

Eric M. Eckert

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EDUCATION

M.A.	Missouri State University , Springfield, MO English-Creative Writing	2008
B.A.	Truman State University , Kirksville, MO Communications-Journalism	1999

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Outreach **January 2022 – Present**

Temple College, Temple, TX

As Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Outreach, I lead Temple College's marketing and recruitment teams and manage an annual budget of more than \$375,000. Since my arrival in January 2022, we:

- Launched "Your Community's College," a broad and dynamic visibility campaign that fully embraces our ties to our service-area communities
- Realized a 25% increase in fall enrollment from 2021-2022 and a 22% increase in spring enrollment from 2022-2023, the first enrollment increases in many years
- Launched the new Temple College website
- Grew our Recruitment Team to meet the needs of our service-area communities and school districts
- Developed a campus-wide Recruitment Task Force to build synergy and tear down institutional silos
- Rebuilt our marketing team to include robust graphic design, photography, videography and media center functions
- Restructured our media and advertising strategies
- Introduced a new mascot
- Launched Temple College Athletics' first live-streaming and play-by-play services
- Increased our community outreach activities, including a focus on creating a college-going culture among elementary and middle school students, including the launch of an Adopt-A-School pilot program
- Expanded our on-campus experience to include increased numbers of individual and group tours, a new Leopard Preview Day, revamped Open Houses, and more!

**Assistant Director for Faculty Development
Office of Media and Public Relations**

September 2016 – January 2022

Baylor University, Waco, TX

I led the Baylor University Media and Public Relations team's efforts to raise the profile of Baylor faculty, their research and expertise. This included building and maintaining a list of top-tier faculty experts; training faculty to work with reporters and provide expert commentary; pitching Baylor's success stories to national, statewide and local outlets; and creating media opportunities via strategic marketing campaigns (hot topics, op-eds, pitches). This resulted in millions of dollars of earned media and helped Baylor raise its national and international profile as it approached R-1 status.

- Built and maintained a directory of top-tier faculty experts
- Recruited faculty researchers and experts to participate in media training
- Trained faculty to work with online, print, radio, video, and podcast media outlets to provide expert commentary
- Pitched Baylor's success stories to national, statewide, and local outlets
- Created media opportunities via strategic communications campaigns (hot topics, op-eds, media pitches, social media strategies, and research stories)
- Led the Marketing & Communications content strategy implementation team to develop monthly plans for Baylor's social media and online marketing opportunities
- Sought partnerships and opportunities to advocate and showcase Baylor faculty experts via speaking engagements, podcasts, column writing, etc.

**Media Communications Specialist
Office of Media and Public Relations**

April 2014 – September 2016

Baylor University, Waco, TX

- Raised the profile of Baylor faculty experts and research to assist in recruiting efforts for top-tier faculty, staff, and students
- Built the University's Hot Topics campaign to showcase faculty experts and researchers
- Bolstered the Baylor University brand via strategic messaging to constituents
- Developed and launched initiatives – specifically, a new content marketing strategy – to place positive university stories in national, regional, state, and local media outlets
- Collaborated with colleagues in social media, photography, video, magazine, electronic marketing, and graphic design to produce and share positive Baylor stories messages
- Measured campaign and initiative effectiveness
- Promoted Baylor experts by pitching their research successes and expertise to national media outlets, such as TODAY Show, Wall Street Journal, NPR, Fast Company, and others
- Crafted strategies (such as op-eds and columns) to insert Baylor professors and administrators into major national discussions
- Pursued positive relationships with reporters and pitched stories to national, regional, statewide, and local media
- Trained Baylor administrators and faculty to engage with media and maintain comfort and control during interviews
- Monitored positive and negative stories and perceptions about Baylor University, and work with colleagues to develop strategic responses, if needed
- Wrote regular news and feature stories regarding Baylor research and academic programs

**Academic Marketing Information Specialist
Office of University Marketing & Brand Strategy**

May 2011 – April 2014

Baylor University, Waco, TX

- Planned and implemented strategic communications solutions to support Baylor initiatives and initiatives of key academic units, specifically Truett Seminary, Graduate School, and the Diana R. Garland School of Social Work
- Provided editorial and production leadership for a variety of print publications and other communications materials that supported Baylor's strategic marketing plans
- Collaborated with key members of schools and colleges to research and ensure accuracy of marketing information
- Coordinated the research, writing, editing, photography, and production of content in a variety of communication media, including websites, print publications, and advertisements
- Served as managing editor of Truett Seminary's annual magazine, *The CORD*

