



Communication

Student Report 2019-2020

Activities and Accomplishments

Award

Conner Schee received the Outstanding Graduating Senior in Communication award (Spring 2020 Undergraduate Honors).

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 25 new members:

Zaini H. Ali
Chloe E. Chadick
Marcus A. Collins
Brennan M. Flynn
Jason W. Freed
Dante Gutierrez
Simmone C. Harding
Kailyn C. Hayes
Victoria T. Hoang
Jennifer Irving
Isabelle C. Jean
Kaitlin A. Junek
Daphne S. Kokkinis
Joseph D. Kulbeth
Margeaux Y. Labat
Catherine S. O'Brien
Brandon E. Paz
Nina Rocha
Kendyl E. Roman

Sierra N. Rozen
Joshua L. Saldivar
Hayden D. Steckel
Simona F. Taddei
Andrea N. Theis
Gianni M. Zorrilla

Building valuable relationships is the goal of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). And that was the mission of the Liz Carpenter Chapter of PRSSA at St. Edward's this year. Through enhancing their campus presence and leveraging targeted recruitment efforts, the SEU Chapter enjoyed a 10% increase in membership.

2019 PRSSA Officers:

Maria (Fernanda) Garcia Arroyo - President
Katya Melchor - Vice President
Judith Gonzalez - Public Relations Director
Austin Ortega - Treasurer
Emma Weber - Events Coordinator
Kailyn Hayes - Social Media Director

The 2020-21 SEU Chapter Officers (listed below) have planned a comprehensive calendar of professional development, networking and social activities.

Marcus Collins - President
Halle Lacy - Vice President
Kailyn Hayes - Secretary
Jacob Bryce - PR Director
Emma Weber - Events Coordinator
Albert Valverde - Treasurer
Brennan Flynn - Social Media Director

Academic Conferences

Janine Khammash (MLA student concentrating in Communication) was a panelist on the “Surviving and Thriving in the Mainstream of the Maelstrom” panel at the November 2019 National Communication Association conference. She also presented a paper, “When Data Gets Touchy: The Ethical and Health Implications of Wearable Technology” at the June 2019 Media Ecology Convention.

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On-Campus Scholarly Events

The following students' scholarship appeared in the 2020 SOURCE Conference Proceedings:

Neil Bogenrieder, "Personal Space: How Context of Environment Impacts Socio-Sexual Behavior" (Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Teri Varner**).

Ana Isabel, "Cien Años de Soledad y el Determinismo Tecnológico" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Georgia Seminet**).

Whiteaker James, "The Hateful Answer to Third Wave Feminism: Involuntary Celibates and The Gradual Slide into Hate" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Innes Mitchell**).

Joshua Saldivar, "69 Years after Jackie Robinson: The Legacy of Racism in Baseball Continues" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Stephanie Martinez**).

Albert Valverde, "Holy Cross Values" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Lori Peterson**).

Grace Watt, "Eye Contact: How Much is Too Much?" (Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Teri Varner**).

Mackenzie Wight, "'Actually, It's Sir': An Exploration into How Physical Characteristics Do Not Always Correlate with Gender" (Faculty Mentor: **Dr. Teri Varner**).

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

Taylor Garcia, "Substantial Style: How Fashion Trends and Styling Choices Informed the Greater American Narrative in the Modern Era" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Innes Mitchell**).

Whiteaker James, "Response to Feminism: A Dramatistic Analysis of Involuntary Celibates and their Ideological Perspective" (faculty mentor: **Dr. Innes Mitchell**).

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. The following students placed at the event:

1st Place: **Vince Martinez**, "Making Sexual Orientation a Protected Class"

2nd place: **Chloe Seminet**, "Nuclear Powers Sustainability"

3rd place: **Olivia Schneider**, "Hot N Cold, Left N Right"

Classroom Projects

Social justice campaign proposals were created in COMM 3337 *Principles of Public Relations* (Instructor: **Dr. Nancy Reiter-Salisbury**). Student teams created messaging and implemented comprehensive public relations tactics to educate target audiences on the importance of social issues and move them to action. The issues they tackled were food deserts in Texas, sustainable fashion practices, revoking of Iranian student visas, and sex-trafficking in Texas.

