With seed money from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1980, the Department started the Communication Planning and Strategy (CPS) training program for officials and decision makers in agriculture, health, nutrition, family planning, and rural development. During each summer over a 15-year period (1980-1995), it attracted more than 300 participants from 65 countries. Participants in 1985 are shown in this photo taken in front of the Department's Teaching and Research Center. Professor Njoku Awa (far left) and Professor Roy Colle (far right) were co-directors of the CPS Program.

One hundred international students from many countries received the Master of Professional Studies degree (MPS) in the field of communication from 1970 to 1999. Among them was Mahyuddin Syam (left) who completed the degree at Cornell in 1980. As soon as he returned to Indonesia he became head of the Division of Information Services for the Central Research Institute for Food Crops in Indonesia. In this photo, he told Professor Ward, his graduate committee chairman, about a new rice variety developed by the Institute and his plans to get the information about its advantages to Indonesian farmers.
New Academic Dimensions

Beginning in the mid-1990s, the Department's undergraduate program underwent major changes based on the realization of dramatic new developments in the communication environment that affected the lives of students and the interests of the faculty. On July 1, 1995, Professor Carroll Glynn became the first chairwoman in the history of the Department. Under her leadership the graduate programs expanded and four focus areas were identified which emphasized the study and application of communication science:

1) **Communication in the Life Sciences.** Students study the role of communication in environmental, health, science, and agricultural issues. They choose from courses within the Department such as Health Communication, Risk Communication, Communication and Persuasion, Communication and the Environment, Science Writing for Mass Media and Public Information, and Campaign Planning. In addition, they take courses outside the Department to develop scientific expertise.

2) **Communication Systems and Technology.** This focus area enables students to explore how communication technologies and systems are designed and how they are used and influence people. Among the courses: Communication Systems and Technologies, Computer Mediated Communication, Impact of Communication Technologies, Interactive Multimedia, and Information Systems Management and Use.

3) **Communication Planning and Evaluation.** Students learn to develop and evaluate communication plans, acquire skills in identify-
ing audiences, assessing their communication needs, and creating communication messages and programs to meet those needs. This program emphasizes the proactive use of communication and the ways in which communication influences human affairs. They choose from courses such as Planning Communication Campaigns, Organization Behavior and Communication, Communication and Persuasion, Public Opinion and Social Processes, and Leadership Communication.

(4) Communication as a Social Science. Students learn how researchers in the academic world and in business and industry conduct communication research. They choose from courses in the areas of social psychology and the sociology of communication and take courses in advanced communication research methods and statistics. Each student writes a senior thesis under faculty supervision. This focus area offers an excellent foundation for study at the master's and doctoral level and for rewarding careers in teaching and research.

Professor Glynn resigned in August 1998 to accept a position at Ohio State University. That unexpected action, along with the retirement of three other professors and the resignation of three lecturers during 1998, left the Department in a serious staffing position, especially in relation to its teaching programs.

Request for a Joint Self-study

On August 31, 1998, Professor Ostman was appointed chairman of the Department and devoted a large percentage of his time, in cooperation with the faculty, to meet Dean Daryl Lund's request to undertake jointly with the Department of Education a comprehensive self-study and submit it by March 1, 1999. Following are portions of the Dean's June 4, 1998, memorandum addressed to faculty and academic staff of the two departments:

"This self-study will have the purpose of considering the future and the departmental strategic plans in light of faculty restaffing opportunities that now exist in both units . . . . The number of faculty leaving or retiring shortly from Communication and critical needs in Education create an unprecedented opportunity to consider the most advantageous strategic positioning for programs of these units as leaders nationally and internationally in agricultural communication and education.

"I know that both units have recently reexamined their program directions. I have been impressed by the ideas and directions presented. However, we all would be remiss by not taking this opportunity to think further about these future plans in view of staffing possibilities that might not have been considered previously but now present themselves. There appear to be several areas in which these two programs could cooperate more fully to create stronger initiatives than continuing to operate separately. In what ways are the programs of these departments similar? What are the areas of mutual interest? How might they be better integrated programmatically, and perhaps administratively, to strengthen CALS teaching, research and extension programs in communication and education specifically, and in the social sciences generally? For ex-
ample, could the outcome of our current and future investments in the social sciences in CALS be magnified by combining the two departments?

