



University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

NEWS RELEASE

News Bureau • Schofield Hall 201 • Eau Claire, WI 54702

phone: 715-836-4741

fax: 715-836-2900

Web: www.uwec.edu

e-mail: newsbur@uwec.edu

New textbook focuses on organizational rhetoric

RELEASED: Nov. 19, 2009

EAU CLAIRE — Dr. Mary Hoffman, chair of the department of communication and journalism at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, has co-authored an unprecedented text that guides students through the analysis and critique of organizational rhetoric.

Hoffman and her co-author Debra Ford, assistant dean of student affairs at the University of Kansas School of Nursing, studied organizational rhetoric in graduate school.

"[We] became very interested in how theories about how organizations work and theories about how public messages work fit together," Hoffman said. "When we finished school, we both wanted to teach a class on the topic and there were no textbooks on it. There were a few scholarly books and lots of journal articles, but no one had translated and integrated the ideas for students. We believe this is the first text of this type for undergraduate and master's level audiences."

The book, titled "Organizational Rhetoric," is aimed at students in courses that teach about organizations and their messages, Hoffman said, noting that it could be used in courses in organizational communication and public relations.

"The book is pitched at junior and senior students as well as graduate students," Hoffman said. "We also hope that the book will get some attention from scholars in organizational rhetoric who would like a source that integrates concepts and offers a great bibliography on the topic."

Though the title may seem intimidating, the concept of organizational rhetoric is really quite simple, according to Hoffman.

"To study organizational rhetoric is to study how organizations create messages for audiences inside and outside the organization," Hoffman said.

Some examples in the text include an advertisement from an airline apologizing for flight delays, a newsletter promoting the launch of a new records system to employees of a hospital, and a press release from a university announcing their intention to build an outdoor forensic science research facility over the protests of some neighbors.

"We hope the students who use the book learn to think critically about the many messages they see, hear and read every day," Hoffman said.

Hoffman received a doctorate in communication studies from the University of Kansas in 2000. She was a member of the faculty and director of graduate studies in the department of communication studies at Texas State University-San Marcos from 2000-2008, before joining the UW-Eau Claire faculty.

For more information about the book, contact Hoffman at hoffmamf@uwec.edu or 715-836-4431.

-30-

LB/JB/DW

UW-Eau Claire News Online

Find UW-Eau Claire news online at **www.uwec.edu/news**. You'll find recent and archived news releases, links to other campus news, upcoming events, a news tips submission form, news media resources and more.