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ABSTRACT
        As a partial result of the burgeoning interest and
activity on the part of professors and students in communication
consulting, a model was developed to provide a solution for many of
the problems associated with university consulting. The model
proposes that universities develop and operate their own Centers for
Applied Communication. Through such centers the roles of the
communication professor as educator, researcher, and consultant are
integrated. The centers also could serve as an apprenticeship for
students and junior faculty. Furthermore, the centers could provide
outreach programs for the community and bridge the gap between the
academic and the business communities. Rather than viewing consulting
as an extracurricular or separate activity from teaching and
research, faculty and students are better served through the center
because consulting would be perceived as part of the educational
process. (Two notes are included; 37 references are attached.)
(KEH)

APPLIED COMMUNICATION TRAINING:
A MODEL FOR INTEGRATING UNIVERSITY TEACHING WITH COMMUNICATION CONSULTING AND RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

The burgeoning interest and activity on the part of
professors and students in communication consulting has given
rise to numerous questions and controversies. Two questions
of particular interest are: 1) what are the relationships of the
roles of the academic as researcher, educator, and consultant;
and 2) can we, as professors, connect these roles for ourselves
and our students in ways that help prepare students for careers
as communication specialists. Therefore, this essay: 1) examines
the controversies and relevant literature concerning
communication consulting and training; and 2) proposes a model to
integrate the roles of the academic as researcher, educator and
consultant and to help resolve the controversies.

Currently, one of the most exciting and innovative trends in speech communication is the widening of the scope of the professor's role to include communication consulting.[1] Though traditionally, scholarly endeavor, research, and teaching were the primary activities of the university professor, over the last decade it has become increasingly common for faculty members to devote considerable time and energy to consulting (Redding, 1979). However, the relationship of this new role to scholarship, research, and teaching lacks clarity and definition. And though there has been a proliferation of university programs in speech communication offering majors and minors for students pursuing "non-academic careers as communication specialists" (Blankenship, 1981, p. 33), apparently students who major in speech communication have limited insight into what their professors do when they consult (Goldhaber, 1986). It almost seems as if professors view their consulting activities as extracurricular, and as having limited relevance to the content of university curricula.

Consulting seems to have become a highly desirable career; however, little has been published about the current viability of this career path, or detailing the number of communication professionals who have actually achieved successful consulting careers (Weitzel and Gaske, 1984). Little has been reported concerning the difficulties and pitfalls of pursuing this

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career. Although Weitzel and Gaske assess the communication consulting literature as "generally very adequate", (p. 189), their review consists mainly of conference paper presentations that never seem to make their way into print and remain difficult to access.

The burgeoning interest and activity on the part of professors and students in communication consulting has given rise to numerous questions. The questions that are germane to this discussion are: 1) what are the professional and ethical implications and responsibilities of offering degrees in communication for students pursuing non-academic careers as communication specialists; 2) what are the relationships of the roles of the academic as researcher, educator, and consultant; and, 3) can we, as professors, connect these roles for ourselves and our students in ways that help prepare students for careers as communication specialists. These issues must be addressed through research and reporting as an avenue for clarifying our own professional roles and responsibilities. Therefore, this essay: 1) examines the controversies and relevant literature concerning communication consulting and training; and 2) proposes a model to integrate the roles of the professor as researcher, educator and consultant and to resolve the controversies.

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CONTROVERSIES OVER THE ROLE/IMAGE OF CONSULTANTS

Images of consultants range from conceptualizations of
highly professional and experienced "sages" to bright-eyed
zealous novices, beginners, or as Owen (1982) puts it:
"Consultants: Punks in Pinstripes" (p. 10). The answers
to how much education and how much experience is needed before
and individual can "do" consulting and training depends on who
is answering the question and upon the realities of the market.
The fact that corporations buy consulting services and are,
frequently, more concerned with the consultants' ability to
produce results than with degrees or titles may contribute to
controversies surrounding perspectives on roles of professors who
consult. The controversies surrounding communication consulting
typically organize into three major themes: 1) the complexity of
consulting activities; 2) the reasons professors consult; and 3)
the ethics of intervention and training.

