

The Relay

A publication for PR students

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PRSSA hosts internship workshop

By Genevieve Kia Wilson

Bobbi Kingery, Career Services, stressed the importance of internships to the members of PRSSA Feb.6, during an internship workshop. She provided PRSSA with key information on how to search and secure an internship.

Within her presentation, Kingery first gave an exercise to stimulate interaction. Within the exercise, Kingery provided students with two internship postings and asked the student to pick which one was the best fit for them. Kingery then proceeded to tell PRSSA what terms to look for within internship postings and how to use that information in a cover letter.

Some of her key points included the following: Students should search everywhere for possible internships including networking, job and company sites; Use social media as a tool for possible jobs and internships; Make certain that their resumes are free of errors; Finally, be open-minded because an internship can be found almost anywhere or even created.

Professor Brian Sowa, co-adviser of PRSSA, agreed with Kingery's emphasis on the importance of tailoring the cover letter to the specific job. He said, "There is an art to them."

They each agree that the



Bobbi Kingery discussed the importance of internships with the members of PRSSA. She encouraged students to use every possible outlet to find an internship to gain experience.

Photo by Kelly Johnson

student should be trying to sell themselves to the company by promoting what they can do for the organization.

Terri Johnson, co-adviser of PRSSA, said "excellent advice" was given by Kingery.

Senior communication studies major and president of PRSSA, Tim Trahey said, "It

was great how Kingery stressed the importance of research because students often miss out on many opportunities."

Kingery is available for appointments in the Career Services office or rkingery@eiu.edu. She said she is booked weeks in advance, so students should sign-up soon.

"Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some hire public relations officers."

- Daniel Boorstin

Students juggle internships, school & more

By Kelly Johnson

Many students intern during the semester. These students have to balance their workload while they attend class. It is a tricky balance, but it is easy with a few tricks.

Two students, Beth Steele and Johnny Kraps, are currently going to school and interning simultaneously.

Being an intern is a time consuming job, as well as being a full time student. These two go above and beyond the expected requirements and are building their professionalism on the way.

Kraps, a senior communication studies major, is interning for The Lumpkin Family Foundation. This foundation establishes programs that support people who are innovators in health, education, and the en-

vironment. Kraps helps manage the foundation's website and social media, create flyers for events, and calculate the analytics for the website.

Steele, a senior journalism major, is interning for the Health Education Resource Center (HERC) on Eastern Illinois University's campus. HERC is affiliated with EIU's Health Services. It provides students and faculty with programs, resources and consultations. Steele works in the marketing/public relations aspect, creates promotional material and website content, and promotes the events the HERC hosts.

While Kraps and Steele are getting experience outside the classroom that is time consuming, it is manageable. Kraps interns 12 hours a week.

"I love being a student

intern," Kraps said. "It counts as class credit so it helps keep the work load at a reasonable level." Kraps has a very hectic schedule, he works in the morning three days a week, then has to make it back for class at 1 p.m.. Also, he has class in the morning two days a week and works on homework on those afternoons.

Steele may have a more relaxed semester. She only works four hours a week at HERC and planned her workdays strategically. "I was able to pick my hours. So I made sure the days I work I did not have class, or had class later," Steele said. "This way I am not rushed and can stay focused." Steele chose a schedule that let her manage her time.

"Internships are a great opportunity to get work experience before graduation, so

there's no reason not to try to find one." Kraps said. "I would say keep a detailed log of what you do, and to make sure to add things you produce to your portfolio. Also, try to take on extra assignments that add value to you." Kraps suggested.

"I would say to only do it if you have the time to dedicate to the internship." Steele said. "Building a resume is important but we are at Eastern to be students first and education is important. You do not want to overwork yourself because in the long run it will not benefit anyone." Steele stresses the importance of class before an internship.

Kristin Jording is interning at Consolidated Communications this semester, too.

Having an internship is valuable, but time management is an important aspect. Students do not want to be over stressed with both classes and interning.

The impact of social media on PR

By Alyssa Stockton

Social media is the latest and greatest for being in the loop. Companies are catching on and sponsoring ads on Facebook and promoting trends on Twitter. With features so easily accessed by the general public, social media is changing the way companies do public relations.

