

Important Dates:

March 12: Website Workshop

March 12-15: PRSSA National Assembly

March 26: Media Relations & executive board elections

April 16: Alumni Panel

April 23: Lifestyle PR

Letter from the President

PRSSA family,

Someone once asked, if you can't brand yourself, then how can you expect to brand another person, company or organization? Think about that for a moment, and ask yourself if you are doing everything you possibly can to separate yourself from the other hundreds of thousands of aspiring public relations professionals in the world.



De'Andra Roberts
PRSSA at LSU President

The answer is that you can always be doing more, and our Chapter is here to help. From our website workshop happening in March to our alumni panel in April, there will be countless amounts of advice offered to you from already-established professionals in the public relations industry. In addition, your executive board is always available to offer advice on ways you can take your personal brand to the next level.

But don't always rely on other people. You can use your free time to design personal business cards (I use Zazzle.com!), freshen up your social media accounts, and create cohesive background images. Start a blog, and volunteer to do PR work for family and friends.

Your personal brand is the foundation for your career. Make it count!

Best,
Dee

FROM THE EDITOR'S

The PRogress Report is PRSSA at LSU's revamped, monthly newsletter produced by students, for students. We strive to bring you current, PR-related news, but we would love your help. Did you have a fulfilling internship experience? Want to share your social media expertise? If you are interested in contributing, please contact PR Director Kelsey King at kking32@lsu.edu. It's a great way to get published and have some portfolio-worthy material. Plus, members will receive 1 point toward their active membership. Thanks!

Join the PRSSA at LSU executive board!

It's almost that time of year again. Executive board elections are just around the corner.

Do you want to get more involved with PRSSA at LSU? Do you want more hands-on PR or leadership experience? You are the perfect candidate for the executive board!

If you have any questions, contact the current executive board! All members are more than happy to help.

Successful Live Tweeting

Whether it's the Super Bowl or a presentation, live tweeting has become a way for social media users to start conversations about current events. But is this always a good thing? Live tweeting can be worthwhile when you want to share your opinion on that Nationwide commercial, but it may not be so great when you miss the left shark's blunder in Katy Perry's Super Bowl performance because you're glued to your Twitter timeline.

Live tweeting can add a lot of information and spark a lot of conversations, but it can also take away from truly experiencing an event. Live tweeting events puts us in the position of constantly looking for that one-liner or blooper moment that we instantly document on social media. A moving speech or an influential presentation deserves full attention, not a hunting and pecking method of choosing only what we want to tweet. According to socialmediatoday.com, it's recommended to tweet at an event every six to nine minutes. Imagine watching an hour-long TV show, planning to tweet every six minutes. That puts you on Twitter 10 times throughout the show, constantly refreshing your feed, reading new tweets and writing a tweet to send. After the show is over, did you really get to enjoy it? Or did you miss a key point?

Live tweeting is a way to connect socially with others who are enjoying the same event, but when we place too much focus on the one-liners or the gif-worthy moments, we may miss lasting impressions. So if you're going to live tweet, don't spend too much time crafting the perfect hashtag. Immerse yourself in what's happening in real life – your Twitter followers will wait.



Mattie Eversole
Junior

POINT SYSTEM

To be considered an active member of PRSSA, dues must be paid and 5 points must be earned by the end of the semester. Active members are eligible to run for officer positions and are able to receive awards given at the end of semester and/or year. Active members will also have access to PRSSA National Conference funds and in-state & out-of-state agency tours. Each activity is worth one point:

- Attending a business meeting
- Participating in a volunteer effort or service project
- Involvement in affiliated student-run firm, ImPRint Communications
- Involvement in a committee formed by the Executive Board
- Assistance in fundraising for PRSSA
- Attending a PRSSA workshop or special event
- Writing an article for PRSSA at LSU's or PRSSA National's newsletter and/or blog
- Attending PRSSA National Events, including National Conference, Regional Conference or National Assembly

What Studying Abroad Taught me about Communication

Last semester I had the opportunity to study at the University of Nottingham in England as a mass communication major. It was an amazing, challenging, life-changing experience for so many reasons. I could talk about that for hours! However, in this article I'll share some of the specific things I gained from this experience.

