Public Relations

Department: Journalism
Pulliam School of Journalism Director: J. Krull
Department Chair: S. McDaniel
Department Members: M. Carter, D. Jaggers, S. McDaniel

Major: Public Relations
Minor: Public Relations

Public relations is a management function that helps business, government and nonprofit organizations reach desired outcomes by ethically and effectively building and maintaining relationships with target audiences. Deeply rooted in the liberal arts tradition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* teachings, PR has become an engaging, fast-paced, demanding and strategically sophisticated profession that today uses multi-media communications tactics and technologies.

Hallmarks of the profession include, but are certainly not limited to, a) a commitment to freedom of speech and expression; b) clear, concise and compelling writing; c) an understanding of and appreciation for journalism's role in a democracy; d) appreciation of and commitment to multicultural awareness; e) mass media literacy; f) critical thinking and problem-solving skills; g) adherence to the codes of ethics of the Public Relations Society of America and the International Association of Business Communicators.

Students pursue in-depth academic studies of public relations while also gaining real-world, real-time learning experiences. Graduates are well prepared to launch careers in public relations and related fields. The public relations major also serves students who plan to pursue graduate or professional degrees in communications or other areas. The public relations program encourages students to explore possibilities for double majors, and also possibilities for study abroad and study away experiences.

Franklin College is the alma mater of one of the key historical figures in American public relations – Elmer Davis, who directed the Office of War Information for President Franklin Roosevelt during World War II.

All major and minor courses must be completed with a grade of C- or better.

Public Relations Major

Core Requirements

PRL 115 Reporting, Interviewing, and Newswriting
PRL 221 Public Relations Practice Areas
PRL 222 Social Media Strategy and Tactics
PRL 333 Public Relations Writing
PRL 334 Learning Engagement with Public Relations Professionals
PRL 375 Public Relations Research
PRL 480 Strategic Communications Campaigns
PRL 498 Portfolio Development Seminar
PRL 499 Senior Competency Seminar

Optional Course

PRL 303 Sports Information and Public Relations

Professional Development Requirements

PRL 120 Ethics and Professional Development
SNT 489 PRL Senior Year Internship

Media Skills and Knowledge Requirements

PRL 180 Publications Design
PRL 190 Digital Photography
PRL 195 Digital Media Production I
PRL 445 Communication Law in a Digital World

Activity Credits

All PRL majors must participate and earn credit for at least THREE multimedia journalism activity experiences such as:

MMJ 001 Student Media
MMJ 002 Statehouse File
MMJ 005 TV News
MMJ 007 Media Manager
PRL 005 Pulse Promotions

Related Field Requirements: Students are required to choose ONE of the following options

Related Field Option – Twelve credit hours from one academic field outside of major. Cross-listed courses with major courses, such as MMJ/PRL/SPR Publication Design, cannot count toward a related field.

Minor Option – A minor in an academic field outside of major. Students must meet the requirements of the department offering the minor.

Double Major Option – A second major at Franklin College. Students must meet all requirements for both majors.

Public Relations Minor (except for Multimedia Journalism and Sports Communication Majors)

Core Requirements

PRL 180 Publication Design
PRL 190 Digital Photography
PRL 195 Digital Media Production I
PRL 221 Public Relations Practice Areas
PRL 334 Learning Engagement with Public Relations Professionals
PRL 445 Communication Law in a Digital World

Public Relations Minor for Multimedia Journalism and Sports Communication Majors

Core Requirements

PRL 221 Public Relations Practice Areas
PRL 222 Social Media Strategy and Tactics
PRL 333 Public Relations Writing
PRL 334 Learning Engagement with Public Relations Professionals
BUS 101 Introduction to the Business Mindset
SOC 230 Introduction to Nonprofits

Public Relations Course Descriptions

PRL 005 Pulse Promotions		1 credit hour
Fall and Spring		

Laboratory course in advertising and public relations includes the planning and execution of campaigns for campus and community clients. Counts as activity course credit. Pass/fail.

PRL 115 Reporting, Interviewing, and Newswriting		3 credit hours
Fall and Spring		

This course will focus on the processes of news and information gathering making use of different media platforms. Students will learn the techniques of interviewing and will learn to challenge the information they gather. The emphasis will be on developing reporting skills so students can gather accurate information. Same as MMJ/SPR 115.

PRL 120 Ethics and Professional Development		3 credit hours
Fall and Spring		

An introduction to basic aspects of professionalism required of media professionals. Course emphases are on professional ethics codes of journalism and public relations; basic concepts and terminology of journalism; business etiquette; media career options; basics of Associated Press style; resume and cover letter preparation; and internship preparation. Same as MMJ/SPR 120.

