The New Public Relations Major

This semester, Kutztown University introduced the BS in Public Relations, which is housed in the English Department. The PR major is a mixture of newly created PR classes, and courses from the professional writing and communication programs. Some of the courses include: Personal Public Relations, Integrated Marketing Communication, Crisis Communication, and Social Media Writing. In addition to the PR-focused classes, PR majors will complete a three-credit internship and are required to take a two-part agency course. For this course, students will communicate with a real client and do public relations work for them in the new PR lab, now under renovation in Old Main. This space will look like a “New York coffee house” with a laptop bar, display monitors, a poster printer, and a lounge for meeting new clients. The lab is currently in the architectural stages, but it should be up and running in spring 2019.

In terms of employability, Public Relations advertised jobs have grown by nearly 45% between January and February 2016 alone, according to the Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI). The demand for qualified PR specialists is expected to rise in the near future and the PR program will prepare our students to take these positions.
Graduating in December, political science major Arlin Salazar is currently working under the House Democratic Leader, Frank Dermody and his legislative staff. She's interning in Harrisburg, experiencing what it's like to pass bills, attend caucus, and communicate with the public.

Salazar’s interest in political science started when she would tag along with her mother to vote. “I thought it was the most exciting thing—standing in line, waiting to go into the booth...” With her parents being from the Dominican Republic, Salazar also had an interest in international relations. “I've always been interested in other countries and how the US interacts with them.” These interests guided her to become a political science major at Kutztown.

Before Kutztown, Salazar attended Reading Area Community College. She heard about the political science program at Kutztown and came to campus for orientation. Talking with the political science faculty solidified her decision to study here. “[The faculty] really ignited a fire in me,” Salazar comments. She knew she loved political science but coming to Kutztown and experiencing what the major entailed only enhanced her desire to be a part of the political world.

Salazar desperately wanted real-world experience before she graduated. One of her professors, Dr. Holoviak from the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, told her to apply for the Harrisburg internship with the State System of Pennsylvania. She got the internship and loves it. Every day is different for Salazar. She does a lot of research writing, interacts with the citizens affected by the proposed bills, and has face-to-face interaction with Frank Dermody. Salazar attends meetings, responds to constituent issues, and helps his legislative staff deal with problems within his district. She recently worked on a bill just passed by the House that would require people convicted of domestic abuse to quickly surrender guns.

Salazar is proud of being awarded the internship and what she has achieved in the position. She has also participated in the process of law-making and comments, “I never knew that so many people had to view a bill and so many people can change it, and then they have to vote on the changes. It's not as easy as people think.”

Salazar continues to pursue her passion in political science and plans to work in a federal agency. She encourages fellow students to think about what they want and remember why they’re in school. “Your experience is what you make it. I just encourage everyone to find what they like.”

Dean’s Corner
Dr. David Beougher

It is an exciting time to be part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences! Faculty are deeply engaged with students in the classrooms and labs, and through advising and grading. Many members of our community are presenting their research, engaging their scholarly communities as well as serving our local community in a variety of ways. Students are learning more about their world – and themselves in the process. We are implementing the new Gen Ed 2018, new programs (like the BS in Public Relations), and new classes, all combining with our tradition of excellence that has served students so well for so long.

November seems to be the time for developing our talents and understanding as we determine how each of us will unleash our potential. The most exciting life journeys involve twists and turns, ups and downs, challenges and change. Our features in this edition of The Collage show you two ways that others have travelled. I encourage you to discover the opportunity to leave the defined trails as you find your path in life.