

TBD: TO BE DISCOVERED

A Newsletter from the Department of Communication and Media Studies

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Plan of Action

*By Dr. David Eshelman,
department head and professor
of communication*

The Department of Communication and Media Studies is eager to see many new faces among the fantastic students that we already have. To recruit more students to our university and, specifically, to our majors, we have formulated the following plans:

- Introduce innovative curriculum ideas. We have proposed changes to our majors that allow more chances of interconnection among the various disciplines housed within the department.
- Improve our social media presence. You may notice that we are doing a better job posting on the ATU Communication and Media Studies Facebook page. We plan to go further in the spring semester and push more content to more platforms.
- Host and participate in more recruitment events. Some ideas include on-campus sessions with high schoolers, like Journalism Day and the Theatre program's matinee performances of "The Crucible" (all in October).

Here is how you can help us in our endeavors:

- First, tell all your friends about our programs. We would love to see your siblings or high school friends---or other interested parties---come to ATU and study with us.
- Like our Communication and Media Studies Facebook page. Share some of our links if you think there is interest. Do you have ideas for content? Let us know!
- Consider participating in recruitment events. Would you like to help out with on-campus events? Would you like to visit a high school? Let us know!
- Give us your ideas. We have a lot of plans here; but we would love your ideas.



Drs. Johnson and Hudkins, along with Graduate Assistant Shakayla DeVoe, represent the department at a recruitment event during a recent football game.

Debate and Forensics Makes A Return

By Dr. Gabriel Adkins, professor of communication and debate and forensics program director

The ATU Debate and Forensics program is currently rebuilding in preparation for a return to live tournament competition after two and a half years of competing virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

This year's smaller team will focus on returning to state/national championship form. The three returning members from the 2020 team (Sarah Pollock, Hannah Wyatt and Scottie Lawrence) are being joined by a cadre of novice debaters attending weekly coaching/practice sessions to master the skills required for competition success. The team anticipates participating in its first tournament later this month (October), with two or three more tournaments scheduled for fall 2022 semester.

During the last season in which live tournaments were featured in the IPDA schedule, ATU earned the rank of the top team in the state of Arkansas and was awarded the Arkansas State Championship at the Southern Forensics Tournament in January of 2020. The ATU debaters are looking forward to a return to the live debate format where they had gained recognition as one of the top schools in the IPDA by consistently placing in the top 5-10 programs in the nation since joining the IPDA in 2011.

During this period, the school hosted both the IPDA National Championship Tournament and Convention (2017) and the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament (2018). During this period, ATU also placed in the national rankings (ranking as high as second place overall in novice debate). It produced its first national debate tournament champion in 2017, with Senior Michael O'Brien earning the National Championship in the Junior Varsity division of IPDA.

In January of 2023, the ATU debate team will open their semester competition schedule with a defense of their 2020 state title at the Southern Forensics Championship tournament. For further information about the debate and forensics program at ATU, please contact the program director, Dr. Gabriel Adkins at gadkins@atu.edu.

Arka Tech Plans Podcast

By Tommy Mumert, assistant professor of journalism

The Arka Tech's first podcast will debut when "The Feminine Urge" is released in mid-October. Arka Tech staffer Trinity Lisk and her project partner, Neveah Montoya, will write and produce the podcast. Lisk serves as the newspaper's primary editorial writer and has been a staff writer since fall of 2020.

Lisk describes the podcast as "a chronological exploration of women in media, starting in the golden age of Hollywood. We will discuss how the media shapes culture and reflects the changing role of women in American history."

In addition, Lisk said, "we will also tackle the importance of diversity and gather input from students, faculty, and potentially other guests."

"I am excited for The Arka Tech to expand into podcasting," Tommy Mumert, faculty advisor for The Arka Tech, said. "The Arka Tech is just months away from its 100th birthday. At the same time, we continue looking for new platforms to use for our storytelling. That is a credit to the leadership of the newspaper's editors and the efforts of the staff."

