Arts & Humanities Faculty Research Program
FY 2019

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*Understanding the Roles of Strategic Internal Communication in Effective Organizational Change Management*
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One necessity for modern organizations to grow and succeed in the dynamic and competitive global market is to monitor the business environment constantly, make necessary adjustments, and embrace change. Organizations seek change for many reasons, such as downsizing, mergers and acquisitions, disaster, leadership change, adoption of new technology, etc. However, many organization’s change efforts fail because of the lack of effective internal communication. Previous literature has suggested multiple roles of communication in the strategic change process, such as reducing uncertainty, overcoming resistance to change, enabling employee participation, and building shared understanding and accurate interpretation. Despite the wide recognition of the importance of communication in strategic change management, there has been a lack of empirical evidence on how specific communication strategies, tactics, and communication channels contribute to successful change implementation, especially in today’s fast-evolving social media era. Therefore, to fill the research gap, the purpose of the proposed study is to examine whether and how strategic internal communication strategies, including symmetrical internal communication and transparent communication and the use of optimized communication channels (e.g., one-way vs. two-way, mediated vs. interpersonal, traditional vs. social media.) influence employees’ perception of uncertainty during change and ultimately, the change-related (i.e., commitment to change, behavioral support for change) and organizational long-term outcomes (i.e., employee-organization relationships, employee engagement). Through a quantitative online survey of 500 employees at different levels of positions working in various---sized corporations, which have gone through changes in the past two years in the United States, this study will provide an examination of the roles of strategic communication in the effective change management process. Results will provide implications for public relations, organizational communication scholars and practitioners, and organizational leaders and managers.