

Dr. Keya Saxena
Tenure-Track Assistant Professor of Communication Studies
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EDUCATION

PhD in Communication & Media Studies

University of Oregon, School of Journalism and Communication, Eugene, US

2019-2025

MA in Media Studies

University of Oregon, School of Journalism and Communication, Eugene, US

2015-2017

MA in Development Communication

 AJK Mass Communication Research Centre (AJK MCRC), Jamia Millia Islamia University,
 New Delhi, India

2013-2015

BA (Honours) Journalism

Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, New Delhi, India

2010-2013

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Tenure-Track Assistant Professor of Communication Studies

Department of Communication, University of South Alabama, Mobile, US

August 2025- present

Faculty Advisor of Due South (Student-led Campus Magazine)

University of South Alabama

August 2025- present

Instructor

Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, University of Oregon, Eugene, US

2025-2026

School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, Eugene, US

2019-2023

Grader

Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, University of Oregon, Eugene, US

2024-2025

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapter

Saxena, K., & Martínez, G. (2026). Palabras de luz: Reclaiming personal stories and narratives for social change in postconflict Colombia. In C. L. Ballengee (Ed.), *Shooting back: Documentary film in Latin America and the Caribbean* (pp. 153–172). University Press of Mississippi. <https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.35529414.12>

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Saxena, K. (accepted with revisions). Living in the In-Between: Migration, Belonging & Americanness. *Journal of Studies in American Culture*.

Saxena, K., & Ofori-Parku, S. S. (2024). 'Funny' Politics: Stand-up Political Comedy, Public Engagement, Critical Thinking, and Opinion Sharing in India. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/09732586241252201>

Saxena, K., & Martínez, G. (2024). Collaborative Film Making for Socio-political Transformation in Colombia: A Decolonial Perspective. *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media*, Issue 62.

<https://www.ejumpcut.org/currentissue/Saxena-Martinez/index.html>

Saxena, K. (2023). That's a 'Sign'!: How Placards Communicated Disapproval of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in India. *Communication Studies*, 1–15.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2023.2210631>

Markowitz, D. M., Blackburn, K. G., **Saxena, K.**, Marion, J., Olivarez, O., Hernandez, R., Woodworth, M. T., & Hancock, J. T. (2022). The Truth Project. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 41(4), 450–461. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X211067821>

Martinez, G., & **Saxena, K.** (2021). Mapping the promises and perils of distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic: Peru's case. *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media*, Issue 60.

<https://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc60.2021/MartinezSaxena-PeruEducation/index.html>

Book Reviews

Saxena, K. (2024). Cracking up: Black feminist comedy in the twentieth & twenty-first century United States: by Katelyn Hale Wood, United States, University of Iowa Press, 2021, 204 pp., \$28.91 (paperback), ISBN 9781609387723. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 1–3.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2024.2371127>

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Saxena, K. (2026) 'Laughing' Resistance in YouTube Comments: Stand-Up Comedy and Counterpublics. Paper presented at the International Communication Association Conference (ICA), Cape Town, South Africa.

Saxena, K., Ofori-Parku, S., Jones, P., Martinez, G., & Workneh, T. (2026) De-westernizing Notions of 'Non-western' Scholarship in Media Studies. Paper presented in 'What is Research?', Portland.

Saxena, K., & Gogolushko, L. (2025) 'Standing up' to Ableism: Josh Blue's Comedy as Disability Activism. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA), Denver.

Saxena, K. (2024) 'Funny' Resistance: Stand-up Comedy for Socio-political Activism in India. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, Gold Coast.

Saxena, K. (2023) Stand-up Comedy for Political Resistance in India. Presented and chaired the panel 'Activism in and through Media Industry' at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, Toronto.

Among top three student papers in the Activism, Communication and Social Justice Division

Saxena, K., (2022) 'Laughing' at Gender Based Violence: Talking About Marital Rape Through Stand-up Comedy in India. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, Paris.

Clark, K., **Saxena, K.**, Shafer, A., & Beyene, G. (2022) Understanding Gendered Beliefs, Barriers, and Opportunities in Condom Communication. Paper presented at the International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, Paris.

Saxena, K., & Ofori-Parku, S. (2021) 'Funny' Politics: Effects of Stand-Up Comedy on Public Engagement, Critical Thinking and Opinion Sharing. Paper presented at the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), Nairobi.

Saxena, K. (2020) 'Telling Everyone' the Media Narrative of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Are They Reaching Everyone? Paper presented at the Annual What is Information Media Virtual Conference, Eugene.

