

## **MELINDA R. WEATHERS**

Department of Communication  
George Mason University  
Science & Tech II, MS 3D6  
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444  
(703) 993-1090 (o)  
(972) 896-9674 (c)  
[mweathe1@gmu.edu](mailto:mweathe1@gmu.edu)

### **EDUCATION**

- 2012                   **Ph.D. Health Communication**  
George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
- 2008                   **M.A. Speech Communication, Health Communication concentration**  
University of Houston, Houston, Texas
- 2003                   **B.A. Speech Communication, Business minor**  
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
- 2001                   **A.A. General Studies**  
Tomball Community College, Tomball, Texas

### **THESIS**

Exploring Communication Competence, Social Support, Perceived Coping, and Religious Coping among Hispanic Family Members Caring for Loved Ones with Alzheimer's Disease.

Advisor: Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Ledford, C. J. W., Villagran, M. M., Kreps, G. L., Zhao, X., McHorney, C., **Weathers, M. R.**, & Keefe, B. (in-press). "*Practicing medicine*": A grounded theory of patients' perceptions of physician communication and its influence on medication adherence. *Patient Education and Counseling*.

Kreps, G.L. Villagran, M.M., Zhao, X., McHorney, C., Ledford, C., & **Weathers, M. R.** (in-press). Developing and implementing pharmacy-based communication interventions to promote medication adherence for consumers with chronic health problems. *Patient Education and Counseling*.

Kreps, G.L. Villagran, M.M., Zhao, X., McHorney, C., Ledford, C., & **Weathers, M. R.** (in-press). Applying consumer psychology to develop and validate motivational message interventions for improving prescription drug adherence with consumers confronting chronic

diseases: A multimethodological field study. In R. Batra, P. Anand, & V. Strecher. (Eds.). *Consumer psychology and health communication*. M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Akerloff, K., DeBono, R., Berry, P., Leiserowitz, A., Roser-Renouf, C., Clarke, K., Rogaeva, A., Nisbet, M. C., **Weathers, M. R.**, & Maibach, E. W. (2010). Public perceptions of climate change as a human health risk: Surveys of the United States, Canada and Malta. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7(6), 2559-2606.

Villagran, M. M., **Weathers, M. R.**, Keefe, B., & Sparks, L. (2010). Medical providers as global warming and climate change (GWCC) health educators: A health literacy approach. *Communication Education*, 59(3), 312-327.

**Weathers, M. R.** (2010). *Health care providers: The missing link in educating patients about the public health risks of climate change*. Article published on UPI.com.

**Weathers, M. R.** (2009). *Don't talk to us like children! Respectful adult communication improves quality of care in Alzheimer's*. Article published on UPIU.com.

Query, J. L., & Wright, K. B., Amason, P., Eichhorn, K., & **Weathers, M. R.** (2008). Using quantitative methods to conduct applied communication research. For L. R. Frey and K. Cissna (Eds.), *Handbook of applied communication theory, research, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.

### **CONFERENCE PAPERS**

**Weathers, M. R.**, Jun, J., & Walsch, D. (November, 2010). *Informal Opinion Leaders as a Climate Change Public Engagement Strategy: An Analysis of The Climate Project*. Paper submitted to the 2010 annual conference of the National Communication Association (NCA), San Francisco, CA.

Castle, Bell, G., **Weathers, M. R.**, & Hullryde, L. (November, 2010). *Examining Black Friday as a communication ritual*. Paper presented at the 2010 annual conference of the National Communication Association (NCA), San Francisco, CA.

Kreps, G. L., Villagran, M. M., Xiaoquan, Z., Ledford, C., **Weathers, M. R.**, Keefe, B., & McHorney, C. (June, 2010). *Development and validation of motivational messages to improve chronic disease patients: Adherence with prescribed medications*. Paper presented at the 2010 annual conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), Singapore.

Kreps, G. L., Villagran, M. M., Xiaoquan, Z., Ledford, C., **Weathers, M. R.**, Keefe, B., & McHorney, C. (April, 2010). *Exploring medication adherence: A multi-methodological approach*. Panel presented at the 2010 bi-annual Kentucky Conference on Health Communication, Lexington, KY.

