



Communication

Student Report 2018-2019

Activities and Accomplishments

Award

Andrea (Andi) Theis received the Outstanding Graduating Senior in Communication award at the Spring 2019 Undergraduate Honors ceremony.

Student Organizations/Inductions

Coordinated by **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza** (faculty sponsor), St. Edward's chapter of the National Communication Association's (NCA) Honorary Society, Lambda Pi Eta, inducted 31 new members:

Samantha K. Balita
Katherine A. Bingham
Carlye Cook
Ashley R. Cuevas
Aida Domingo
Jordan E. Ely
Crystal R. Esparza
Simmone C. Harding
Emily J. Hart
Kailyn C. Hayes
Victoria T. Hoang
Jean N. Hritz
Kenneth C. Hurley
Jennifer Irving
Kaitlin A. Junek
Daphne S. Kokkinis
Joseph D. Kulbeth
Margeaux Y. Labat
Shannon M. Lowry

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Catherine S. O'Brien

Brandon E. Paz

Nina Rocha

Eliana Rodriguez

Sierra N. Rozen

Joshua L. Saldivar

Hayden D. Steckel

Simona F. Taddei

Andrea N. Theis

Klaire L. Warren

Jordan N. Welch

Gianni M. Zorrilla

Coordinated by **Dr. Nancy Reiter-Salisbury** (faculty advisor), St. Edward's PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) chapter inducted a new slate of energetic and focused officers for 2019-2020:

President: **Fernanda Garcia-Arroyo**

Vice President: **Katya Melchor**

Public Relations Director: **Judith Gonzalez**

Social Media Director: **Kailyn Hayes**

Events Coordinator: **Emma Weber**

Treasurer: **Austin Ortega**

Sammi Balita, SEU PRSSA Chapter President 2018-2019, received the organization's prestigious Bronze Anvil Award at the Texas PRSSA Regional Conference in March. This award recognizes her leadership and contribution to the chapter's outstanding growth.



Sammi Balita

Article and Reviews Published

Kokkinis, D.S. (Spring 2019). Release of *Le Voyage dans la Lune* (A Trip to the Moon). *J SOURCE: A St. Edward's Undergraduate Research Journal*, 7-14.

Students enrolled in **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza's** Communication and Popular Culture course contributed articles to the Life and Arts section of *The Hilltop Views*. The following student articles were published:

Alex Childers' article entitled, "Horror fans were treated to several scary films at SXSW this year," reviewed two films that premiered during SXSW 2019. Jordan Peele's film "Us" and Stephen King's second adaptation of "Pet Cemetery."

To read her article:

<https://www.hilltopviewsonline.com/?s=Horror+fans+were+treated+to+several+scary+films+at+SXSW+this+year>

Maria Cardona-Gutierrez's article entitled, "East Austin festival keeps Tejano music alive with help of local residents," reviewed The East Side Heritage Music Fest that featured Tejano and Tex-Mex bands.

To read her article:

<https://www.hilltopviewsonline.com/?s=East+Side+Music>

Scholarly Presentations

In March, the following students presented their scholarly research at the SOURCE conference:

Jess Arrazolo, "Somos, an American Story" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza**).

Alex Childers and **Jean Hritz**, "Viva la Vida" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza**).

Jordan Ely, "The Southern Way: UGK's Influence on Houston Rap" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Stephen King**).

Jack Riggs and **Hayden Steckel**, "Familismo, Masculinity and Femininity in Robert Rodriguez's *Spy Kids*" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza**).

Matthew San Martin, "The Big In-Between: A Look into the Struggle of the Young" (documentary film) (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza**).

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Annika Strout, “Climate Refugee Speech” (faculty mentor: **Dr. Valerie Thatcher**).

Katherine Tyler, “Regulating Firearm Manufacturing to Reduce Mass Shootings” (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teri Varner**).

At the April 2019 Undergraduate Honors Thesis event, the following students presented their projects:

Jordan Ely, “The Southern Way: UGK’s Influence on Houston Rap” (faculty mentor: **Dr. Stephen King**).

