Performing arts centers are experiencing a notable decline in college student attendance to the events that are held at these venues. College students are generally unaware of student discount programs offered by performing arts centers in their area as well as information about performing arts events in general. This study examined this phenomenon and explored student awareness and engagement with performing arts centers, their events, and their student discounts. It also explored how student discounts impact the college student’s purchasing decisions, specifically in relation to ticket buying. The study also discovered the communication channels college students generally use to receive their information about performing arts events to better understand how to effectively communicate with college students. This study used a survey of local college students and focused primarily on Tennessee Performing Arts Center in Nashville, Tennessee. The survey results showed information about students’ interests in the performing arts, how they engaged with the performing arts, and their preferred communication channels for information.

The Weinstein Company produced the film “Silver Linings Playbook,” which explored bipolar disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Both disorders are present in the director’s son, thus causing his strong tie to the film and the desire to start a conversation that led to understanding and evoking change. Each member of the research team had been exposed to mental disorders in various ways and contended that there were damaging effects of keeping the conversation quiet. The film caused much conversation by engaging viewers in a topic that had previously been considered a taboo. This research project sought to discover the extent to which media is a catalyst for conversation and to what degree it might evoke change around social
issues. This project examined the effectiveness of the film breaking down these fragile barriers. The purpose of the study was to illustrate the need for open and candid conversation surrounding mental health to promote healing and understanding. The study involved pre- and post-test surveys of respondents who viewed Silver Linings Playbook in a focus group setting that also included a group dialogue.

7:30-7:45 p.m.
**Social Media and Politics: How Social Media Influences Political Opinions of Students**
Graceann M. Belgiorno, Ian Ignacio, Hannah Jones, Francesca A. Joubran, Lauren Larkin, & Jamie N. Smotherman
Faculty Advisor: Kevin S. Trowbridge, Ph.D.

The purpose of this research was to measure the relationship between Belmont University students’ social media usage, political messages, and opinions. After reviewing literature from President Barack Obama’s 2008 and 2012 presidential campaign strategies, it was observed that there was a significant impact on voters due to the campaign’s use of social media for both campaigning and connecting with voters. Additional secondary research included studies from various campaigns as well as overviews of political figures’ usage of Twitter and Facebook. To further investigate this phenomenon, this project used a survey to see if these same national social media and political trends applied to the population of Belmont University students. A survey was sent to Belmont students to get various insights on how politics and social media affect their views and opinions. We hypothesized that there would be a correlation of how students at Belmont use social media to connect with and react to political figures and movements with previous studies.

7:45-8 p.m.
**Nashville Sports: College Students’ Perceptions of the Nashville Sounds**
Alison Burry, Aubrey Considine, Danielle Fairwether, Justine Morris, Sarah Roberts, & Kelsey Stewart
Faculty Advisor: Kevin S. Trowbridge, Ph.D.

Nashville, Tennessee, is commonly known as the music city of the United States. However, Nashville is also home to professional sports teams such as the Tennessee Titans and the Nashville Predators. The goal of this research project was to discover college students’
perceptions of Nashville sports and, more specifically, the minor league baseball team, the Nashville Sounds. The inspiration for this research project stemmed from the construction of the new Sounds stadium and the recent rebranding of the team. Through this research, data was collected to discover what does and does not motivate college students to attend Sounds games. In order to gather data, surveys were distributed to various college students in the Nashville area. Interviews with professionals who work in the Nashville Sounds front office were also conducted to discover their current strategies for marketing and advertising to college students.

8-8:15 p.m.
**Metro Arts Nashville: A Campaign to Increase the Awareness and Use of Metro Art’s New Mobile Website, ExploreNashvilleArt.Com**
Kelsey A. Hutchinson, Dee D. Miller, Sam T. Pomarico, Audrey N. Register, Jessica R. Steddom, Emily B. Thrailkill & L. Ashley Washington
Faculty Advisor: Bonnie P. Riechert, Ph. D

The Metropolitan Arts Commission is a division of the Metro Nashville Government, with the main goal to help the community participate in their creative interests through public artwork. Metro Arts seeks to provide leadership to inspire all art aspects of the community by focusing on four areas for community engagement: Artober Nashville, THRIVE Micro-funding Program & Other Artist Development Plans, Poetry in Motion, and other special projects. Their most recent project is www.ExploreNashvilleArt.com, an interactive mobile website available to the general public. The website uses your location through a geotracking system that will alert you when you are near public art works in the area. In addition to that, the mobile website also contains information about each piece of artwork. Metro Arts relies on its strong relationship with the community to expose everyone to art in Nashville. A student team in public relations campaign class worked to promote Metro Arts Nashville and its new mobile website. The team aimed to create more engagement and exposure to Metro Arts Nashville and its new mobile website. Tactics included organizing a convocation event to showcase Metro Art’s efforts. Caroline Vincent, the public arts manager, spoke about their purpose and plans for the future. Vincent provided insight during the event to Belmont University. The final success of the awareness campaign will include measurements of attendance of the convocation event, along with other upcoming events to promote Metro Arts Nashville and the community.