**Weathers, M. R.,** Villagran, M. M., Ledford, C., Kreps, G. L., Xiaoquan, Z., & McHorney, C. (November, 2009). *Enhancing person-centered communication to improve medication adherence*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual conference of the National Communication Association (NCA), Chicago, IL.

**Weathers, M. R.,** Keefe, B., Villagran, M. M., & Sparks, L. (October, 2009). *Climate change in the patient-provider interaction*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual International Conference on Communication in Healthcare (ICCH), Miami Beach, FL.

Ledford, C., Villagran, M. M., Kreps, G. L., Xiaoquan, Z., McHorney, C., & **Weathers, M. R.** (October, 2009). *“Practicing medicine”: A grounded theory of patients’ perceptions of physician communication and its influence on medication adherence*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual International Conference on Communication in Healthcare (ICCH), Miami Beach, FL.

Kreps, G. L., Villagran, M. M., Xiaoquan, Z., McHorney, C., Ledford, C., & **Weathers, M. R.** (May, 2009). *Applying consumer psychology to develop and validate motivational message interventions for improving prescription drug adherence with consumers confronting chronic diseases: A multimethodological field study*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual Advertising and Consumer Psychology (ACP) Conference, Ann Arbor, MI.

**Weathers, M. R.** & Query, J. L. (April, 2009). *Lived narratives among Hispanic caregivers for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual conference of the Eastern States Communication Association (ECA), Philadelphia, PA.

**Weathers, M. R.** & Query, J. L. (April, 2009). *Expanding Kreps’ (1988) relational health communication competence model: A multivariate test among Hispanic caregivers for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual conference of the Central States Communication Association (CSCA), St. Louis, MO.

Kreps, G. L., Villagran, M. M., Xiaoquan, Z., McHorney, C., Ledford, C., & **Weathers, M. R.** (March, 2009). *A multimethodological field study to develop and validate motivational messages to improve prescription drug adherence for patients with chronic diseases*. Paper presented at the 2009 annual American Association for Health Behavior (AAHB) Scientific Meeting, Hilton Head, SC.

**Weathers, M. R.** & Query, J. L. (April, 2007). *Towards expanding the relational health communication model: A conceptual and research template for studying Hispanic AD caregivers*. Paper presented at the 2007 annual conference of the CSCA, Minneapolis, MN.

Martinez, A. R., Query, J. L., & **Weathers, M. R.** (April, 2007). *Integrating Hispanic organizations into field research: Promoting their voices during catastrophic illness*. Paper presented at the 2007 annual conference of the CSCA, Minneapolis, MN.

Query, J. L., Wright, K. B., Campbell, K. & **Weathers, M. R.** (April, 2006). *Quantitative investigations in applied communication research: Implications for theory building and testing*.

Paper presented at the annual conference of the Southern States Communication Association (SSCA), Dallas, TX.

Query, J. L. & **Weathers, M. R.** (October, 2005). *Health-related issues affecting accountability in families*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Texas Speech Communication Association (TSCA), Galveston, TX.

### **INVITED COLLOQUIA**

Title of presentation, "Climate Change Communication: Global Warming's 'Six Americas' Update and Potential Messaging Strategies." Presented to participants of the Washington Youth Summit on the Environment, July 14, 2010, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.

Title of presentation, "Extending Kreps' (1988) relational health communication competence model into a new population: Hispanic caregivers for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease." First author, Melinda R. Weathers and second author, Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D. Presented by second author to the faculty of the School of Communication Studies, March 24, 2010, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

### **RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC AWARDS/HONORS**

**Recipient, National Science Foundation's (NSF) Pan American Advanced Studies Institute Program (PASI).** One of 50 graduate students selected from an international pool of applicants chosen to attend the advanced institute on climate change and hazards in the Americas. PASI seeks to encourage joint progress from data to knowledge to action by consolidating advanced research, synergizing international geospatial collaboration around links between climate change and hazards, and fostering a region-wide community of scholars and practitioners. The desired result of PASI is a clear roadmap and collaborative mechanism for developing and sharing the knowledge necessary for responding to climate change and hazards in the Americas in an integrative way, using geographic tools and methods as a research and communication framework. Panama City, Panama. June, 2010.

