

Governors State University

OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship

Newsroom

Marketing and Communications

12-2-2020

GSU Connections: Natalie Page

Office of Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://opus.govst.edu/newsroom>

University Park, IL,
December
02,
2020

GSU Connections: Natalie Page



When Natalie Page, the recently named Vice President of Academic Affairs at [Danville Area Community College](#), first came to [Governors State University](#) for the guidance she needed to advance her career, she had no idea she would become a pioneer in an emerging field.

In the late '80s, her degree in Instructional Design and Training Technology from Governors State prepared her to write training manuals and deliver professional development for a prestigious consulting firm.

Although the degree is no longer offered at the university, it provided a highly prized skill set to help deliver instruction before e-learning was the norm. With the degree she received, Dr. Page was one of the early trailblazers in instructional technology," said

Colleen Sexton, Associate Provost/Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Governors State.

Dr. Sexton leads a team of [instructional designers](#) who were critical to assisting faculty transitioning classes to a remote setting in a COVID environment. "Today, the instructional design programs have an emphasis on K-12 instructional design and/or instructional design for higher education," Sexton said. "That degree was really ahead of its time."

A Great Foundation at Governors State

A passionate and creative individual, Dr. Page earned her undergraduate degree in marketing and advertising from Michigan State University. Her dream, which came to pass, was to work at a top advertising agency. Though she enjoyed the industry, Page was not professionally fulfilled.

At a career crossroads, Page discovered Governors State University's degree in instructional and training technology. The Hazel Crest native was intrigued and reached out to Michael Stelnicki, then Professor of Human Performance and Training for the [College of Arts and Sciences](#) and a leader in the dawn of distance learning. Dr. Stelnicki is now an esteemed Governors State Emeritus Professor.

"Professor Stelnicki was so well connected in the field of instructional technology and was a great resource and mentor to me," Page said. "Back then, instructional technology was focused on training and development. The field has since evolved, but what I learned at GSU was invaluable."

Applying Practical Lessons

After earning her master's degree in 1988, Page began working as an instructional designer for Arthur Anderson, now Anderson Consulting. In her role, she learned the critical importance of working alongside subject matter experts as she developed technology training manuals for consultants from all over the world.

"I learned to ask probing questions to make sure I could ascertain exactly what was needed and should be conveyed to the participants," she said.

A few years later, Page went to work for a U.S. Navy contractor in Virginia, where she wrote training materials for Operation Desert Storm. At one point, she even found herself climbing on top of a helicopter to draft a description of how to replace rotor blades eroded by sand.

She even used her instructional design skills to create the MBA distance learning content for Regent University where her husband was in graduate school.

Connecting and Reconnecting

In the early 2000s, after raising a family and working as an instructional designer and adjunct teacher, Page reached out to Governors State—for a second time. This time, she received career counseling that ultimately helped her make the leap from a full-time

college professor to administrative dean, amassing over 25 years of higher education experience.

“There has always been a constant thread of education throughout my career—training, teaching, and educating.”

She called her administrator journey organic. “Venturing into the administrative side of academics was a natural progression, where a lot of my honed skills came full circle—as an advertiser, instructional designer and college faculty.

Advice for Current Jaguars

Page, who earned a doctorate in community college leadership, knows first-hand what education can do. “Education is a game-changer. It can open doors and provide opportunities you never would have imagined.”

A few years ago, Page returned to Governors State as part of a tour for area community college administrators. She recalled being impressed with the continued development and growth of the campus she had not seen for almost 30 years.

“All the innovative programs at the university were inspiring. For me, it was a great launching pad and a significantly transformational part of my life. Governors State was providential.”