Coordinator, Graduate Admissions and Recruitment

September 2008 – May 2011

Graduate College, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO

- Coordinated all admissions and recruitment services of Missouri State University's Graduate College
- Managed an office staff of seven people
- Implemented recruiting efforts that resulted in a substantial increase in first-time, degree-seeking graduate students
- Developed a new communications plan to interact with prospective graduate students
- Built and launched the university's first Graduate Student Visit Program
- Established the Graduate College Showcase – an annual event designed as a one-stop shop to showcase all graduate programs
- Redesigned the Graduate College website to include a microsite for prospective students
- Worked with faculty on the Graduate Council to develop an official Graduate Recruitment Committee to oversee and assess graduate recruitment efforts across the university
- Worked with a team to design, develop, and launch the GRADuate ADmissions System (GRADS), a new online, paperless system that greatly economized the workflow of the graduate admissions and decision-making process
- Worked as a member of the university's Marketing Council to develop the institution's marketing messages and campaigns
- Increased greatly the number of recruitment visits to feeder schools throughout Missouri and surrounding states
- Doubled the annual graduate requests for information from prospective students
- Created the Graduate College's Facebook and social media presence
- Facilitated the development of recruitment publications for numerous graduate programs
- Worked with a team to develop content for departmental and graduate program websites
- Advised and assisted prospective students with the admissions process
- Redesigned the Graduate College view book and other recruitment publications
- Worked with Publications to write, design, and develop the Graduate Student Pocket Guide, a "next steps" publication to assist new graduate students

Public Relations Specialist

July 2004 – September 2008

Missouri State University, Springfield, MO

- Edited and wrote for internal and external publications, newsletters, and magazines
- Helped manage a staff of student writers
- Assisted administrators/faculty/staff with media interaction
- Assisted in development of media/public relations campaigns
- Tracked local, statewide, national, and international media coverage
- Developed relationships and contacts within the university, media, and community
- Maintained Missouri State's expert sources and speakers online database
- Recruited and promoted the university's expert sources
- Acted as a liaison between faculty, administrators, and media
- Worked as member of university's Public Relations Advisory Team
- Planned and organized special events, projects, and naming ceremonies
- Pitched story ideas to the media
- Wrote and distributed news releases, faculty updates, and Hot Topics
- Produced a weekly 5-minute radio show, *Missouri State Journal*, to promote university research, scholarship and activities
- Wrote scripts and speeches for administrators

Reporter

June 2001 – June 2004

Springfield News-Leader, Springfield, MO

- Reported and wrote news, feature, and investigative stories for daily publication
- Covered police, courts, school districts, local, and state government
- Covered breaking news in Springfield and surrounding areas
- Conducted daily interviews and networked with multiple sources
- Investigated and wrote extensive enterprise projects
- Worked daily with editors, photographers, and fellow reporters

Reporter/Design Editor

October 1999 – June 2001

Suburban Journals, Festus, MO

- Investigated and wrote news stories for three publications
- Designed news and sports pages on QuarkXPress
- Wrote headlines for news and sports stories
- Scanned, cropped, and touched-up photos on Adobe Photoshop
- Shared responsibility for overall look of the newspapers

Copy Editor/Designer

May 1999 – October 1999

The Ottumwa Courier, Ottumwa, IA

- Worked on four-person copy/design desk
- Edited news, sports, and AP wire stories for daily a.m. newspaper
- Designed 3-6 news or sports pages daily on QuarkXPress
- Worked with editors to budget daily stories

ENTREPRENEURIAL EXPERIENCE

Owner

July 2012 – 2018

Eckert Communications (formerly Hands and Feet Marketing), Temple, TX

- Provided marketing and communications consultation to small businesses and churches

Freelance Writer/Copy Editor

2004 – 2015

- Wrote and edited copy for various publications, websites, and manuscripts, including:
 - *Through Wind and Fire: A History of First Baptist Church, Temple, Texas* by Dr. David Yeilding
 - *Strong Advocate: The Life of a Trial Lawyer* by Thomas Strong
 - *Like a Lily Among Thorns: Colonial African Village Child Transitions to Post-Colonial Modernity, and America* by Dr. Innocent Chukuma Onwueme
 - *Questions Not Being Asked: Topical Philosophical Critiques in Prose, Proverbs, and Poems* by Dr. Innocent Chukuma Onwueme

UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

I have had the pleasure of teaching journalism and media courses at two incredible universities – Baylor University (Waco, TX) and Missouri State University (Springfield, MO). I have been teaching in Baylor University's Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media since 2014.