**Outstanding Ph.D. Student Award,** Communication Department, GMU. In recognition of outstanding academics and research, that has greatly impacted the field of communication. The annual award was established to honor the outstanding Ph.D. students at George Mason University who are expected to make a major impact on their field of research. Presented at the annual award luncheon, Fairfax, VA. April, 2009.

**Top Paper Award,** Health Communication Division, CSCA. In recognition of health communication scholarship exemplifying superior health communication research. Title, *Expanding Kreps' (1988) relational health communication competence model: A multivariate test among Hispanic caregivers for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease*. Co-authored by Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D., Professor, James Madison University. Presented at the annual conference of CSCA, St. Louis, MO. April, 2009.

**Outstanding Master's Thesis Award,** Communication and Aging Division, NCA. In

recognition of graduate student scholarship exemplifying superior communication and aging research. Thesis title, *Exploring communication competence, social support, perceived coping, and religious coping among Hispanic family members caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease*. Thesis Chaired by Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D., Professor, James Madison University. Presented at the annual conference of NCA, San Diego, CA. November, 2008.

### **CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

Panel title: "Current issues in applied contexts: Policing, participation, personal narrative, science communication, and supply chains." NCA, Chicago, IL. November, 2009.

Panel title: "Communication and aging division: Competitive papers – Intergenerational communication." NCA, Chicago, IL. November, 2009.

Panel title: "Discourse and health in Africa." NCA, Chicago, IL. November, 2009.

Panel title: "Extending applied communication inquiry into conventional and unconventional domains" NCA, San Diego, CA. November, 2008.

Panel title: "Applied communication division: Competitive papers." NCA, San Antonio, TX. November, 2006.

### **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

#### **George Mason University:**

##### **Research Assistant, Summer 2010**

*Mobilizing Citizen Support for Climate Stabilization and Adaptation Policies* (PI, Edward Maibach, Ph.D.). Worked with an interdisciplinary team of faculty members from George Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication to gather and analyze data that sought to illuminate how best to activate citizens as a force for prudent yet aggressive climate change prevention and adaptation policies, in order to inform a larger grant project submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

##### Responsibilities included:

Assist with data collection and analysis, assist in writing various manuscripts for publication, liaison with various team members.

##### **Research Assistant, Summer 2009-Fall 2009**

*Air Force Communication Workshop* (PI, Melinda M. Villagran, Ph.D.). Worked with a team of GMU faculty and Air Force personnel to prepare a website that provided important information relevant to the course (Researcher-Initiated Grant, United States Air Force, August 2008). The goal of this workshop was to address the most current issues and challenges in the development, execution, and evaluation of Air Force communication initiatives.

##### Responsibilities included:

Work with GMU's OCPE office and Air Force personnel to register students, create website content for course, gather relevant course material from Communication faculty for the website, work with GMU parking services to ensure participants have valid permits, on-site management during the workshop.

**Research Assistant, Fall 2009**

*Strengthening the Effectiveness of Public Health Emergency Law* (PI, Melinda M. Villagran, Ph.D.). Worked with an interdisciplinary team of faculty members to gather preliminary data from emergency public health responders to assess their levels of knowledge about relevant federal legal statutes, in order to inform a larger grant project submitted to the RWJF.

Responsibilities included:

Assist with idea generation, research design, IRB write-up and submission, data collection (telephone interviews), data analysis, write-up of the results.

**Research Assistant, Fall 2008-Fall 2009**

*A Multimethodological Field Study to Develop and Validate Motivational Messages to Improve Prescription Drug Adherence for Patients with Chronic* (PI, Gary L. Kreps, Ph.D.). Worked with a team of faculty members and graduate students to prepare a "library of knowledge" that provided scaleable data for guiding strategic, evidence-based health communication interventions for improving prescription drug adherence that could be applied to a range of audiences and settings (Researcher-Initiated Grant, Merck, August 2008). The goal of this innovative research program is to advance behavior change theory and suggest specific strategies for improving medication adherence.

Responsibilities included:

Assist with focus group facilitation, assist with tabular data presentation, assist in writing various manuscripts for publication, assist in editing application, liaison with various team members.

**University of Houston:**

**Graduate Editorial Assistant, Spring 2005-Fall 2006**

*Communication Studies* (quarterly scholarly journal), Editor: Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D.

Assisted facilitating communication between the editor, reviewers, and prospective authors. Drafted decision letters.