If there is one thing that I learned, it is the importance of flexibility and patience. Immersing yourself in an entirely strange country's culture overnight, and alone, is enough to teach anyone a few lessons. I was lucky to meet a couple of Americans pretty quickly, but we still had to grapple through the transitions, albeit together. I think we all had the notion that England would be easy. Nope. In reality, I had to learn new words, phrases, methods and culturally appropriate interactions across the board. Everything from ordering food to speaking of the rain was different.

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Q: What is the best piece of professional advice you've received?

A: It sounds cliché, but my favorite piece of advice related to work is to find something you love and figure out a way to get paid for it. I've worked at LSU for 2 years and there hasn't yet been a day that I didn't want to go to work.

Q: What is the most important thing we (as students) should do before entering the workforce?

A: I wish someone would have told me that your first job (or first few jobs) might not be the one you really want, but that doesn't mean it won't happen one day. I'm extremely lucky that my job in Memphis and my job now are the exact jobs I want. However, if I would have known this fact, I might have appreciated my first job even more.

Q: What is unique about your Communication across the Curriculum?

A: Our program is the only one of its kind in the country. Other universities are now calling on us to use our model. We've also been recognized as a program of excellence by the Conference on College Composition and Communication in 2010.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

Jason Mollica
President of JRM Comm



Q: What is your favorite part about being in the public relations field?

A: I love being able to help businesses, big and small, find ways to think differently about success. It doesn't all have to be by the book. Thinking smarter can be great. I also enjoy being able to help the next generation of PR pros find their way.

Q: What is the coolest experience you've had while at your current job?

A: I would say starting my own consultancy would be the coolest experience. Seeing where I started and where I am now, it has been a thrill to be able to do things I never thought I would do.

Q: Describe a typical day at work.

A: My "typical" day changes all the time. There are days that I'm able to do all of my client work by noon. Then, there are days that I work from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m., and then do more work after my kids go to bed. When you love what you do, it doesn't seem typical; it's enjoyable.

Q: What is the most important thing we (as students) should do before entering the workforce?

A: Know how to write well. If you need to take two or three writing courses to be the best you can be at it, do it.

PRSSA Star Chapter Award Requirements:

One of our initiatives this year is to win the PRSSA National Star Chapter Award. We won the award last year at the 2014 PRSSA National Conference and plan to win it again in 2015. We would appreciate your help in achieving this goal! In order to win the award, Chapters must complete 8 out of the 10 criteria and submit an application to PRSSA Nationals:

1. ~~Initiate and complete at least one community service project.~~
2. Strengthen your relationship with your PRSA sponsor Chapter.
3. Give attention to ethics in at least one Chapter meeting.
4. ~~Confirm that at least one Chapter member applies for an individual National PRSSA scholarship or award.~~
5. Confirm that your Chapter applied for at least one national PRSSA award.
6. Conduct a high school outreach session and/or promote Affiliate membership to a nearby community college.
7. ~~Confirm attendance by at least one Chapter member at National Conference, National Assembly, a Regional Conference or Leadership Rally.~~
8. Gain positive attention for your Chapter in at least one campus or community publication or other media.
9. ~~Extend an invitation to students/faculty from other disciplines to attend at least one Chapter meeting.~~
10. Confirm that at least 10 percent of your graduating seniors applied for PRSA Associate Membership.

What Studying Abroad Taught me about Communication, cont'd.

Take, for instance, simple clothing terms. Trousers are pants, pants are underwear, jumper means sweater, and a Brit would never use the word sweater unless they've been hanging around with an American. That first bit about pants can get pretty embarrassing when pondering outfit choices in public. Suddenly, "should I wear pants tomorrow?" was worthy of weird looks from strangers. There are a few other really funny ones, but you'll have to ask me about those.

As for the actual "study" part of this experience, UoN prides itself on being a "global" university. They foster very strong relations with schools around the world, including LSU, and host thousands of exchange students every year. Further, UoN has campuses in China and Malaysia, with frequent student transfers among all three campuses. In particular, the media department focuses on teaching its diverse student base skills that will help them in all three of the, arguably, largest media landscapes in the world. Most lectures cover strategies and examples from the United States, United Kingdom and China.