Adjunct Instructor

Writing for Media Markets (JOU 3372)

Spring 2014-Present

Dept. of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media
Baylor University

Official Course Description: Specialized writing for media markets, including public relations releases, brochures, news reports, and speeches.

Law and Ethics of Journalism (JOU 4380)

Fall 2014-2021

Dept. of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media
Baylor University

Official Course Description: Rights and privileges of the news media and their social and legal responsibilities under the principles of common law and the constitution. Includes an overview of the American judicial system and the role of the journalist in reporting civil and criminal matters.

Reporting/Writing for Media (JOU 2303)

Fall 2018

Dept. of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media
Baylor University

Official Course Description: Specialized writing for media markets, including public relations releases, brochures, news reports, and speeches.

Per Course Instructor *Broadcast/Media Writing*
Dept. of Media, Journalism and Film
Missouri State University

Fall 2010 and Spring 2011

Official Course Description: An examination of the principles and production techniques involved in writing broadcast copy. Three areas will be investigated in depth: copywriting for radio and television, news writing, and feature story preparation.

Issues in Media Ethics
Dept. of Media, Journalism and Film
Missouri State University

Spring 2009

Official Course Description: An investigation of fundamental ethical issues and their implications for media practitioners. Responsibilities of media practitioners to the public, advertising agencies, the government, and special interest groups will be examined. Special attention will be paid to the possibility of conflict between the business of media and general ethical considerations.

Introduction to Journalism
Dept. of Media, Journalism and Film
Missouri State University

Fall 2008

Official Course Description: Study of the purposes and forms of journalism. Includes writing the basic types of stories.

UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE (STUDENT)

Editor-in-Chief: DETOURS Magazine

June 1998 – May 1999

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO

DETOURS is a regional magazine focused on the plentiful travel opportunities throughout Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. The magazine published three times each academic year. As a senior in college, I served proudly as the magazine's editor-in-chief, overseeing all of the planning, budgeting, writing, designing, editing, and production of each issue.

Sports Editor: INDEX

July 1997 – April 1998

Truman State University, Kirksville, MO

The INDEX is Truman State University's award-winning weekly student newspaper. As a junior in college, I served as the sports editor, overseeing all story budgeting, writing, designing, and editing of the sports section. This included writing weekly news, features, and columns.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Executive leadership and decision making
- Leading creative teams
- Editorial leadership
- Brand strategy
- Budget management
- Strategic vision
- Marketing
- Developing collaborative and creative atmospheres
- Project management
- Community engagement
- Journalism
- Writing and editing
- Media relations
- Public relations
- Marketing and communication strategies
- Media and advertising campaigns
- Content marketing
- Social media
- Writing for marketing, print, and broadcast journalism
- Publication design
- Internal/external communication
- Event planning
- Public speaking

INDUSTRY PUBLICATIONS

- "[Are Your Professors Ready for Their Close-Up?](#)" - CASE CURRENTS Magazine (January/February 2018)

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 NCMPR National Conference (New Orleans, LA)
 - “Making Small Teams Bigger (Without Hiring Anyone)” – Speaker (2025)
- 2025 Texas Association of Community College Marketers Conference (Richardson, TX)
 - “Making Small Teams Bigger (Without Hiring Anyone)” – Speaker (2025)
- 2023 NCMPR National Conference (Orlando, FL)