Saxena, K. (2017) The Role of Mobile Phones in Empowerment of Female Domestic Workers. Paper presented at the What is Life Conference Annual Media Conference, Portland.

SELECTED TALKS

Saxena, K., Finley, J., Krefting, B., Hennefeld, M., & Bobker, D. (2026, August). Teaching Humor in Politically Turbulent Times: Pedagogy, Resistance & Solidarity. Panelist for Critical Humor Studies Association (CHSA).

Saxena, K. (2024, May) Politics in Indian Stand-up Comedy. Presented in Political Communication at Eastern Oregon University. La Grande, OR.

Saxena, K. (2023, October) Stand-up Comedy for Social Justice. Presented in International Communication at Northeastern University. Boston, MA.

Saxena, K. (2022, April) Creative Communication for Women's Reproductive Rights. Presented in Creative Strategist at University of Oregon. Eugene, OR.

Saxena, K. (2021, December) Humor for Socio-Political Resistance. Presented in International Communication at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR.

Saxena, K. (2021, November) The Representation of Women in Bollywood 'Item Numbers'. Presented in Gender, Media, and Diversity at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR.

Saxena, K. (2020, February) Communication for Social Change in India. Presented in International Communication at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR

Saxena, K. (2016) Effectiveness of Interpersonal Communication by Community Health Workers (CHW) in mobile-health Initiatives. Presented in Communication for Social Change at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR.

Saxena, K. (2016) Eritrea against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Presented in Communication for Social Change at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR.

Saxena, K. (2016) The Role of Mobile Phones in Development in Rural India. Presented class Media Theory at the University of Oregon. Eugene, OR

AWARDS, GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

Cornell Center for Global Democracy's Community of Practice *January 2026- present*
Selected as a member of Cornell University's Center on Global Democracy Community of Practice, a global network of pro-democracy practitioners and scholars advancing the democratic agenda.

Arts and Sciences' Support and Development Award *January 2026*
Awarded \$1500 by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Alabama to support my research on comedy and care.

ICA Special Commendation Award *May 2023*
The Activism, Communication and Social Justice division of International Communication Association (ICA) awarded special commendation to my research paper titled, "Stand-up Comedy for Political Resistance in India" in Toronto

Wayne Morse Center Graduate Research Fellowship Award *July 2023*
Awarded \$3000 grant by the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics at the University of Oregon to develop dissertation research and contribute towards the larger canon of 'Defending Democracy'

Lokey Scholarship, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon *June 2022*
Awarded \$10,000 by the SOJC under a scholarship program that seeks to develop future leaders for the journalism and communication industry

Global Oregon International Research Fund *June 2022*
Awarded \$2000 by the University Graduate School for conducting dissertation research in India

The Centre for Asian and Pacific Studies Grant *April 2022*
Awarded \$500 as travel funding to International Communication Conference in Paris in June 2022

Special OPPS Travel and Research Award, University of Oregon, USA *May 2020*
Awarded \$500 by the Graduate School for researching the role of women in post conflict Colombia and the role of documentary in peace making process

Columbia Scholarship, University of Oregon, USA *October 2019- June 2023*
Receiving \$1000 per year renewable up to 4 years, as part of university scholarship

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, University of Oregon, USA *October 2019- June 2023*
Receiving full tuition fee waiver and serving as a teaching assistant in undergraduate courses with a monthly stipend

Outstanding Master's Student Teaching Award, University of Oregon, USA *June 2017*
Received the award for serving as an instructor of 'Gender, Media and Diversity'

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, University of Oregon, USA *September 2015-June 2017*
Received full tuition fee waiver and served as a research assistant, teaching assistant, and instructor in undergraduate courses with a monthly stipend

African Studies Scholarship: Media in Ghana *August 2016*
Received \$2000 to represent the University of Oregon for a six-week program in Accra, Ghana and acquired first-hand experience of the nation's media and non-profit landscape

TEACHING EXPERIENCE**Department of Communication, University of South Alabama, USA****Primary Instructor****CA 360 Communication & the Internet***August 2026-present*

An upper division undergraduate course that examines emerging patterns on the internet, and cultural trends of wellness, beauty, politics, self-care, love and travel that influence the most intimate aspects of our lives

CA 456 Social Media & Politics*January 2026- May 2026*

An upper division undergraduate course that examined examples of political expressions like memes, hashtags and reels, and investigated the promises and perils of platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and TikTok in conjuring our public discourse and civic engagement.