"I need to have the best input possible for any decisions about future investments in faculty lines in education and communication programs. I believe we should consider how we can build on the strength of the two departments to create programs that are academically exciting and that would have greater combined impact on scholarship in teaching, research and extension. To inform our decisions, I am asking that over the next academic year the Departments of Education and Communication present a joint response with recommendations by March 1, 1999, prior to department program planning and budget conferences next spring.

"We realize that requesting a joint self-study will present some special challenges. The cultures of the two departments differ in some ways, but we hope the common interests and desire for excellence in teaching, research and extension will be a mitigating force. We also hope that you will see promise in and be excited by the possibility for new intellectual interactions and collaboration as you assess the potential for integrating the two units and adding new people to the new entity created."

Déjà Vu

In his memorandum, Dean Lund pointed out that "there appeared to be several areas in which the two departments could cooperate more fully to create stronger initiatives than continuing to operate separately." Then he pursued the controversial issue of a merger in these words: "Could the outcome of our current and future investments in the social sciences in CALS be magnified by combining the two departments?" And one more time at the end: "We hope that you will see promise in and be excited by the possibility for new intellectual interactions and collaboration as you assess the potential for integrating the two units and adding new people to the new entity created."

The initial reaction of active senior faculty members and professors emeriti to these parts of the memorandum could be summed up in two words: déja vu. They had been subjected to a similar encounter when a former dean (W. Keith Kennedy) proposed a merger in December 1974. At that time, a large majority of faculty members in both the Department of Communication Arts and the Department of Education voted against his proposed merger. A committee representing the two faculties submitted this conclusion to the administration:

There does not appear to be a clear intellectual, disciplinary, or subject matter basis for a merger. (Dean Kennedy dropped his proposal.)

Development of the 1998/99 Self-study

After several weeks of preparatory work, the two departments held a joint retreat in October to consider reports of the five committees involving possible areas of collaboration: technology in education and communication; leadership in an organizational context for education and communication; psychology and cognition; education and communication for extension and adult learners and audiences of importance to the College in both domestic and international settings; and science literacy and education.
All five committees agreed that the two departments have differences and, while complementary, do not offer overlapping programs in the subject areas considered. Each group generated specific ideas for collaboration. Overall, however, the tone of the committees' reports suggested that faculty from both departments considered that their present departmental identities have significant value for the College and believe that fundamentally altering the existing structures would be harmful to the College as well as to the departments. No support was expressed for a merger, the most radical possible outcome of the joint self-study.

With the departments far enough along with the self-study, Dean Lund agreed to release the vacant organizational communication faculty position and one for the Department of Education so search committees could begin to locate applicants. Then after the final joint self-study was submitted to meet the March 1, 1999, deadline, he released additional positions.

The Dean and the College Executive Council responded to the joint self-study on May 18. No mention was made of a merger of the two departments. Excerpts from the response by the College administration applicable primarily to the Department of Communication follow:

1. Although the joint self-study apparently has encouraged some new interactions between the departments and reinforced the value of existing collaborative ventures, the Offices of Academic Programs, Research, and Extension feel that more collaboration is possible than has been identified.

2. There may be an excessive array of courses beyond the delivery capacity of each department. Curriculum and teaching assignments need continuing attention. Simple strategies can improve the situation, such as offering low enrollment courses of 10 or fewer in alternate years and thereby freeing teaching capacity to be directed in other areas of need.

3. The Department of Communication should consider fewer undergraduate concentrations that more appropriately match teaching capacity.

4. We encourage the excellent work already developed by the department to build the educational core areas of interest in environmental and life sciences. This approach will serve to position the department well for the future.

5. Overall, we feel the research program is heading in the right direction, but expect continual improvement in research productivity.

6. The commitment to instruction reduces the availability of faculty for extension/outreach as a way to reduce transaction costs. Among the opportunities for future collaboration are distance learning/technology and staff development.

The response report concluded that "as a result of this planning process, the two departments seem to have learned a lot about each other, and the Executive Committee has learned more about them, too. CALS administration will work with the departments to create opportunities to take this initiative to the next step and increase the degree to which the departments actually work together. CALS administration remains committed to keeping the departments strong, as evidenced by recent reinvestments in new faculty lines in both units."
Both Communication and Education are expected to play important roles in the programs of CALS in the decades to come."

