

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

December 28, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Norman Abeles, Chairperson
 Executive Committee of Academic Council

FROM: Lou Anna K. Simon, Provost ^{LAK}

SUBJECT: Proposed Name Change for the Department of Telecommunications

The members of the Department of Telecommunication have requested that the name of the department be changed to the Department of Telecommunication, Information and Media. With the endorsement of the College Advisory Council, Dean Spaniolo has recommended that this name change be made. The effective date would be July 1, 2002. A copy of Dean Spaniolo's correspondence to me is attached for your review (Attachment A).

Based on an initial review, the Office of the Provost raised a question about the inclusion of "information" in the title. Dean Spaniolo and his colleagues reviewed this matter and provided additional commentary supporting the inclusion of "information". A copy is also included for your review (Attachment B).

I seek the advice of the Executive Committee of Academic Council as to which, if any, University-level governance committees I should consult about the proposed name change. I have asked Dean Spaniolo, a representative of the College Advisory Council, Dr. Levy, and a representative of the department advisory committee to attend the January 15, 2002 meeting of the Executive Committee of Academic Council to discuss this matter.

cc: Members, ECAC
 Dean Spaniolo
 Dr. Levy
 Provost's Staff



OFFICE OF THE
PROVOST

Michigan State University
 Administration Building
 East Lansing, Michigan
 48824-1046


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**MICHIGAN STATE
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DEC 19 2001
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

December 18, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lou Anna K. Simon Provost
FROM: James D. Spaniolo, Dean 
SUBJECT: Department of Telecommunication Request for Name Change

Before our meeting Wednesday, I wanted to give you an update on the proposed name change for the Department of Telecommunication. In light of our recent conversation about this, I have reviewed the matter with Mark Levy, Chairperson of the Department and Tom Baldwin, Associate Dean and long-time senior faculty member in the Department. Based on that review and discussions I wanted to reiterate my support for the request by the Department of Telecommunication to change its name to the Department of Telecommunication, Information, and Media (TIM).

This new name clearly and unmistakably speaks to the current and growing strengths of the Department. Moreover, it accurately reflects the rapidly evolving field that is the Department's focus of teaching and research.

While retaining its brand-name (Telecommunication), the new label places "information" literally at the center of its identity. This essential centrality reflects the Department's long-established commitment to teaching and research on *information* technology. In short, TIM will alert students, industry, and potential funders to this core competency.

In addition, it is important to note that each element in the proposed, tripartite name is meant to be read in concert with the other two. Thus, for example, the Department will continue to build on its long established interest in the management of *information* technologies and *telecommunication* networks. Similarly, TIM will extend teaching and research that ties an understanding of *information* processing to the creation of immersive (virtual reality) *media*.



**COLLEGE OF
COMMUNICATION
ARTS AND SCIENCES**

James D. Spaniolo
Dean

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Provost Simon

12/18/01

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It is, I believe, this synergistic overlap of telecommunication and information and media that makes TIM unique, differentiating it from related programs in Library Science, Business, or Computer Science. Indeed, it is the ongoing convergence of telecommunication, information, and media manifest in TIM that generates such widespread interest and enthusiasm for this Department.

Before adopting TIM, the Department engaged in several serious discussions considering a number of alternatives, including: 1) Telecommunication and Information (Studies); 2) Media (Design) and Information Studies; 3) Media Arts and Information Technology; 4) Communication Technology and Information Systems; and, 5) Information Communication Technologies. However, it was the judgment of the faculty (with which I concur) that TIM most appropriately describes what the Department is all about in the new century.

By approving this name change, the University and my College would be reaffirming its leadership role in charting the future of public higher education. I look forward to discussing this more with you soon.

JDS/lp

MICHIGAN STATE
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OCT 25 2001
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

October 24, 2001

Lou Anna K. Simon
Provost
438 Administration Building
Michigan State University

Dear Lou Anna:

We recently endorsed a request by the Department of Telecommunication to change its name to the Department of Telecommunication, Information and Media. A copy of the original letter is attached.

At your request the College Advisory Council reviewed and approved the request on October 4. Attached also is a sampling of names for similar departments. This includes the Big Ten universities and some others. As you will see there is little consistency.