One-third of Americans use blogs to gather information and public relations practitioners have reached out to these blogging communities to pitch ideas and to even participate in the blogs.

Traditionally public relations go through journalists and have news releases to reach the public. With the new wave of social media taking over, comes the expansion of public relations to Facebook, multi-media blogs, videos, pictures and bursts of 140 character tweets.

Companies, too, write blogs and create websites. Thinking of a company that does not use the Internet to connect with customers is difficult. Large corporations and Fortune 500 companies have recognized the importance of social media tools and their accessibility to gain audiences and release media updates directly to those audiences. Social media is important to companies and consumers.

they are not face-to-face (with a publicist)," Armstrong said. "Social media has given better visuals and digital means saving money on printing and postage" which is never a bad thing in this economy.

"Death of the email pitch, rise of the tweet pitch" is number one on Bulldog Reporter's Daily Dog ranking of the Top Ten Public Relations and Social Media Predictions for 2012.

According to a 2009 College Board poll, 84 percent of students planning to attend college that fall reported having a personal account on a social media website.

"Social media is taking over," Ashley Wirkus, a sophomore nursing major said.

Social media is this generation's word of mouth, or as it is now

referred to the word of text or tweet. Most students text and leave telephones on all the time to keep in touch. Email seems to be less important as a way to keep in contact with others.



Photos courtesy of Google Images

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HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

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- Raise campus awareness on good drinking habits

Another internship opportunity is the social marketing internship through the communication studies department. Senior and communication studies major Heather Derby is currently interning there. "It's been a great learning experience for me because we have staged events and other things that will help me in the future," Derby said. Internships are available on and off campus. Students can contact Career Services or professors for more information on internships available.

Photo Courtesy of Heather Derby

Attend the PRSA Central Illinois Chapter Meeting March 1.

Meeting will be held at Swingers Grill in Bloomington-Normal. Featuring Henrik Rasmussen who will discuss international communication. Cost: \$20 for students, meal is provided.

RSVP to Jane Castellano at jcastellano@growmark.com by February 27.

LOOK OUT

St. Louis Professional-Amateur Day!

Friday, March 23

10 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Break-out groups on the various areas of public relations as well as a Q & A table. The cost will be \$25 per student.

Contact Terri Johnson at tjohnson@eiu.edu for more information.

New graduate school option for PR

By Michael Wolbers

Strategic Communications is just one of three new concentrations that graduate students in the Communication Studies department can choose from.

"We upgraded our MA program based on requests from current students, alumni and our graduate faculty," Dr. Olaf Hoerschelmann, graduate coordinator, said.

After hearing feedback from students and other research, Hoerschelmann and other members of the graduate faculty knew what changes to make to the program.

"Most responses indicated that people would prefer a 'tracked' program," Hoerschelmann said. Based on that information, the department designed three tracks for graduate students: human communication processes; strategic communication and critical/cultural

studies."

The way the graduate program is now structured allows students to even further specialize in their area, according to Hoerschelmann.

Other than their own specialty, students will be tasked to take electives out of their own concentration.

"A student in strategic communication will take a set of four core classes and will then be allowed to take four courses in the area of concentration," Hoerschelmann said. "All students will also take two elective classes outside of their area of concentration."

After taking the set of courses required, students will then write a creative thesis or a detailed applied project as a capstone experience to finish their master's degrees.

As for how students and faculty have responded to the new strategic communication

option, Hoerschelmann said that it is "too early to tell."

According to Hoerschelmann, students have been very interested in the new option and have been working on their creative thesis' for next year.

"We are only in the second semester of the program, but I think students have been very interested in the new strategic communications area of concentration," Hoerschelmann said.

Prof. Terri Johnson, journalism, noted that strategic communication is one of the newer terms for public relations, along with integrated marketing communication, integrated communication, and organizational and corporate communication.

She added that the Public Relations Society of America is working on redefining PR in terms more people can understand because it can be referred to in so many different ways.



Graduate school is an option for students who wish to further their education. The strategic communications program is a part of the Communication Studies masters program.

Photo Courtesy of wordle.net

General Information

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