ATU Theatre Presents "The Crucible"

by *Kyndal Atkinson*

Arkansas Tech University Theatre and Film is preparing for its production of "The Crucible", which is a fictional play based on the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. Written by Arthur Miller, it tells the story of a village that becomes embroiled in a witch hunt. The people of Salem live in a constant state of fear and hysteria as more and more people are accused of witchcraft.

This is the largest production ATU Theatre and Film has hosted in recent memory with 28 actors and 16 technical crew members.

Faith Spencer, a recent ATU graduate, is directing the production. Spencer states "It is important to present a show like "The Crucible". There are misconceptions within the world, and there is a tendency to not attempt to understand these misconceptions. Due to these misconceptions, figurative witch hunts ensue whether it be for power, greed, or ignorance. 'Witch hunts' like these occur today whether it be for the rights of women, racial equality, gun rights, or LGBTQ+ rights. Directing a show like this is important in bringing attention to the current state of our world and seeing the consequences that come from these actions."

The production is being assisted by students taking Stagecraft Techniques, students employed by the Theatre/Film fellowship program, and volunteers in the tech crew. Because of this, the set was erected just four days after the first rehearsal, and the majority of the costumes are handmade.

Pre-sold performances for area high school groups will be at 10 a.m. on Oct. 27-28. Performances open to the public will run at 7 p.m. from Oct. 27-29, at the Techionery Theatre. Tickets are \$5 and will be available at the box office the night of the performances.

Tune In For Radio Plays

by *Braden Jones*

Theatre will be continuing its presence on the radio this semester with the production of several radio plays. These plays will be aired on the KXRJ 91.9 FM station and www.atu.edu/broadcast. One of these plays has been selected for the Playwriting Panel at the South Central Modern Language Association Convention held in Memphis this October.

Currently, there are several plays being edited for production. The first is *Candida* by George Bernard Shaw. There will be two episodes for this production and will star Siddalee Malone, Midori Jones, Tim McCoy, and Tara Malone. *Mercedes and the Count* (from *The Count of Monte Cristo*), starring Tim McCoy, Siddalee Malone, and Midori Jones, is also being edited now. Episode 26 of *Concealed Carrie: Diamond State Crime Fighter* titled "The Community Theater", and episode 27 of *Concealed Carrie: Diamond State Crime Fighter* titled "The Werewolves", are also in the editing stage for this semester.

Episode 28 of *Concealed Carrie: Diamond State Crime Fighter* titled "The Italian Count", and *The Florist Shop* will both be recorded at a later date in the semester. The *Florist Shop* will be directed by theatre major Courtney Mercier. The *Mercedes and the Count* production has been selected for inclusion as part of the Playwriting Panel at the South Central Modern Language Association Convention in Memphis.

For any information regarding the upcoming events and a schedule of the productions please visit the arkansastechnews.com article regarding the Fall 2022 Theatre Radio Plays.



ATU students rehearse for the upcoming production of "The Crucible."

Journalism Students Go Nuclear

by Elli White

This past month, students within PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) and SPJ (Society of Professional Journalists) were invited to a "media day" hosted by Arkansas Nuclear One (ANO). On Sept. 22, students and SPJ advisor Megan Toland arrived at ANO ready to learn more about Arkansas's only nuclear facility located right here in Russellville. Throughout the day, students were taught how nuclear energy works, how our local plants operate and were given the opportunity to experience a day on the job through a training simulator. Most importantly, students were walked through the emergency protocols of the facility and the important role of the media when it comes to emergency procedures and response. Students walked away with a better understanding of ANO, and of the importance and opportunities ATU journalists have once they graduate.



Journalism students traveled to Arkansas Nuclear One's "Media Day" and learned how the facility communicates both with public and media outlets.

Upcoming Events

Arkansas Tech's Theatre and Film Department's production of "The Crucible" opens 7 p.m. on October 27.

SPJ will be hosting a silent auction in the Energy Center from 9 a.m. October 25 to 2 p.m. October 26.

SPJ will be hosting a "Journalism Day" from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for students from local high schools.