Yours truly,


James Spaniolo
Dean

JDS/lp

Enclosures



COLLEGE OF

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Selected Program and Department Names

University of Michigan – School of Information

Penn State University – Department of Telecommunications

Indiana University – School of Informatics

Northwestern University – MA in Telecommunication Science, Management, Policy

Purdue University – Department of Communication, Mass Communication concentration

University of Illinois – College of Communication, Division of Broadcasting

University of Wisconsin – Department of Communication Arts

University of Iowa – Department of Communication Studies

University of Minnesota – Department of Speech Communication

The Ohio State University – School of Journalism and Communication

Harvard University – Information Infrastructure Project

George Washington University – Graduate Program in Telecommunication

Rutgers University, School of Communication, Information and Library Studies

Syracuse University – School of Information Studies

MICHIGAN STATE
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SEP 19 2001

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

September 18, 2001

Dr. Lou Anna K. Simon
Provost
438 Administration Building
Michigan State University
Campus

Dear Provost Simon:

Enclosed is a recommendation from the Department of Telecommunication to change its name to the Department of Telecommunication, Information and Media.

I strongly concur with the recommendation for the reasons explained in Mark Levy's letter. The new name will more fully reflect the foci of the department.

If you have questions or need additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,



James D. Spaniolo
Dean

JDS/lp

Cc: Tom Baldwin, Associate Dean
Mark Levy, Chairperson, Department of Telecommunication

Enclosure



COLLEGE OF
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MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

RECEIVED
SEP 13 2001

September 12, 2001

Dean Jim Spaniolo
College of Communication Arts & Sciences
Michigan State University
Campus

Dear Jim:

I am pleased to report that, on September 9th, my colleagues voted overwhelmingly to change the name of our department to the Department of Telecommunication, Information and Media.

With this letter, I am seeking your endorsement of this action.

Founded in 1958 as the Department of Radio, Television, Film, the Department was renamed Telecommunication in 1975. That name has served us well. However, as an academic label, "telecommunication" no longer has the currency it once had (when we first became TC, the Internet, for example, was still a limited-use medium for academic and military researchers, and the World Wide Web did not yet exist).



DEPARTMENT OF
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We are convinced that renaming our department will help students identify us early as a focus of study, that it will aid our graduates in their increasingly diverse careers, and that it will allow us to secure even greater visibility for our research and outreach efforts.

The new, tripartite name for which we are requesting approval was arrived at after several months of sustained debate and two, extended discussions at faculty meetings. We believe the new name more explicitly describes "who" we are and gives previously denied recognition to important aspects of our program.

In renaming the Department, we have decided to retain "telecommunication" as part of our designation, first, because part of our teaching and research still centers on telephony and networks, which is the core meaning today of telecommunication; and second, because with 26 years of "branding" and with many hundreds of alumni, a substantial amount of "good will" has become associated with that name.

However, we have also decided to include the noun, "information," in our formal title. In so doing, we are attempting to make clear our long-established commitment to teaching and research about *information* technology and services and our wish to participate fully in the interdisciplinary IT initiative, between CAS, ENGR, and BUS. For twenty years, one of the most popular emphasis areas in our undergraduate curriculum has been "Telecommunication *Information* Technologies and Management" and at the M.A.-level, "*Information* Technologies and Services Management" has been even more attractive to students. Among the courses, we teach are "The *Information* Society," "Introduction to Theory in Telecommunication, *Information* and Society," "Telecommunication and Information Policy," "*Information* Networks and Technologies," "*Information* Networks and Electronic Commerce," and "Electronic *Information* and Entertainment Media Management."

As to the third element in our new name, "media," we understand the term to include both the technology of human communication (e.g. radio, television, computers) and the content or media messages. At the undergraduate level, roughly one-third of our students follow the "Digital *Media Arts*" emphasis and an equal proportion of M.A. students enroll for "*Media Arts*." All undergraduates currently are required to take "Telecommunication *Media Arts*," an introduction to radio (audio), television (video), and the Web. In addition, the Department has recently introduced unique courses in "webcasting," video game design, 3-dimensional graphics, and advanced web-authoring, courses that are open to

undergrads and graduate students alike. Research about media in the Department ranges from studies of media law and management (especially work in the Quello Center) to cross-disciplinary research in human-computer interactive and immersive environments, housed in the MIND Lab and CommTech Lab.

As near as I can determine, changing the name of our Department has no implications for staffing, other budget items, or space. Moreover, we do not believe that this change will have any negative impact on our students or on any other program at MSU.

The College of Communication Arts and Sciences was the first such academic unit of its kind in the world. In that pioneering spirit, we would like once more to break new ground. We strongly believe that the Department of Telecommunication, Information and Media is a great name for our Department as we enter the new century.

Thank you very much.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mark".

Mark R. Levy, Ph.D.
Professor and Chairperson