

# LIZ KERNS, IOM

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Liz Kerns is an assistant professor of communication at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, Illinois, where she is establishing a new Public Relations and Strategic Communication program. As the program director, she is responsible for the curriculum development, student recruitment and retention, and program enhancements, including the founding of the Olivet Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) chapter and Inspired Strategies Agency, a student-run, strategic communication firm.

Prior to joining the Olivet faculty, Kerns was an assistant professor of public relations in the Communication Department and director of the Nonprofit Organization Management Program at Central Washington University (CWU) from 2010 - 2015. As part of her appointment at CWU, Kerns served as faculty adviser for the CWU Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), faculty adviser and founder of Central Communication Agency, CWU PRSSA Bateman Team adviser, academic adviser to PR and nonprofit students, and taught courses in PR and nonprofit leadership.

Preceding her appointment at CWU in 2010, Kerns served as the director of local chamber relations and events for the Illinois Chamber of Commerce and president of the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (IACCE) from 2004 - 2010. Concurrently to working in the nonprofit sector, she taught as an adjunct instructor in communication, public relations, and advertising at Benedictine University in Springfield, IL (formerly known as Springfield College in Illinois).

Kerns is highly active in local and national organizations where she currently serves on the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Educator's Academy Board, communication chair for the PRSA Central Illinois chapter, and a member of many professional trade associations. Furthermore, she is a strategic planning consultant working with nonprofit organizations.

In addition to professional endeavors, Kerns is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Educational Leadership with coursework completed at Seattle University and Concordia University at Portland. She holds a Master's Degree in communication from the University of Illinois at Springfield and a Bachelor's Degree from Arkansas State University in journalism/public relations and a minor in business. Furthermore, she earned the Institute for Organization Management (IOM) recognition from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Certification as a National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Ombudsman from the United States Department of Defense; and is an Accredited Chamber Executive (ACE) through the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. She also was a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Institute for Organization Management class adviser in 2008.

Prior to joining the Illinois Chamber and IACCE, Liz worked for the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Jonesboro (AR) Regional Chamber of Commerce, Arkansas State University, and Walt Disney World Resorts (Orlando, FL). She is also the former president of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Central IL Chapter, member of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), member of the Association in Research of Nonprofit Organization and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), and member of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE).

Personally, Kerns and her husband live in Bourbonnais, IL with their three boys and are active members of their church. Her professional website is [www.fialakerns.com](http://www.fialakerns.com) and her twitter account is @FialaKerns.