Complexity of Consulting Activities

One need only attend a regional or national conference of
SCA to discover the range of images that are illustrated in
platform presentations which describe consulting practices and
training programs. Images abound also in the free-floating
advice exclaimed at the podiums or over cups of coffee in less
formal discussions.[2] Many academics have endeavored to formulate
their images in relationship to teaching or consulting activities
by writing conference papers detailing the processes involved in

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initial needs analysis, program designs, and evaluative processes
(Engleberg, 1984; Sprague, 1984; Comeaux, 1986; Kelly, 1986).
Others advise that, as communication professors, we possess the
knowledge and skills necessary to be successful as consultants
and that communication skills training for corporations is no
more than the "stuff" we teach in the basic course. Others
assert that all we need is a step-by-step formula that always
works and therefore sells. Such well intended advise though
reassuring to the novice is undoubtedly alarming to the
experienced. Possibly it is just this kind of advice that
motivated Kempfer's (1980) comments about communication
consulting:

> . . . too much of it (training and consulting) is
> elementary, old, thin, pat formulas, recycled, a re-hash,
> new buzz-words, a one-way flow with few questions and
> answers, lectures, this-is-how-we-do-it, and more resale
> than behavior-changing instruction (p. 116).

While a few communication consultants give the impression
that consulting is not difficult or rigorous (Ferris, 1976)
others claim the opposite. Stewart (1983) presents a thorough
description of the complexity of consulting and contends that
there is nothing easy about it. For example, when the
prospective consultant "fails to think through the personal,
professional, and ethical demands of the process, or when he or
she is seduced by the apparent opportunity to earn easy money"
(p. 166) disappointment and failure are likely outcomes.

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Additionally, Stewart (1983) urges his readers to consider the
misconceptions about a consultant's lifestyle before embarking on
a full- or part-time career as a communication consultant.
Glamour, excitement and easy money do not necessarily go hand in
hand with the job. Further he encourages consideration of the
personal qualities that the successful consultant must possess.
These involve, among other things, an ability and willingness to
use the language and survive the fast pace of the corporate
world. Yet, "with some personal restraint and professional
forethought, consulting can be a legitimate, genuinely
productive, and rewarding experience for both consultant and
client" (p. 166).

Purposes for Consulting

Rudolph and Johnson (1983) in their well know SCA publication
claim that consulting and training is not only another teaching
option but a way for academics to achieve the following:

Find out whether the things they teach in the
classroom work outside the classroom.

Make contacts that might result in student
internships, summer jobs, and/or placement.

Conduct research that results in their being able
to contribute to the state of their discipline.

Supplement their academic income (p. 1-2).

Rudolph and Johnson go on to explain that consulting takes
a lot of time and energy and particular qualifications but for

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those willing to "jump on the bandwagon . . . (c)onsulting is big business" (p. 1-2). Other writers in the area of communication consulting warn against the dangers of monetary and professional rewards fearing that as these rewards increase and become obvious to more people, the quality of service and sense of professionalism will diminish (Buchholz, 1983; Goldberg, 1983). Buchholz (1983) urges communication consultants to focus on theirs as one of the helping professions primarily aimed at providing individuals with corrective implementation. But he also warns that anyone who can afford a business card can become a communication consultant and "that is precisely the problem facing the profession" (p. 1). Argyris (1970) reports that "consulting organizations can point with pride to the fact that they have earned millions of dollars without introducing new ideas about organizations, management, or change" (p. 53).

The issue of paid consulting is a difficult one to resolve. In 1982, at the annual ACA Seminar, held at the SCA Conference, the debate question was "Resolved: That Paid Consulting is Contrary to The Best Interests of Academia." Goldberg (1983) claims that consulting takes time and energy away from scholarly endeavors, teaching, and program development. He claims that some consultants engage in consulting activities that compromise and violate the standards of academia. "I Know of faculty members whose 'research' for businesses and industries was designed less to expand the frontiers of knowledge than it was to promote the welfare of a certain group or point of view" (Goldberg, 1983, p. 15).

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Taking the negative side of the resolution, Redding (1983) argues that consulting is a valuable vehicle for the academic scholar to observe the degree to which the theories and concepts we teach hold up under the conditions of non-academic life.

> The essence of my position is that consulting--when
> carried out as it should be carried out (that is, in
> conformity with recognized standards of personal and
> intellectual integrity)--can make a professor a more
> productive scholar, a more effective classroom
> teacher, and a more valuable contributor to social
> advancement (Redding, 1983, p. 19).

Redding goes on to support his argument by quoting survey research compiled by Lipset (1982) which identifies the intellectual leaders and elite of academe as a population of about 2,500 persons whose consulting activities were a prime consideration in their classification as the "elite of academe." Both Redding and Lipset note that these elite were not only paid consultants, but also prolific writers and excellent scholars and educators.