CA 424 Rhetorical Criticism*January 2026- May 2026*

An upper division course that explored a variety of critical theories and methods such as narrative criticism, dramatism, genre criticism, ideological criticism and visual rhetoric, and taught students to apply these frameworks to examine a range of texts.

CA 592 Media & Social Movements*August 2025-December 2025*

A graduate seminar that examined the role of media in the formation, mobilization, and representation of social movements, and explored how people organize themselves to bring about a change in their lives and the larger structures, through collective action

CA 300 Foundations of Communication Research*August 2025-December 2025*

An upper division required course for communication majors that explored the philosophical assumptions, methodologies, and ethical considerations that shape the production of knowledge in the field by examining qualitative methods of inquiry.

Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, University of Oregon, USA**Primary Instructor****WGS 101 Introduction to Women's, Gender and Sexuality***September 2024- June 2025*

Teaching students about examining lived experiences through a feminist lens, with particular emphasis on the interplay of social systems of sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, able-ism, classism, and patriarchy.

Grader**WGS 250 Gender, Literature & Culture***April 2024- June 2024*

Teaching Assistant for the class that analyzes a feminist, queer, and socio-political perspective of Latinx Studies through a close examination of transborder children's literature.

WGS 201 Introduction to Queer Studies*January 2024- March 2024*

Teaching Assistant for the class that examines sexuality as a complex social, cultural, and political organizing principal inseparable from gender, race, ethnicity, class, citizenship, and disability.

WGS 321 Feminist perspectives: Identity, Race and Culture*September 2023 -December 2023*

Teaching Assistant for the class that examines intersections of race and ethnicity, class, sexuality, and gender in the history and lives of United States women of color.

School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, USA**Instructor****J 201 Media & Society***June 2023-July 2023*

Taught students about the significance of media and its implications on opinion formation, public engagement, and citizenship.

J 467 Communication for Social Change in Developing Countries*July 2021- August 2021*

Taught students to critically think about various meanings, connotations, and contexts of ‘development’ and ‘social change’ by reviewing major theories and examples concerning the use of media, especially in the Global South.

Discussion Section Instructor**J 212 Writing for Communicators***April 2020- June 2020, January 2021- June 2021*

Led discussion sections and helped students develop the ability to write for a variety of audiences and platforms (i.e., print, audio, online and multimedia) to achieve strategic purposes (to inform, persuade, educate, and advocate)

J 320 Gender, Media & Diversity*September 2016- June 2017*

Led discussions about the complex ways of media influencing perceptions and representations of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and nationalities among other identity markers.

Received Outstanding Teaching Award

Teaching Assistant

- J385 Communication Law	<i>March 2023- June 2023</i>
- J320 Gender, Media, and Diversity	<i>January 2023- March 2023</i>
- J213 Fact or Fiction	<i>September 2022- December 2022</i>
- J211 Gateway to Media	<i>March 2022- June 2022</i>
- J213 Fact or Fiction	<i>January 2022- March 2022</i>
- J350 Principles of PR	<i>September 2021- December 2021</i>
- J320 Gender, Media & Diversity	<i>October 2020- December 2020</i>
- J320 Gender, Media & Diversity	<i>January 2020- March 2020</i>
- J387 Media History	<i>October 2019- December 2019</i>
- J201 Media and Society	<i>January 2016- April 2016</i>
- J396 International Communication	<i>September 2015- December 2015</i>

ADVISING & MENTORSHIP**Honors These Committee Member***2026-present*

Serving as a member on a Honors’ student theses committee and advising them on their research process

Student: Sage Sullivan

Master's Theses Committee Member*2025-present*

Serving as a member on graduate students' thesis committees and advising them as they undertake their research in the Department of Communication at the University of South Alabama

Students: Ashley Buffington and Sylia Neely

TRAININGS & CERTIFICATES**Alabama Institute of Social Action 2026***September 2026*

Invited to be a part of Alabama '26 Institute on Teaching Social Action at the University of Alabama that trained educators to put teaching democracy into practice by giving students the tools to create change in the real world

University of South Alabama, Innovation in Learning Center, Mobile, US*August 2025- May 2026*

Attended New Faculty Scholars Program for professional development, pedagogical and research training of select faculty at the University of South Alabama

University of Ghana, School of Communication, Accra, Ghana*June 2016-July 2016*

Attended a workshop about the history and contemporary status of radio, television, and newspaper industries in Ghana