8:15-8:30 p.m.
**Delight Summer Series: A Social Media Invitation for College Women Seeking Christ-Centered Community**
Chloe A. Brookshire, Margot A. Lied, Meredith K. Martin, Sarah R. Phillips, MacKenzie L. Wilson
Faculty Advisor: Bonnie P. Riechert, Ph.D.

Delight Ministries is a nationwide women’s community that grows together, serves together, learns together, and does life together while chasing the heart of God. Its mission is to create a meaningful college experience for women through the sharing of stories and testimonies, emphasizing the importance of community and a personal relationship with Christ. The 501(c)(3) organization was founded by two Belmont University students in 2012, Mackenzie Baker and MacKenzie Wilson. Delight, which started as a small Bible study on Belmont’s campus, has now expanded into a national organization represented on 17 college campuses from coast to coast. This year for the first time ever, Delight Ministries is inviting college women to participate in an eight-week summer series. Participants will spend the summer engaging in community and intentionally exploring what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ together. Margot PR, a team in public relations campaign class, partnered with Delight Ministries to develop a campaign to promote the upcoming series. Research informing the campaign included in-depth interviews with the organization’s co-founder. Due to the newness of the summer series, the goal of this campaign is to create excitement while also encouraging women to take part in this spiritual movement. The summer series will be an eight-day social media campaign utilizing PR tactics like promotional videos and product giveaways. Success of the campaign will be measured by engagement on social media and the number of people who register to participate in the summer series.

8:30-8:45 p.m.
“Rescue Nashville”: Improving Nashville’s Pet Care Culture
Jillian M. Cardarelli, Aubrey N. Considine, Adriana M. Figueroa, M. Clare Sobon, Aaron L. Shirley, Kacy Gieg Stern
Faculty Advisor: Bonnie P. Riechert, Ph.D.

Middle Tennessee Pet Resource Center is a local non-profit started in Nashville with the intent to improve the living conditions of pets in the area and surrounding counties and to improve the culture of pet care within Tennessee. A team in public relations campaigns class partnered with MTPRC to promote the message on proper pet care in Middle Tennessee. The students developed recommendations on how the organization can increase the diversity of its volunteers, a need identified by organization leaders. The team also hosted a university community service convocation centered around informing the public about who MTPRC is, and how students can get involved with rescuing Nashville’s pet care culture. The event included a drive for dog toys and water bowls, allowing students to donate to dogs in need. The “Rescue Nashville” event was
aimed at increasing community awareness of MTPRC, increasing education of proper pet care and gaining more of a following on various social media platforms. Success of the campaign was measured by attendance at the event, number of dog toys/water bowls donated, the establishment of social media accounts, and increase in followers on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

8:45-9 p.m.

**Best Buddies Friendship Walk: Raising Awareness and Participation within a Student Community**

Makenzie L. Albracht, Mary Anna Davis, Arielle B. Schrader, Aryn M. Van Dyke, Sarah Kate Brewer & Megan M. McBride

Faculty Advisor: Bonnie P. Riechert, Ph.D.

Best Buddies is a vibrant, international organization that has grown from one original chapter to almost 1,700 middle school, high school, and college chapters worldwide. Best Buddies aims to establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). There are numerous Best Buddies chapters throughout Tennessee, including Belmont University, Carson Newman University, Lipscomb University, Middle Tennessee State University, Rhodes College, Trevecca Nazarene University, University of Memphis, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, University of Tennessee Knoxville, Vanderbilt University, and Vanderbilt University Medical School. Mas PR, a team from public relations campaigns class, worked directly with the Best Buddies chapter at Belmont University to promote the Friendship Walk on April 12, 2015. The client’s objective was to increase awareness of the walk to the greater Nashville community. Research informing the campaign included surveying best practices of similar nonprofit organizations. Mas PR invited the Belmont community through online announcements, emails and events. Success of the campaign will be measured by the level of attendance at the related convocation event and the Friendship Walk.