- “Your Community’s College: How a New Marketing Vision is Driving a Culture Change & Boosting Enrollment” – Speaker (2023)
- ExpertFile Webinar
 - “Preparing Your Experts for the Media Spotlight” – Speaker (March 2018)
- 2018 CASE District IV (Fort Worth, TX)
 - “Knowledge is Power: Using Experts in Your Media Communications and Branding Campaigns” – Speaker (2018)
- 2016 CASE District VI (Kansas City, MO)
 - “Building Your Media Communications Toolkit: Seven Reasons Why Hot Topics Are So Cool”
 - “Grassroots Fundraising: How An 11-Year-Old Boy Raised \$30,000 In Nine Months And Changed Lives”
- Central Texas Public Relations Society of America
 - “Knowledge is Power: Adding Experts to Your Campaigns” – Speaker (2017)
 - “10 Tips for Grassroots Fundraising: How an 11-year-old boy raised \$30,000 in nine months to build a classroom in Gulu, Uganda” – Speaker (2015)
 - “The Great Debate: What is the Value of Continuing Education?” – Panel Discussion (2014)

CONFERENCES/SEMINARS ATTENDED

- 2025 NCMPR National Conference (New Orleans, LA)
- 2025 TACCM Conference (Richardson, TX)
- 2024 TACCM Conference (Austin, TX)
- 2023 CIVSA Conference (St. Louis, MO)
- 2023 NCMPR National Conference (Orlando, FL) – Speaker/Presenter
- 2018 CASE District IV (Fort Worth, TX) – Speaker/Presenter
- 2016 CASE District VI (Kansas City, MO) – Speaker/Presenter
- 2016 Central Texas Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Waco, TX)
- 2015 Council of Independent Colleges’ College Media Conference (Washington, D.C.)
- 2015 Global Leadership Summit – Promotional Strategist (Temple, TX)
- 2015 Central Texas Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Waco, TX)
- 2014 Business Access Media Conference (New York, NY)
- 2014 Global Leadership Summit – Promotional Strategist (Temple, TX)

- 2014 Central Texas Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Waco, TX)
- 2013 Global Leadership Summit – Promotional Strategist (Baylor University, Waco, TX)
- 2013 Central Texas Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Waco, TX)
- 2012 Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education – American Marketing Association (New Orleans, LA)
- 2012 Central Texas Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Waco, TX)
- 2012 Global Leadership Summit – Promotional Strategist (Baylor University, Waco, TX)
- 2011 Global Leadership Summit – Promotional Strategist (Springfield, MO and Baylor University, Waco, TX sites)
- 2010 Global Leadership Summit
- 2010 National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals Annual Conference (San Francisco, CA)
- 2009 Graduate and Professional School Enrollment Management Corp. Conference (Las Vegas, NV)
- 2008 CASE District VI Conference (Denver, CO)
- 2007 CASE District VI Conference (Kansas City, MO)
- CASE 2006 Summer Institute – Communications and Marketing (Nashville, TN)
- 2006 Southwest Missouri Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Springfield, MO)
- 2006 CASE District VI Conference (St. Louis, MO)
- 2005 Southwest Missouri Public Relations Society of America Professional Development Seminar (Springfield, MO)
- 2005 CASE District VI Conference (Kansas City, MO)
- 2003 National Writers Workshop (St. Louis, MO)

MEMBERSHIPS

- National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) – Present
- Texas Association of Community College Marketers (TACCM) – Present
- Public Relations Society of America – PRSA (2004-2008, 2011-2022)
 - 2015 Past President (Central Texas Chapter)
 - 2014 President (Central Texas Chapter)
 - 2013 President-Elect (Central Texas Chapter)
 - 2012 Secretary (Central Texas Chapter)
 - 2007 Board Secretary (Southwest Missouri Chapter)
 - 2006 Chair, Professional Development Seminar Committee (Southwest Missouri Chapter)
- Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, District IV – CASE (2011-2021)
- National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals – NAGAP (2008-2011)
- Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, District VI – CASE (2004-2008)

HONORS/AWARDS

- Judge's Award – Best Print Piece, Waco ADDY 2011
- Gold Award for Excellence in Writing, CASE District VI 2006

- Silver and Bronze Awards for Excellence in Multimedia – Radio, CASE District VI 2008
 - Graduate of CASE 2006 Summer Institute – Communications and Marketing (Nashville, TN)
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FAMILY & CHURCH

- Married to Corinn (24 years)
- Children: Michael (22), Evan (18), and Caleb (14)
- Active members of First Baptist Church, Temple, Texas since 2011