Ethical Issues of Intervention

Certainly the reasons why academics consult raise ethical questions. However, whether the purpose is monetary gain, professional development, scholarly research, or professional service, or all of these, the question of ethics is an individual issue governed by personal, professional and intellectual

integrity. The literature on the ethics of communication consulting and training for the professor is scarce. And as Mills and Goodall (1989) surmise "the ethical dilemmas and academic constraints involved in being a professor and consultant the literature."

Ellis (1982) made what has been regarded as perhaps the most searing attack on communication consultants by referring to the organizational consultant, the public relations program and the advertising degree, as "the shame of speech communication" (p. 1). Ellis' attack centers on his contention that genuine and meaningful research dealing with political and moral issues in organizations is essentially lacking. Ellis goes on to assert that:

> most programs in organizational communication. . . are narrow, theoretically vacuous, without a research base. . . . The quality of research in these areas does not justify dangling visions of consulting jobs in front of students. . . . The study of rhetoric and communication have a long and noble history . . . . Our goal must remain that of turning out educated students and quality research in the liberal tradition, not that of narrow professional preparation (p. 2).

Without doubt, Ellis' suggestions that we remember our roots in history and retain our goal of educating students and promoting quality research in the liberal tradition are excellent ones. Indeed it is our rich heritage in rhetorical theory that

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provides an excellent and unique perspective to draw upon in our consulting activities.

Harrison (1982) explains that if the communication consultant acts as a "rhetor (speaker) in a rhetorical situation . . . the ethical questions would shift from those dealing primarily with ends to those dealing primarily with means . . .then an ethical framework for the communication can be based on rhetorical theory (p. 93). Other communication consultants and scholars suggest rhetorical theory and strategy not only as a way of resolving ethical issues but also as a means of providing an excellent and rich basis to design, implement, and evaluate consulting activities (Lange, 1984; Palmerton, 1986). In addition, scholars look outside the discipline to find ethical guidelines for consulting. Browning (1982) applied the code of ethics formulated by Kohlberg to examine the choices that guided his intervention with a particular organization.

Ethical issues are complex. Yet, it is essential that they be addressed. Webb (1989) provides personal code of ethics that can provide others with guidelines to follow in juggling the multiple roles of a professor, scholar, and consultant. She incorporates consulting with research and teaching by including the simultaneous collection of data and training of graduate students. In addition, she limits her consulting to "16 hours a month" and donates a portion of the money earned to her

department to further support research and teaching activities
(Webb, 1989, p. 84).

Summary of Controversies

Certainly today's economic conditions pose challenges to our
university systems. Many universities must compete for students
merely to keep their programs afloat. As a result we must take
care that in our scramble to recruit students we do not
compromise the quality of our academic programs. Furthermore, as
the literature review indicates, there is a strong and
understandable fear that the projected images of consultants are
those of wealth and ease. Therefore, we are urged to warn
students that consulting is not a pie in the sky and in fact,
quite difficult. As one former communication professor states
"independent consultants must have a solid foundation to be risk
takers, loners, and cutting edge practioners who need not only to
be up-to-date on communication research but also on the latest
management, business, and economical issues and concerns" (Elsea,
1985). Another former communication professor echoes the warning
about a career as a communication consultant:

. . . there is no salary guarantee and fringe benefits are
non-existent. The more diverse the clientele and the more
varied the assignments, the greater the preparation time and
higher the costs for the consultant" (Ferris, 1976, p. 39).

These warnings can be viewed as healthy, as a check and
balance system to make certain that what we offer our

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students has a solid base in theory and is supported in experience. For as Blankenship (1981) tells us, "despite the resistance of many in our field, the concern for the non-academic career in speech communication is a reality and a must (p. 33).

Research reports concerning the validity of applied research and consulting seem contradictory in light of the controversies surrounding the roles and images of communication consultants. However, problems stem from the lack of shared knowledge and experience about communication consulting. The issue of where consulting fits in relationship to teaching and research seems to be a recurring theme. There is understandable resentment toward professors who offer quick and easy fix-it types of training and resentment toward professors who seemingly pay more time and attention to research and consulting than teaching. However, it seems clear that when consulting is carried out with professional and intellectual integrity (Redding, 1983) that it can add to an individual's scholarship, teaching, and contribute to social advancement. As professors of human communication social advancement is our ultimate goal for ourselves and our students. As we discuss interpersonal theories, methods for problem solving in groups, ways to construct strategic and ethical messages, certainly it is our hope that students will be able to implement these theories in particular contexts in such a way to improve their lives and that of others. Too often students and business professionals complain of the lack of connection between what is taught in our classes and what exits

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in the work force. For those of us who have not been there, how
do we know? What understanding do we have of the worlds our
students will enter? What impact will we make on social change
without participation in the contexts with which it operates? As
D'Aprix (1977) asserts, "The communication professional's most
important task is to work to understand the complex culture of
his or her organization and to work within that culture for
constructive change" (p.175).

