

Curriculum Vitae
Bonnie McCracken Nickels

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Communication**, University at Buffalo, State University of New York 2016
Dissertation: End-of-life communication in veterinary medicine
 Minor: Statistics
- M.S., Communication and Media Technologies**, Rochester Institute of Technology 2011
Thesis: Are new media credible? A multidimensional approach to measuring news consumers' credibility and bias perceptions and the frequency of news consumption
 Minor: Integrated Marketing Communications
- B.A., Communication**, State University of New York at Geneseo 2009
- A.A.S., Journalism**, State University of New York at Morrisville 2005

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2026, Lumen Circles Fellowship
 Evidence-Based Teaching with Generative AI
 University at Buffalo, State University of New York
- 2021 – 2023, Coursework in Professional Practice of Public Health in completion towards Certification in Public Health (CPH)
 University at Albany, State University of New York, School of Public Health, Albany NY
- 2021, Certificate in Advancing Cultural Competence in the Public Health and Health Care Workforce
 University at Albany, State University of New York, School of Public Health, Center for Public Health Continuing Education, Albany NY

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- 2023 – Present, Assistant Teaching Professor
 University at Buffalo, State University of NY, Department of Communication, Buffalo, NY
- 2016 – 2021, Visiting Assistant Professor/
 Visiting Lecturer
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 School of Communication, Rochester, NY
- 2012 – 2016, Teaching Assistant / Instructor of Record
 University at Buffalo, State University of New York, Department of Communication, Buffalo, NY
- 2015 – 2016, Adjunct Lecturer
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 School of Communication, Rochester, NY
- 2013 – 2016, Adjunct Lecturer
 State University of New York at Geneseo

Department of Communication, Geneseo, NY

2010 – 2011, Research Assistant

Rochester Institute of Technology
School of Communication, Rochester, NY

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses Taught

Freshmen Seminar*
Family Communication
Communication Theory
Interpersonal Communication
Human Communication
Health Communication
Persuasion & Social Influence
Communication in Organizations
Conflict, Negotiation, & Mediation
Communicating Social Support
Mass Communication
Principles of Public Speaking
Business Communication
Media Literacy in the Age of AI

Courses Taught Online

Interpersonal
Social Support
Mass Communication
Family Communication

Courses Prepared to Teach

Advanced Interpersonal Theory
Research Methods
Gender & Communication
Intercultural Communication
Small Group Communication

*Taught 2023-2026

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

2022 – present, Grant Writer

Contract grant writer providing research, LOI and proposal writing, and process evaluation services in response to a variety of funding opportunities for nonprofit organizations.

- Procured \$65,000 for Warrior House of WNY to fund community-based programs aimed at reducing health disparities.
- FEMA & NYS Grants for Volunteer Fire Departments

SCHOLARSHIP

Refereed Journal Articles

Nickels, B. M., Tenzek, K. E., & Coley, R. A. (2026). "COVID robbed me of that": navigating final conversations and grief during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Communication Quarterly*, 1–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01463373.2026.2628807>

Nickels, B. M., Tenzek, K. E., & Lattimer, T. A. (2023). *This is Us*: An analysis of mediated family communication at end-of-life. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 87, 1238-1258
[doi:10.1177/00302228211036307](https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228211036307).

Nickels, B. M. (2020). Love locked up: An exploration of relationship maintenance and perceived barriers for women who have incarcerated partners. *Journal of Family Communication*, 20, 36-50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2019.1674853>

Tenzek, K. E. & **Nickels, B. M.** (2019). End-of-Life (EOL) in Disney and Pixar films: An opportunity for engaging in difficult conversation. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 80, 49-68. doi: 10.1177/0030222817726258. (Early ePub release 2017).