The Department of Communication continued to explore possibilities of collaboration with the Department of Education in these areas of mutual interest:

- **Teaching:** Cross-list courses in information and knowledge management, as well as technology and learning; jointly develop courses which blend audience analysis issues with team training in educational administration, teach about faculty transformational leadership; develop a full programmatic effort, in collaboration with other disciplines, which offers undergraduate and graduate programs in science literacy and education.

- **Research:** Cooperate on such topics as information management, applications of learning technologies, effective models for distance learning, and leader management.

- **Extension and outreach:** Provide overall guidance through the establishment of a university-wide initiative which links existing disparate leadership efforts and help establish a science literacy program.

### Focus Areas for the Future

In keeping with the Executive Council's positive position on the Department's educational mission built around core areas of interest in environmental and life sciences "which will serve to position the Department well for the future," the newest focus areas for the beginning of the 21st century are:

- Interdisciplinary-minded, featuring better integration with and unique contributions to the various disciplines of the College.

- Sensitive to the on-going communication revolution, examining the various configurations of the computer and multi-media which increasingly are driving the economy.

- Global in scope, with continuing attention to creating positive social change in developing countries in the context of intercultural, group, and organizational communication, with a focus on human diversity.

Those focus areas will be developed further with a new Dean. On June 28, 1999, Lund sent a communication to the faculty and staff announcing that he would not seek reappointment after the end of his tenure as Dean of the College on August 18, 2000. He was succeeded by Susan A. Henry who became the first woman Dean of the College. She was the Dean of the Mellon College of Science at Carnegie Mellon University before accepting the Cornell position.

### Goals and Priorities

At the turn of the century, the Department established a set of goals and priorities to help focus its efforts on actions to strengthen instruction, research, and service roles. With communication technology rapidly accelerating, the Department will develop theories and research approaches for improved information resources which are central to every aspect of daily life. Explosive growth
of the Internet and World Wide Web underscores the dramatic need for better information resources. Cornell President Hunter Rawlings recently identified Information Systems as one of the four focus areas for the University and announced plans to invest in this area. Furthermore, international organizations are making significant investments toward bringing Internet access to rural areas of developing nations. Substantial questions exist about how this can best be accomplished, financially, organizationally, and politically. The Department will initiate more research on this issue.

Perhaps the most noticeable trend facing the academic communication field is the growth in both the undergraduate and graduate population, and this trend is expected to continue. The Department set a five-year target of increasing undergraduate enrollment 10% by 2003. To achieve this goal will require rebuilding the size of the professorial faculty and maintaining the size of the non-professional faculty. (Appendices K and L.)

Recognizing the importance of teaching, the Department will establish a peer-reviewed system for evaluating teaching as an important component of annual performance reviews. In addition, it will continue to enhance and perfect a previously revised curriculum and ensure students' communication competencies in oral, written, listening, and visual communication. A major goal of the new curriculum was to strengthen the discipline's reputation among undergraduates, challenging them to pursue research-based learning, and that goal is being achieved through a steady growth in the number of students undertaking honors theses and seniors pursuing a thesis option. No doubt the faculty and students will find issues that need fine tuning in the future, and the Department has planned surveillance for those issues.

Several universities have tended to separate communication theory from communication practice, but that separation is beginning to disappear. The Department has made sure it is ahead of the curve on this issue by integrating aspects of a communication curriculum. Also, it intends to provide more experimental education through internships, research opportunities, organizational consultations, and mentoring/teaching. Career counseling will be improved and students' opportunities broadened to fill quality positions in areas such as industry, business, government and politics, nonprofit organizations, research organizations, new communication technologies ventures, international relations and negotiations, marketing organizations. Related to this goal will be the establishment of contacts with alumni who have been out of touch with the Department and the enlistment of alumni support in the education of undergraduate and graduate students.

Progress in graduate education is closely tied to progress in the research area. The Department is starting to produce scholars who will be ready for employment in the top academic programs in the country, but this momentum may be lost in an atmosphere of decreased investment in resources for graduate students and with the loss of faculty who can lead them. The Department plans to be the best in a few specific areas of graduate education, building particularly on excellence in the technology and life science areas.

Because communication technology is at the heart of distance learning, the Department will play a leading role in both developing courses and researching learning processes. It will concentrate primarily on the content expertise of the faculty rather than on the technology infrastructure. Building on
the work of its Interactive Multimedia Group, the Department, in conjunction with Extension, expects to be a leader in distance learning.

Cornell has the strongest program in communication of any college of agriculture in the nation, and its Department of Communication wants to keep that rating during the 21st century.