It seems evident that both the academic world and the world
of business would benefit from greater mutual understanding and
closer ties. There is growing need to blend the perspectives of
business and academic professionals. There is a wealth of
knowledge and resources available to business organizations
through academic institutions. We need to develop our academic
programs to address the complexity of the work force.

PROPOSED MODEL FOR INTEGRATING THE PROFESSOR'S ROLES

A model that might well provide a solution for many of the problems associated with university consulting is presented in this section. University programs can develop and operate their own Centers for Applied Communication. These Centers are an essential component for any communication department which offers a masters degree and valuable assets for the undergraduate degree. Through this Center the roles of the communication professor as educator, researcher, and consultant could be integrated. The Center could serve as an apprenticeship for students and junior faculty. Furthermore, it could provide an outreach program for the community and a vehicle for bridging the gap between the academic and business communities.

Design and Purposes of Center

The activities associated with participation in the Center for Applied Communication would be an integral part of the curriculum rather than adjunct to it. Its purpose would be twofold: to provide practicum experience in research and consulting for graduate students and to provide outreach services to the university-at-large and to the surrounding community. Excellent examples for this model exist in many Communication Disorders Departments. Under such programs, university speech and language pathology clinics offer service to university personnel and students and offer services to the community based on a

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sliding fee scale. These clinic services are provided by graduate students and supervised by qualified professors in the department.

Based on existing successful models of university speech and language pathology clinics, the following suggestions are made for a university research and consulting service herein referred to as the Center. The Center would be staffed by a full time staff person and part-time student workers. The support personnel would serve as a clearing house for all incoming requests for service and as a practicum for student interns. The support staff handles the routine details of coordinating practicum opportunities for graduate students and consulting services for the community. Although the initial investment would probably need to be made by the university, the Center would eventually become self-supporting. Profits could be put back into the Center in the form of video equipment, computers, and other educational equipment or graduate assistant stipends. Since the Center would offer programs for the community, grant donations or matching funds might be generated.

Early in the graduate program students would observe and analyze communication in particular contexts as part of an introductory research course. The data from these observations could also lead to potential clients for the Center. Each graduate student would be required to take practicum through the Center. This would consist of an intervention in the form of a training seminar or plan of action which addresses a

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specific problem or request made to the Center. These practicum experiences would take place under the supervision of graduate faculty. A committee of graduate faculty would formulate professional and ethical guidelines to follow in accepting contracts and in supervising graduate students.

This model is envisioned as a solution to some of the controversies surrounding the practice of consulting. Because this model is part of the university, part of the departmental curriculum, and a team effort on part of the professors, graduate students, and senior undergraduate students, it can provide an avenue for professional, intellectual, and ethical direction and supervision.

Potential Clients and Services Offered through the Center

Even in a small rural community, the potential for clients is great. The local school board, arts council, and community development groups frequently seek assistance in planning meetings, surveying community needs, and developing problem solving skills. The local hospital, drug abuse center, police department and civil service department are potential clients. The university community itself is fertile ground for groups who often seek the assistance of a communication specialist. Universities with a medical or law school could offer training to students who need or seek assistance in developing particular kinds of communication skills. One major midwestern university has an extensive communication interviewing program for medical

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students based on a holistic concept of treatment and on interpersonal theories of communication. Another university offers mock trials for law students to practice their skills in a simulated courtroom. Graduate students in communication could be of service in both examples.

The services offered through the Center could become an integral component of the department curriculum. In introductory graduate research classes, students could be required to observe and analyze communication processes. A broad range of possibilities exist. A communication education major could observe and analyze the use of nonverbal communication in high school English classes. Another student might observe a the negotiations between the sales and advertisement department of a local radio or television station . Another student might interview staff and patrons at the local chamber of commerce to inquire about the services sought and the services rendered. In addition to using the data for their class research projects, students would file copies of the information and their report with the Center. Those reports that make suggestions for intervention or a follow-up plan of action, if approved by a supervising faculty, could be used for the needs analysis stage. In this way students first have an opportunity to spend extended time with an organization or members of another department gathering descriptions about the communication behavior and processes. Then this data could be used generate ideas about seminars or programs offerings through the Center. Through

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another course, students could design a follow-up plan of action or training seminar for organizations that have expressed an interest or requested service.