**Research Assistant, Fall 2004-Spring 2005**

*Computerized Support Tool for Caregivers of Individuals with Alzheimer's Disease* (PI, Jim Query, Ph.D.). Worked with a team of faculty members and graduate students to prepare a grant proposal for the National Alzheimer's Association (Researcher-Initiated Grant, December 2004). The long-term goal of the project is to foster enhanced interpersonal communication and informed decision-making about various aspects of AD among ethnically diverse family caregivers, their loved ones, and health care providers. Building upon the work of Dr. Jibaja-Weiss in breast cancer and mammography screening, a computerized decision-making tool (CODMAT) in the form of a CD/DVD will be developed, pilot tested, and then revised prior to being regionally disseminated.

Responsibilities included:

Conduct online and library research; abstract related studies; assist in writing application narrative; assist in editing application; liaison with various team members.

**Research Assistant, Summer 2005**

Graduate Health Communication Book Prospectus—*Health communication inquiry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Negotiating conceptual, research, and professional development domains* by Jim L. Query, Jr., Ph.D., Patricia Amason, Ph.D., and Kevin B. Wright, Ph.D. Prospectus was accepted and the book is under contract with Sage Publications, Todd Armstrong, Senior Acquisitions Editor. Published, Fall 2008.

Responsibilities included:

Abstracting related texts and scholarly books; assisting with tabular data presentation; editing prospectus narrative.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**George Mason University:**

*COMM 101, Interpersonal and Small Group Communication, Department of Communication*  
Fall 2008-present, Instructor of Record

Course Objective: To develop the communication skills and strategies used in interpersonal and small group situations in order to sustain effective communication in personal and professional relationships.

*COMM 305, Intercultural Communication, Department of Communication*

Summer 2009, Instructor of Record

Course Objective: To analyze communication variables as they relate to intercultural encounters. Specifically, emphasis is on the influence of culture on the communication process, including differences in values, assumptions, and communication rules.

**University of Houston:**

*COMM 1332, Fundamentals of Public Speaking, School of Communication*

Fall 2005- Spring 2006, Instructor of Record: Deborah Bridges, M.A.

Course Objective: To improve speaking and listening skills needed for public speaking.

*COMM 1302: Introduction to Communication Theory, School of Communication*

Fall 2005, Instructor of Record: Martha Haun, Ph.D.

Course Objective: To develop an understanding of a variety of theories of human communication and achieve an understanding that permits a more flexible, useful, and discriminating interpretation of human communication events.

*TELS 4397: Senior Project, College of Technology*

Spring 2005, Instructor of Record: John Hansen, Ph.D.

Course Objective: Directed research project. Required for TELS (Technology Leadership and

Supervision) seniors.

*TELS 3363, Technical Communications, College of Technology*

Fall 2004, Instructor of Record: Heather Bigley, M.A.

Course Objective: To foster a dynamic learning environment where students develop critical thinking skills and master technical writing forms.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

#### **George Mason University:**

- National Communication Association (NCA), Communication and Aging Division, Secretary, Fall 2008-present
- Communication Graduate Student Association (CGSA), President, Fall 2008-Spring 2010
- Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA), Communication department delegate, Spring 2008-present
- CGSA Spring/Summer co-ed softball team, Manager, Summer 2009-present

#### **University of Houston:**

- Communication Studies (CS), List-Serve Assistant, Fall 2005-Spring 2008
- School of Communication (SOC), List-Serve Manager, Spring 2005-Spring 2008, directed by SOC graduate director William Douglas, Ph.D.
- School of Communication (SOC), List-Serve Manager, Fall 2003-Fall 2004, directed by SOC graduate director Jim Query, Ph.D.

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

- National Communication Association (NCA)
- Central States Communication Association (CSCA)
- Southern States Communication Association (SSCA)
- Texas Speech Communication Association (TSCA)
- Eastern Communication Association (ECA)
- International Communication Association (ICA)

### **EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

**8/06 to 7/08**

#### **Event Program Coordinator**

*International Facility Management Association, Houston, Texas*

Responsible for creating relevant and compelling conference content, including: researching conference topics and issues for both the existing portfolio and new events; assisting with development of event agendas; developing and building a high-quality network of advisors and experts in the industry; and recruiting and coordinating speakers and other program participants.