December 2021 Newsletter

Baylor Journalism Alumni, You Can Encourage the Next Generation

All the Wrong Perceptions

Did you ever experience false perceptions of your major and of the Baylor Journalism, PR and New Media Department when you were at Baylor? Was journalism mixed up with English, communications and professional writing and rhetoric when you were a student?

When you picked a major in the JPRNM Department, you most likely encountered misunderstandings of your career path, your future plan and your professional credibility due to your major in the JPRNM Department. Students today are certainly experiencing the same struggles. Creative majors often aren't recognized in the professional arena the same way as noncreative majors. As a previous Baylor student, you can offer insight and wisdom. You can help mentor and encourage current students to continue on their paths, despite the numerous false perceptions. The following myths are what current students say are the most common false perceptions.

Myth No. 1: PR Professionals Equal "Spin Doctors"

Often, the perception of public relations professionals is that they unethically cover up bad publicity, don't take ownership for wrongdoing and use any means necessary to protect their company's or client's reputation. While there are professionals who don't maintain ethics consistent with the values of the profession, Baylor's journalism department teaches ethical practices at every turn. Students are encouraged and taught to communicate honestly, transparently and responsibly. By mentoring a current student, you can continue to instill professional ethics and course-correct someone else's journey to uphold practices worthy of a Baylor degree using your own experiences. Current students need real life examples of honest PR and opportunities to network with ethical professionals.

Myth No. 2: Journalism is Dying Because Newspapers and Print Media Are Dying

While print media is certainly less popular than it used to be, there is still a specific audience that desires this type of media. Newspapers have also transitioned to a digital format and make effective use of hyperlinks, photos, videos and interactive tools. As an alumnus or alumna, you can instruct students on communication techniques you've picked up over the years. Many principles of print media transition well to digital media.

Baylor senior Katy Durham had her own false perceptions that journalism was outdated before she got into the major.

"When I was in high school, I told myself I would never major in journalism because I thought it was dying, then I learned through my PR classes how relevant and versatile the industry still is and how it's adapting to a digital age. Now, I can't imagine myself majoring in anything but journalism/PR," Durham said.

Myth No. 3: People in Creative Majors Don't Have an Actual Career Path or Plan

While a career path in the arts is certainly less clear than a traditional career, a lot of individuals in this department still have concrete goals and steps to pursue to get to their desired career point. However, you don't know what it takes unless you're in it yourself, which is all the more reason to have current or retired professionals guide students. You know what it takes. You've been there. You can help those who are there now and are headed where you are. When you come alongside students and walk with them, you can help cement career paths and clarify goals and steps. You know what worked and what didn't. Let's pass the torch to the next generation and with it, some advice.

Most Missed AP Style Rules

Rule No. 1:

No Oxford comma.

Rule No. 2:

Toward not towards.

Rule No. 3:

Spell out numbers one through nine.

Spring 2022 Schedule

- **Jan. 21,** *8 a.m.* **— Alumni and Student Connect Breakfast**
- **Jan. 29,** *3 p.m.* **— Resume and Portflio Workshop**
- **Feb. 18,** *8 a.m. - 4 p.m.* **— Mentor Interest Meeting**
- **Feb. 24,** *5 p.m. - 8 p.m.* **— Networking Event for Students**
- **March 25,** *noon - 3 p.m.* **— Faculty Q&A Panel**
- **April 13,** *6 p.m.* **— Alumnus Speaker: Faith in Journalism**
- **May 4-6,** *8 a.m. - 1 p.m.* **— Student and Mentor Coffee Mixer**

Rule No. 4:
When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

Rule No. 5:
Express time with figures and a space, followed by a.m. or p.m. Use figures except for noon and midnight.

Rule No. 6:
Farther refers to physical distance. Further refers to an extension of time or degree.