Nickels, B. M. & Feeley, T. H. (2017). Breaking bad news in veterinary medicine. *Health Communication*, 13, 1105-1113. doi: 10.1080/10410236.2017.1331309

Anker, A. E., Feeley, T. H., & **McCracken, B. J.**, Lagoe, C. (2016). Measuring the effectiveness of mass-mediated health campaigns through meta-analysis. *Journal of Health Communication*, 21, p. 439-456. doi: 10.1080/10810730.2015.1095820

Book Chapter

Nickels, B. M. (2023). Marriage and incarceration. In J. Hartenstein (Ed.), *Marriage and Divorce in America: Issues, Trends, and Controversies*. Bloomsbury Publishing

Nickels, B. M., & Tenzek, K. E. (2022). Family communication at end-of-life: Breaking the taboo through entertainment media. In G. Luurs (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Communication Strategies for Taboo Topics*. IGI Global.

Nickels, B. M. (2022). An illegal practice of veterinary medicine. In J. Wrench (Ed.), *Cases in Organizational Communication* (2nd ed.). Kendall Hunt Publishing co.

McCracken, B. J., Rintamaki, L. S., & Peek, D. M. (2015). Breaking bad news during physician patient interactions. In M. Brann (Ed.), *Contemporary Case Studies in Health Communication: Theoretical and Applied Approaches* (2nd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing co.

Submitted Papers/In Preparation

Nickels, B. M. (2026, submitted). Talking About Hard Things: Difficult Family Conversations in *Bluey*. Chapter proposal for the proposed book titled *The Bluey Book: Critical Perspectives on Communication, Culture, and Care*

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Nickels, B. M. (2026, tentative November). The UB Big Little Project: Demonstrating the Utility of First Year Peer Mentor Programs in Departmental, Institutional, and Accreditation Assessments. Panel proposal for the *National Communication Association, 2026 Conference*. Panel Participant for panel organized by Lance Rintamaki

Cherry, J., Densmore, C., & **Nickels, B. M.** (2025, November). Grief training and support: Elevating the human connection in professor-student relationships. *National Communication Association, 2025 Conference*. Denver, CO. Panel Submission.

- Nickels, B. M.**, Tenzek K. E., & Coley, R. A. (2025, March). “COVID robbed me of that”: Navigating final conversations and grief in the time of COVID-19. *Eastern Communication Association, 2025 Conference*. Paper submission, Interpersonal Communication Division. Buffalo, New York. **Top Paper.**
- Nickels, B. M.** (2025, March). Bringing interpersonal theory and scholarship to practice: Supporting campus and local communities. *Eastern Communication Association, 2025 Conference*. Buffalo, New York. Panel Participant.
- Nickels, B. M.** (2025, March). Early career and end of life scholars: Students expressions of grief. *Eastern Communication Association, 2025 Conference*. Instructional Communication Division. Buffalo, New York. Panel Participant. \
- Nickels, B. M.** (2025, March). Using creativity to manage classroom disengagement. *Eastern Communication Association, 2025 Conference*. Buffalo, New York. Panel Participant.
- Tenzek, K. E., **Nickels, B. M.**, Lattimer, T., Lapan, E., & Neurohr, M. (2024, March). Final conversations at end-of-life: An analysis of family communication in the television series This is Us. *Eastern Communication Association, 2024 Conference*. Paper submission, Applied Communication Division. Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Nickels, B. M.**, Tenzek, K. E., Lattimer, T. (2019, November). *This is Us*: Depictions of end-of-life conversations in *This is Us*: Cultivating perceptions of the impact death has on life, family, and relationships. *National Communication Association 2019 Conference*. Paper submission, Family Communication Division. Baltimore, Maryland.
- Nickels, B. M.** (2019, April). Serving time together: Strategies and barriers for relational maintenance during incarceration. *Eastern Communication Association 2019 Conference*. Paper Submission, Interpersonal Communication Division. Providence, Rhode Island.
- McCracken Nickels, B.** (2017) “I’m so sorry for your loss”: The practice of providing emotional support in Veterinary medicine. *Eastern Communication Association 2017 Conference*. Paper Submission, Health Communication Division. Boston, MA. **Top Paper Award.**
- McCracken, B. J.** & Feeley, T. H. (2016). End-of-life in veterinary medicine. *National Communication Association 2016 Conference*. Paper Submission. Philadelphia, PA.
- Tenzek, K. E. & **McCracken, B. J.** (2016). End-of-life as a communication context for research: A look into the National Communication Association journals. *National Communication Association 2016 Conference*. Paper Submission. Philadelphia, PA.
- McCracken, B. J.** (2015, November). Cultural constructions of the good death: Case studies in communication about what it means to die well. *National Communication Association Conference*. Panel participant. Las Vegas, NV.
- Anker, A. E., Feeley, T. H., & **McCracken, B. J.**, Lagoe, C. (2015, November). The impact of mass mediated health campaigns on knowledge, behavior, and self-efficacy: A series of meta-analyses characterizing current campaigns to promote health. *National Communication Association Conference*. Poster Session. Las Vegas, NV.