My teammates for my final class project – from Italy, Singapore, South Korea and the UK – came from extremely different media landscapes and cultures. What transpired was



Tara Hebert
Junior

one of the best and most rewarding group experiences of my life. As a result, I can confidently say I can overcome the cultural challenges that are becoming increasingly prevalent in our global industry.

This experience gave me a new awareness of my environment and drove me to a much more thorough understanding of what diversity really means. My semester at University of Nottingham gave me a truly global education experience.

In the end, our group's franchise, "UCI: Undercover Criminal Investigation," received the green light as the most viable idea. This earned us high marks in the class -- and the success also underscored the pride we all felt from pulling so much hard work together.

While I can't guarantee that you will get to work with many different cultures if you study abroad, I can say one thing for sure. Pushing out of your comfort zone with such an experience in any country will only enhance your communication skills and help you to feel much more prepared to take the world by storm in your professional career.

Internships and Sticky Notes

Many college students spend a great deal of their time preparing for interviews in hopes of landing the perfect internship. But what happens once you finally land the position you've been pining for? I once held a marketing internship at a tech company and found myself in a whole new arena. On your journey to professional perfection, I'd like to share some tips I've learned during my internship that will help your inner intern shine.

Tip 1: Make plenty of mistakes, but don't make the same mistake twice.

If you walk away from an internship without having made a single mistake, odds are you didn't learn anything or step outside of your comfort zone.

A couple of years ago I stumbled across a piece of advice that I still remember to this day. The advice is simple: make as many mistakes as possible during your internship - so many that you have to write them down on sticky notes to remember not to make them again. This sounds counterintuitive, right? You might be saying to yourself, "Who wants to showcase their mistakes on brightly colored sticky notes to their officemates or, even worse, their boss?" The answer is probably no one.

In my opinion, this advice has more to do with not making the same mistake twice, and less to do with an embarrassing array of sticky notes as your new office décor. Whatever method you choose, the point is to be mindful of every mistake you make and learn from it. The only way to become better at your work is to make hundreds of new mistakes, while never giving up along the way.

Tip 2: Ask thoughtful, intelligent questions that deliver results.

As an intern, it's important to know the right questions to ask to get the job done. Sometimes, this is easier said than done. Between seeking clarity from your boss on a project and getting carried away with dozens of petty questions, it can be difficult to find a happy medium. I once asked my boss to explain the term "cloud computing" to me. My boss responded by emailing me an ebook entitled "Cloud Computing for Dummies," a resource I could have easily found myself. Point taken.

Before interrupting your boss with just any question that comes to mind, take the initiative to do some research on your own, whether that means exhausting Google for "cloud computing" definitions or gaining insight from other employees in the office. Use any and all resources at your disposal. It's okay to ask a question – just make sure it's not something you can't figure out on your own.

Tip 3: Always be eager to learn and never act entitled.

Your job as an intern is to learn as much as possible and to do so enthusiastically. If you already knew everything you needed to know, then you wouldn't be interning. Something I struggled with was knowing when to speak up and share my unsolicited opinion with my superiors and when to hold back. I learned to listen more than I talked, especially to what my boss and superiors were saying. If you have a really great idea for a project, be realistic about it. If you're not asked to give your opinion, only bring it up if you think it's relevant and fits the company's budget and strategy.

Tip 4: Keep track of your accomplishments and reflect on your experience.

During the course of your internship, you'll be completing so many tasks that by the time it's over, it may be hard to remember all that you've accomplished. It's a good idea to jot down the projects and tasks you're working on, even if they don't seem important at the moment. This makes it easier to update your resume in the future.

As your internship comes to an end, having a list of all the projects you've worked on - both big and small - will help you to better evaluate your overall experience and what you learned. When you review your list of accomplishments, ask yourself questions about the value you contributed and how you can improve your skills in the future. This will help you to gain insight about yourself that can be great talking points for future job interviews.

With these tips in mind, go forth and conquer your next internship like a true pro! Each internship experience is unique, so get excited as you build a road to your own professional success.



*Sarah Voelkel
Graduate Student*