Tyler Hooks, “Energy Drinks: The Fuel of Dirt Bikes” (faculty mentor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**)

Daphne Kokkinis, “‘To All the Films I’ve Loved Before’: An Examination of Cisgender Female Body Politics in American Teen Films” (faculty mentor: **Dr. Teri Varner**).

Edmund Wideman, “Call of the Void: A Thematic Analysis of Stressors in Suicide Attempt Survivor Interviews” (Faculty mentor: **Dr. Lori Peterson**).

Brother Dunstan Bowles Public Speaking Contest

In October, the Department of Communication sponsored its annual oratorical contest, the Brother Dunstan Bowles Public Speaking Contest. This event is coordinated by **Dr. Stephanie Martinez**, Associate Professor and the Course Director for COMM 1317: Presentational Speaking. Six students presented speeches on a variety of social issues from peace in the Middle East to autism. The following students placed at the event:

- 1st Place: **Arrian Ebrahimi**, “Democracy and the Judiciary Don’t Mix”
- 2nd place: **Juliet Shino**, “A Twisted System”
- 3rd place: **Isabelle Jacobs**, “It’s Not an Addiction Until . . .”

Conference Participation

Brandon E. Paz and **Janine Khammash** attended the 2019 NCA conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. Both students received funding from the university's Council for Arts and Humanities committee.

Five officers and three members (**Jordan Welch, Sammi Balita, Emily Hart, Kara Douglas, Judith Gonzalez, Darian Castillo, Katherine Bingham** and **Ashley Cuevas**) from the SEU PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) chapter attended the (PRSSA)/International Conference in Austin, Texas in October 2018. Nearly 2,000 college students took part in the "Art of PR" themed conference, focusing on dynamic, complex and specialized topics, such as technology, social responsibility, stakeholder outreach, and crisis communication.



PRSSA Students. Fall 2018. Photo by Dr. Nancy Reiter-Salisbury.

Classroom Projects

Students in COMM 4326: Public Relations for Nonprofit Organizations (Instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**) class adopted the university's Department of Communication as their client for the Fall 2018 semester. Five teams were formed and tasked with evaluating the image of the department and the use of promotional communication. The students developed plans that included goals, objectives, strategies and tactics to adapt and expand the existing promotional communication efforts within the department. The teams used creative approaches to building awareness and understanding of the Communication major, such as a humorous "Mean Tweets" video featuring the faculty responding to tweets about communication as well as a COMM Department Instagram account to promote department news and activities.

Students in COMM 3360 Advertising Creative Strategy (instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**) worked on a student-learning project with Hungry Souls, a local nonprofit organization, to address food insecurity in Austin. The students worked in teams to develop an advertising plan and then designed posters, print ads, and social media messaging to build awareness of the organization and its mission, recruit volunteers and increase donations.

COMM 3309: Social Media for PR students embraced an entrepreneurial role to strategically implement St. Edward's mission "to confront the critical issues of society and to seek justice and peace." Through an experiential learning environment guided by **Dr. Nancy Reiter-Salisbury**, student teams developed and maintained comprehensive social media campaigns. Leveraging a variety of social media platforms, these campaigns educated and engaged stakeholders on the issues of: living a sustainable lifestyle, cleaning and protecting oceans, utilizing clean energy, and participating in democracy through voting.

Internships

During the 2018-19 academic year, 75 communication students completed the COMM 4350: Internship for the Communication Major course.

Some internship highlights include:

Samantha Balita and **Kathern Bingham** interned at Hahn Public Communications.

Brieanna Bowman interned at Livestrong.

Margeaux Labat completed her internship with Margin Walker Presents—an independent concert promotions agency based in Austin, Texas. As part of her internship **Margeaux** was assigned the position of Austin Music Awards (AMA) intern. Her primary responsibilities involved working on the social media marketing for the award show this year.



School of Arts & Humanities

John Walker completed his internship with The Austin Film Society (AFS).

Volunteering

Students enrolled in **Dr. Teresita (Tere) Garza's** Spring 2019 Communication and Popular Culture course completed over 400 volunteer hours in a weeklong volunteer service-learning project with South by Southwest (SXSW) the locally held international music, film, and interactive media convention and festival.



Communication and Popular Culture. Spring 2019. Photo by Dr. Tere Garza.



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