Benefits of Center

The benefits are multiple. First of all, with research and consulting as an integral part of what we do and teach our students, then it necessarily connects our roles and makes them one of a multifacted role. Such a center would put the investigation (research), and implementation of theories (consulting toward social advancement) at the center of our teaching. With its outreach services, there would be an avenue for exchange of ideas between the academic and the business communities. Furthermore, students would have a unique opportunity to operate as a communication specialist under the guidance of experienced faculty. The consulting activities of faculty would be open to students. This is not to say that faculty would not pursue consulting and research activities separate from the Center. However, there would need to be clear guidelines to minimize conflicts of interest. Students would not be paid extra for their work nor would the faculty. The money would be paid to the university and used to improve and staff the center.

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Descriptions of Similar Models Currently in Operation

Internship programs as an integral part of an undergraduate or graduate communication curriculum prove very instructive for anyone wishing to establish a Center for Applied Communication. Internships provide students with experience-based learning and if well planned and monitored can be quite valuable for the students, the faculty, and the participating organization (Hanson, 1984; Hyre and Owens, 1984; Phelps and Timmis, 1984). Columbia College (1981) has been able to develop a strong support system from cooperating employers because of their emphasis on internships and experience-based learning. Internships programs already in existence provide us with important issues of concern to students, faculty and participating institutions. The issues of professional ethics, and academic integrity come into play. From the coordination of such activities, faculty must question their courses, their curriculum, and their course assignments. Such questioning, if conducted in a positive vein, can only lead to an improved and coordinated curriculum. The internship programs in communication can serve as a basis for curriculum development.   We already have in place successful models of the combination of research and teaching and the use of undergraduate

research teams. As Stacks and Chalfa, (1981) explain the use of the undergraduate research team was established with the following objectives in mind:

1) to provide students an opportunity to expand

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their skills in research with an aim toward
cultivating more 'marketable' graduates;
2) provide student input to on-going faculty
research projects;
3) to provide an outlet for applying and testing
material learned in the classroom;
4) to illustrate the benefits of cooperation and
collaboration by encouraging students to work as
a cohesive group with common goals (p. 180).

Although some problems in initiating and coordinating a team
concept for research might be expected, the the benefits outweigh
the difficulties. The particulars of the programs described by
Stacks and Chalfa (1981) and Miller (1979) prove very instructive
for communication faculty interested in instituting their own
programs. Rushing (1984) makes a strong case for considering
teaching and research as integral and for using students as
participants in a research project using participant observation
an investigative technique. As Rushing asserts,

"they (students) simultaneously learn research
methods and the application of theoretical
concepts in naturalistic settings. It is
precisely the simultaneity that is important.
When students discover firsthand that 'Research'
is simply a sophisticated form of observation and
analysis, they begin to de-mystify the process,
. . . (and) their excitement about the subject

matter increases, and their resentment towards

professors' research projects decreases" (p. 369).
In addition to de-mystifying the research process, students can
de-mystify the consulting process as they work under the
supervision of experienced faculty and in conjunction with their
graduate course work.

Redding (1979) provides an excellent and very thorough
description of specific educational criteria and experiences to
guide graduate programs in preparing students for careers as
communication specialists. Redding advocates rigorous preparation
of graduate students preparing for this profession:

> The experienced communication consultant of the
>
> 1980's will require the ethos, philosophical
>
> grounding, professional expertise, and
>
> methodological competence to accept a wide variety
>
> of demanding high risk tasks (p. 351).

SUMMARY

Speech Communication is a discipline that has survived
change and has responded to the needs of our time. It is this
attribute that should inform us as an academic discipline not
only to encourage consulting or work in applied contexts but
require it of ourselves and our students. Despite the
well documented need, we do not have a clearly articulated
position concerning the roles and responsibilities of the
communication specialist. A model Center, as presented in this

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article, could help us establish that position. Such a Center would not only integrate the roles of the professor as researcher, educator, and consultant but provide students with a more holistic conception of the communication specialist. Rather than viewing consulting as an extracurricular or separate activity from teaching and research, our discipline and our students would be better served if we perceived these activities as part of the educational process.

Endnotes

1. The term consulting will be used throughout this paper as an inclusive term including training and development as well as consulting activities, generally considered as organizational change. Training and development are activities associated with individual development which in the conceptualization of this paper is individual change consisting of learning and growth.

2. In 1980, I begin my own inquiry into the area of consulting. I attended SCA programs and short courses on training and consulting and interviewed many full and part-time communication consultants. In 1983, I opened my own consulting firm, "Communication Training Associates, Inc.

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