McCracken, B. J. (2015, April). Considering end-of-life (EOL) communication: A roundtable discussion encompassing collaborative perspectives of care. *Eastern Communication Association*, Health Communication co-sponsorship with Interpersonal Communication Interest Group. Panel participant. Philadelphia, PA.

McCracken, B. J. & Adam, C. (2010, May). Communication, Active Learning, Diversity, and Technology Findings from “The Eisenhart Interviews.” Presented in panel session at the annual meeting of the Faculty Institute for Teaching & Learning, Rochester, NY.

PROFESSIONAL AWARDS AND HONORS

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| 2025 | Top Paper, Interpersonal Communication Division. Eastern Communication Association Convention. Buffalo, NY |
| 2017 | Top Paper, Health Communication Division. Eastern Communication Association Convention. Boston, MA. |
| 2017 | Nominated for an Outstanding Teaching Award for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty, Rochester Institute of Technology. |

SERVICE

Service to Department

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| 2025 | AI Initiative, Course Development, Department of Communication, University at Buffalo |
| 2024 | Learning Outcomes Assessment, Department of Communication, University at Buffalo |
| 2023 – 2024 | Teaching Assistant Initiative, Department of Communication, University at Buffalo |
| 2019 – 2020 | Developed and Managed Student Recognition Awards, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology |
| 2018 – 2020 | Member, Spring Celebration Event Planning Committee, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology |
| 2016 – 2021 | Senior Thesis second reader, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology. Provided second advisor services to students completing senior theses. |
| 2016 – 2018 | Member, Graduate Committee, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology |
| 2016 – 2018 | Member, Curriculum Committee, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology |
| 2016 – 2018 | Member, Communication Marketing Committee, School of Communication, Rochester Institute of Technology |

Service to Discipline

- 2024 Journal Submission Reviewer, *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*
- 2021 Chapter Reviewer, for G. Luurs (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Communication Strategies for Taboo Topics*. IGI Global.
- 2016 – 2021 Journal Submission Reviewer, *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*
- 2016 – 2021 Conference Submission Reviewer, Health Communication Division, National Communication Association
- 2019 Panel Chair, James C. McCroskey and Virginia P. Richmond Undergraduate Scholars Conference, Eastern Communication Association, Providence, Rhode Island.
- 2018 - 2019 Undergraduate Submission Reviewer, James C. McCroskey and Virginia P. Richmond Undergraduate Scholars Conference, Eastern Communication Association
- 2015 Invited textbook review of R. B. Adler, L. B. Rosenfield, and R. F. Proctor II's *Interplay*, for Oxford University Press.

Service to University

- 2026 – Present Member of the UB Seminar Committee, focusing on first-year seminar 199 courses and objectives
- 2019 – 2020 Seminar/Workshop, “Interpersonal Communication for Professional Success,” College & Careers, Rochester Institute of Technology
- 2020 Invited Speaker to the Department of Access Services at Rochester Institute of Technology. Seminar to familiarize Deaf and Hard of Hearing interpreting staff to the vocabulary and content presented within Communication classes in order to prepare interpreters for future class assignments
- 2020 Invited speaker at the Emerging Professionals Institute (EPI), Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement at Rochester Institute of Technology. Presentation scheduled for April 11, 2020 (*Cancelled due to COVID-19*)
- 2017 Seminar/workshop, “Communication: People Person or Not? Communicate Your Way,” College & Careers, Rochester Institute of Technology

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP/AFFILIATIONS

- 2014 – Present Member, National Communication Association (NCA)
- 2014 – Present Member, Eastern Communication Association (ECA)