr. Bessette emphasized that communication is important to rally participation in development projects. In his words, "no participation, no development… no communication, no participation."

He shared that PDC is a planned systematic process with four main phases: understanding and relating to stakeholders; formulating objectives, key messages, and content; developing a strategy; and validating and organizing the implementation plan with the community.

While PDC is a method composed of steps, Dr. Bessette furthered that development communicators should focus on the main goal of “empowering people”.

Empowered communicators
Dr. Cadiz shared experiences in PDC in the context of research and extension in agriculture, natural resource management, and community development. She underscored the skill of listening and using the stakeholder’s language and culture to frame messages for and with the community.

Dr. Cadiz was the proponent of the course, DEVC 70: Interpersonal Communication for Development. She shared that DEVC 70 was developed because “to empower others, you have to be empowered first.”

All about the community
A DEV 70 student, Joel Chester Pagulayan, was the last speaker. Students in the audience easily connected to Pagulayan’s narrative on how their group conducted participatory rural appraisal with an organization of solo parents. He shared his key takeaways on mapping a problem and developing a solution with the organization. “At the end of the day, it’s not #AllAboutChen. [PDC] is about the community.”

Following the talk was an open forum with a pipeline full of questions on PDC. aProf. Winifredo B. Dagli capped the seminar encouraging students to focus on the values of development communication. Dr. Mildred O. Moscoso served as the seminar facilitator. (MRFSRolle)
My place in communication for social change
by Christele Jao Amoyan

The Conference for Social Change: Intersections of Theory and Praxis held at the National University of Singapore (NUS) last January 6 to 8 was my first time to attend an international conference. I am the only undergraduate student to present a paper and with me were seasoned communicators and academics. I doubted myself at first, thinking “what if I am not good enough; what if my experience as a researcher is still inadequate compared to them?” I was bugged by these thoughts which lasted for days before my presentation.

Engrossed with too much anxiety, I then realized that I should not be bothered; I have a task, that is, to represent the people who entrusted me their stories of struggle and injustice. How can I possibly tell their stories if I am overthinking about myself being a novice qualitative researcher among a pack of experts? Yes, people with highly regarded names in the academia were gathered there. But the thing is, they do not dwell much on intellectual arrogance. They are more concerned on (re)learning and understanding theories and methods to make social change possible. Regardless of ethnicity, age, or degree, we share the same advocacy: to raise the marginalized voices in a global platform – to meet and talk about communication and social change within the context of our personal reflexivity and experiences, expert and novice qualitative researchers alike.

I came to see more clearly how the communication paradigm has shifted from the positivist-empiricist perspective to a more value-laden, context-driven view of subalternity; that communication researchers in a qualitative sense are not detached human beings from their participants, because they themselves are participants in the process, too.

As researchers, we are self-reflective individuals, continuing to interrogate common realities, building sympathy and trust among the people we deal with. Communication, therefore, is a restructured and co-constructed world, made up of shared lives and struggles.

Flashforward to the conference, I literally ran out of words as I listened to the crowd praising and commending me for my presentation. At that moment, I knew I was physically present in the panel session but my mind drifted back to the year when I was still doing my fieldwork. I had this self-fulfilling prophecy that one day I can tell to the world the humble stories of the small fisherfolk in Calancan Bay, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque. And then voila, right then and there, I realized that I was already fulfilling that prophecy! It was really overwhelming; I almost broke into tears in front of the audience. I could not even breathe properly that time. My voice turned airy. I gasped for words, but they spilled like broken whisper out of my mouth.

At the conference, I met other researchers like me who provide space for the voices of the oppressed. Now, I see no barriers for undergraduate students like me to interact with expert communicators, even those who have affixed titles on their names. I can confidently say that I was never alone in this struggle. I know I have a place here.

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No barriers. “I can confidently say that I was never alone in this struggle. I know I have a place here” says Christele Amoyan (second from right), BSDC undergraduate student and panelist at the CARE conference held at the National University of Singapore. (Photo by Culture-Centered Approach to Research and Evaluation (CARE-CCA))