Social Media for Social Good campaigns were developed, implemented and maintained in COMM 3309 *Social Media for Public Relations* (Instructor: **Dr. Nancy Reiter-Salisbury**). Student teams coordinated weekly blogs and daily Twitter posts to raise awareness and promote engagement on the issues of sustainable living, personal financial responsibility, supporting mental health in college students, and decreasing plastics in the ocean.

In COMM 3337 *Principles of Public Relations* (Instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**), students partnered with the Munday Library to develop PR plans and tactics for promoting the visit of the St. John's Bible this year.

Students in COMM 4326: Public Relations for Nonprofit Organizations (Instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**) worked on a service-learning project during the Fall 2019 semester. The students conducted research in the area of food insecurity and then developed public relations plans to promote the work of Keep Austin Fed, a food recovery nonprofit that redistributes surplus food to people facing food insecurity.

The COMM 3360 *Advertising Creative Strategy* class (Instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**) wrote advertising plans and developed creative concepts to build awareness of the Half Helen Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by Chelsea Elliott (B.A. in Communication, 2012) to provide hearing and vision testing for children in low-income communities. This Spring 2020 service-learning project contributed to students earning the Experiential Learning for Social Justice Mission Marker.

During the Spring 2020 semester, each student in COMM 4352 *Special Topics: Crisis Communication* (Instructor: **Ms. Susan Whiteside**) partnered with a for-profit or nonprofit organization to write a Crisis Communication Plan ranging from identifying risk factors to designing templates to be used in crisis situations, all of which was customized to the specific partner organization.

Internships

During the 2019-20 academic year, 63 communication students enrolled in COMM 4350: Internship for the Communication Major.

Some internship highlights include:

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- **Simmone Harding** (Fall 2019) completed her internship at Breakaway Public Relations and was asked to continue with the firm in a senior intern role with increased responsibilities after graduation.
- **Riley Weiss** (Spring 2020) was selected for one of the highly sought-after internships in the Account Leadership area of GSD&M, the largest advertising agency in the southwestern U.S.

Alumni

Emmy award winning journalist **Brandon Benavides** was hired on as an Adjunct Instructor at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

Faith Castillo and **Manisha Verma** graduated from law school.

Austin Hestdalen (Communication and McNair Scholar alumnus) was awarded the Media Ecology Association 2019 Linda Elson Scholar Award for the Top Student Paper for his paper entitled, "Understanding the Medium of Exchange." **Austin** is currently pursuing his doctorate at Duquesne University.

Zanira Ghulamhussain was accepted into Syracuse University's graduate program in Media Studies.

Daphne Kokkinis was hired by SXSW's Film Department.

Tony Laudadio started a non-profit foundation called the Tony Foundation. The foundation, according to its website, provides "critical financial assistance to families affected by cancer" (<http://tonyfoundation.org/about/#tonys-story>).

Marilyn Lor is currently an Immigration Paralegal at Garcia & Garcia Attorneys at Law, P.L.L.C. As a student at St. Edward's University, Marilyn was involved in the multicultural board, was a member of the Hispanic Student Association, Seniors Staying Connected, and a volunteer for Foundation Communities of Austin and St. Edward's University.

For several years, **Deneice O'Connor** has worked in TV and film in New York. Recently, she was involved in the film, *Uncut Gems*, starring Adam Sandler.

Grace Pettis signed a record deal with Mpress Records. She completed work on her debut album with her band Nobody Girl's. The album will be released this summer. **Grace** was also competitively selected for a SXSW 2020 music showcase.

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Jass Roman has assumed additional responsibilities as a graphic designer at SocialWithin, an Austin advertising agency.

In February 2019, **Emily Wolfe** released a debut self-titled, full-length album, produced by Ben Tanner of the Alabama Shakes. Since graduating from SEU she has gone on to a successful career in music and was competitively selected for a 2020 SXSW music showcase.