World Bank e-Institute for Development- Certificate Courses

Frontiers in Development Policy

February 2015

Gender Equality and Development: Women's Economic Empowerment

October 2014

Gender Equality and Development: Overview Module

*September 2014***RESEARCH POSITIONS****Editorial Assistant***July 2022-July 2024*

Political Communication (Taylor & Francis Journal)

Worked with the editor of the journal, Dr. Regina Lawrence, in reviewing manuscript submissions, revisions, facilitating publications of issues, and coordinating other functions of the journal

Research Assistant*April 2022- June 2022*

Understanding the Public Trust Crises in Journalism and Healthcare

Worked with Dr. Seth Lewis on research project about understanding the social dynamics of trust in news and healthcare

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), New Delhi, India***January 2018- June 2019*

Program Communications Specialist (Communications, Advocacy and Partnerships Unit)

Worked in the area of communication led innovations- Conceptualizing blueprints for tech-based innovations, especially in the area of electronic media, Interactive Video Response (IVRS) technology, mobile telephony and internet-based edutainment, documenting program implementation on the field

UNAIDS, New Delhi, India*January 2019; June 2019-July 2019*

Communications Consultant

Advised and contributed to planning communication strategy to address HIV/AIDS among key populations in India, responsible for conceptualizing case studies and donor reports

International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland*July 2017- December 2017*

Trainee in Social Protection Department

Creating content for department's official social media handles and the website, assisting in research and the official launch of World Social Protection Report 2017-18, leading the communication strategy for annual Development Partner's Meeting and Global Business Network Conference

Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, Accra, Ghana*July 2016-August 2016*

Summer Intern

Assisted in monitoring, evaluating, and documenting the project, "Cellphones for Safer Schools" that involved deployment of mobile phones to address sexual violence in 10 private schools of Ghana

Radio Univers, Accra, Ghana*July 2016-August 2016*

Branding Strategy Head

Guided the process of branding Ghana's first public radio station and developed creative work through a mix of design, writing, multi-media, and photography

BBC Media Action, New Delhi, India*May 2015-July 2015*

Trainee

Led the social marketing and creative content generation for organization's first ever digital campaign on promoting water use efficiency among urban Indian youth

The Hope Project, New Delhi, India*September 2014- October 2014*

Content Developer

Assisted in structuring, writing and editing Brochure of the NGO working toward imparting education, improving health and expanding livelihoods of economically weaker communities in Delhi

Acropole Travels, New Delhi, India *July 2012-February 2013*

Freelance Travel Writer

Got acquainted with online trends and styles of travel writing, learnt the process of quick segregated research, structuring of articles

Indian Oil Corporation Limited, New Delhi, India*June 2012- July 2012*

Corporate Communications Intern

Got introduced to the functioning of Corporate Communication department of a *Fortune 500 Company*, coordinated client meetings, supervised editing, and dispatching of in-house journals

TV 18 Broadcast Limited, Noida, India*December 2011-January 2012*

Editorial Department Intern

Got exposed to the working culture of real time television media and learnt the writing aspect for television along with pre/postproduction techniques, research officer for programming content

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP**Co-chair of Teaching Commons**

2026- present

Critical Humor Studies Association (CHSA)

Gender Studies Committee Member

2025-present

College of Arts & Sciences, University of South Alabama

Scholarship Committee Member Department of Communication, University of South Alabama	<i>2025-2026</i>
Co-Founder of Feminist Pedagogy Group University of Oregon	<i>2024-2025</i>
Doctoral Student Representative on University Graduate Council University of Oregon.	<i>2022-2024</i>
President of Journalism and Communication Graduate Student Communication University of Oregon.	<i>June 2020-August 2022</i>
Member of University Graduate Student Advisory Council University of Oregon.	<i>January 2022- June 2022</i>
Founding Member of Student led Diversity Task Force University of Oregon	<i>September 2020</i>
Graduate Student Coordinator of <i>What is Information?</i> Cyberconference University of Oregon Remote	<i>May 2020</i>
Chair/Moderator of "Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning" panel. What is information? Cyberconference University of Oregon Remote	<i>May 2, 2020</i>
Chair/Moderator of "Freedom of Information" panel. What is Information? Cyberconference University of Oregon Remote	<i>May 2, 2020</i>
Department Steward/Representative of the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation University of Oregon, USA	<i>October 2019- June 2020</i>
Founder President of the Dramatics Society University of Delhi, India	<i>2011-2012</i>
Executive Director of the Journalism Society University of Delhi, India	<i>2010-2011</i>

References and Students Evaluations Available on Request