

# TBD: TO BE DISCOVERED

*A Newsletter from the Department of Communication and Media Studies*

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## **Curriculum Changes**

*by Braden Jones*

The curriculum has undergone several changes to ensure student success and create new possibilities for students outside of the department to get involved in media studies. Starting in the fall of 2023, declared majors will take a course called Exploration of Communication and Media. This will provide the skills necessary for all our disciplines. They will receive knowledge on how to consume and communicate on different media platforms to better understand the constantly changing media environment from all perspectives.

In the fall of 2023, there will no longer be options in broadcast, print and public relations. Instead, students will have the choice to elect to pursue these options as certificates of proficiency. This will become a part of their journalism major. This new process will allow students to have the opportunity to walk away from ATU with more credentials and make it possible for non-degree-seeking students to obtain certificates in these areas.

Finally, the social media influencing major will be offered in the fall of 2023. The courses for this major will be:

Comm 3133 Digital Civility  
Jour 3173 Public Relations Principles  
Jour 4023: Social Media  
Th 3263: Narrative Film Production  
Th 4393: Social Media Influencing  
Comm/Jour 1023 Exploration of Comm/Media  
Comm 4823 Senior Capstone *or* Jour 4823 Senior Capstone  
Three hours of approved performance course  
Six hours approved elective

## PRSSA Field Trip

*by Braden Jones*

On Friday, Feb. 17, the Arkansas Tech PRSSA chapter visited the Arkansas PRSA meeting in Little Rock. Each month a meeting is conducted to allow media professionals within the state to connect, discuss current industry topics and foster new connections. The Arkansas PRSA chapter invites students to attend these meetings to gain insight into their future careers in the industry.

The Arkansas Tech chapter attended the meeting to learn about the RPIE process in public relations. This process involves four distinct categories in a strategic public relations plan. They include: research, planning, implementation and evaluation. The overview of the plan was presented by Chapter Liaison Casey Pearce. After the overview, two public relations professionals who were APR certified presented real-world examples from their work. One came from a non-profit worker while the other provided a strategic plan from a public relations firm. The non-profit RPIE process was delivered by Stella Prather. This plan was formed around her organization at the time, the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries. Carson Horn, from the Communications Group, represented the PR firm perspective. His RPIE process presentation explained The Communications Group's involvement with the 50th anniversary of Arkansas Soybean Month.

The Arkansas Tech students who attended this PRSA-led workshop received insight into the RPIE process from non-profit and PR firm perspectives. Hannah Wyatt, Denzil Navolt, Ellie White and Braden Jones all were given a certificate for their participation in the workshop.



## Theater Presents One Act

*by Shakayla Devoe*

"All the Ways the World Will End ...But Not You" is a one act production written by Ian McWethy and Jason Pizzarello in 2018. Actress Natalie Canerday, who is commonly known for her roles in "Sling Blade" and "October Sky" is directing this production to be shown in late March. Canerday was born and raised in the Russellville area before she followed her dreams to Hollywood.

In this production, TED Talk hosts Able and Meg guide the audience through a variety of possible apocalypse outcomes. Meg and Able teach the audience how to survive everything from blatant robot takeovers to dysfunctional survivalist groups. The hosts cautiously guide the galaxy's cutest alien invasion! The end of the world will be a confusing time, but that's only if we make it out alive. We probably won't, but just in case this play will definitely help--we promise.

The show will be held March 31 through April 2 at the Arkansas Tech Techionery located across from Baz- Tech. Student-led short films will also be featured.



## Time Out For Tech

*by Michelle Galli*

Tech held its annual Time Out For Tech event on Feb. 23. This event featured many of Arkansas Tech University's registered student organizations, including some from the Department of Communication and Media Studies. Among those featured were PRSSA, SPJ and The Arka Tech student newspaper.

Students who represented the RSOs gave prospective students information about RSOs they may be interested in joining when enrolling at Arkansas Tech University.

Around 1,400 high school seniors registered to attend the Time Out For Tech Event. Including family and parents, the total pre-registered participants totaled to 2,328.

Potential Tech students got to see many of the on-campus organizations. They also were given opportunities to win scholarships to Tech.







## SPJ Fundraiser

*by Hannah Wyatt*

SPJ spread the love with Jerry on Valentine's Day with a photobooth and raffle fundraiser in the lobby of Brown. Participants were able to take photos, purchase candy grams, and raffle tickets to win a prize. SPJ raised around \$100.



## Media Writing Guest Speaker

*by Tommy Mumert, assistant professor of journalism*

Ryan Harmon was a guest in Tommy Mumert's Media Writing class March 2, where students had the opportunity to sharpen their interviewing skills with a press conference style interview of Harmon. A 2017 journalism graduate, Harmon auditioned for a spot on American Idol in 2020. The video of his audition attracted 10 million views on Facebook and 1.5 million views on YouTube. The singer/songwriter from Lamar won an Arkansas Country Music Award last year for best acoustic act. While at Tech, Harmon was a regular contributor to The Arka Tech with music reviews.