PRL 180 Publication Design		3 credit hours
Fall and Spring		

Theory and practice in graphic design for publications commonly used by news and public relations professionals. Focus is on creating ethical, compelling and effective visual communications vehicles by combining elements such as copy, colors, fonts, photos, illustrations and informational graphics. Same as MMJ 180.

PRL 190 Digital Photography		3 credit hours
Fall and Spring	Creative Arts exploratory	

This course offers a broad exploration of digital photography and its applications both as a fine art and for storytelling purposes. The curriculum begins with fundamental aspects such as camera controls, composition, and lighting. It progresses to more intricate topics that delve into the dynamic relationship between the photographer and the audience. Students will be required to create content using appropriate gear and prepare it for distribution across multiple platforms as appropriate for the message intended. Fall and spring. *Fee: $20 nonrefundable*. Same as ART/MMJ/SPR 190.

PRL 195 Digital Media Production I		3 credit hours
Fall and spring		Prereq: ART/MMJ/PRL/SPR 190

Introduces storytelling across a variety of digital platforms, including basic concepts of audio, video, and multimedia technologies, as well as social media. Emphasis on understanding the processes from reporting to content creation, as well as the aesthetics and production techniques to achieve high quality content for different audiences. Same as MMJ/SPR 195.

PRL 221 Public Relations Practice Areas		3 credit hours
Fall		

An introduction to practical and theoretical aspects of the public relations profession. Students become familiar with career options and the basic knowledge/skills required of public relations practitioners through the study of contemporary practice areas such as, but not limited to, community relations, consumer relations, corporate communications, education communications, employee communications, faith-based communications, government communications, healthcare communications, investor relations, nonprofit communications, sports communications.

PRL 222 Social Media Strategy and Tactics		3 credit hours
Spring		Prereq: PRL 221 or consent of instructor

The study and practical application of social media best practices in public relations contexts. Topics include social media policy development/management, using social media within strategic communications plans, case studies in social media success, and basic analysis of social media metrics. Course includes hands-on practice in results-driven social media simulations.

PRL 300 Topics in Public Relations		3 credit hours

A topic of current interest in public relations will be taught. Topics will vary depending on faculty and student interest. Course will be offered upon the request of a faculty member and with approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

PRL 303 Sports Information and Public Relations		3 credit hours
Fall		Prereq for PRL: PRL 221 & PRL 333 or consent of instructor Prereq for SPR: SPR 101, SPR 115, & SPR 200 or consent of instructor

The study of and hands-on experience in best practices for conducting public relations on behalf of sports teams and their parent organizations-schools, conferences, amateur governing bodies and professional teams. Emphasis is on the college/university sports information profession. Topics include, but are not limited to, using in-game statistical software for major sports; media credentialing; press box and press row management; proactive and reactive media relations; season media guides; game-day media guides; strategic planning; crisis communications; relationships with players and coaches; multimedia story packaging; and pre-season, in-season and post-season writing. Same as SPR 303.

PRL 333 Public Relations Writing		3 credit hours
Spring	Prereq: PRL/MMJ 120 and PRL 221 or consent of instructor	

Extensive practice in writing materials commonly used by public relations professionals and their clients. Projects involve research, concept development, writing, revision, and project management. Focuses on results-oriented writing based on accuracy, clarity, and creativity in business and nonprofit settings. Includes introduction to advertising copywriting.

PRL 334 Learning Engagement with Public Relations Professionals		3 credit hours
Fall		Prereq: PRL 221 or consent of instructor

Within the context of a traditional course, students interact and network weekly with public relations professionals from a variety of practice areas. Students study each visiting professional's practice area, business/organization, competitors, and communications tactics. Students develop additional skills and knowledge by studying communications from a professional trade organization in public relations. There is a course fee required for student membership in either the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) or the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), depending on the instructor's choice of organization each year.

PRL 375 Public Relations Research		3 credit hours
Fall		

The goal of this course is to present an overview of the vital role research plays in the field of public relations. In addition to being introduced to various measurement tools and methodologies for gathering and analyzing data, students will review both classic and modern public relations case studies. Students will also be introduced to the PRSA Code of Ethics and the process of conducting public relations research to better understand the steps of creating an action-driven campaign.

PRL 380 Practicum in Public Relations		1-2 credit hours
Fall and Spring		Prereq: PRL 221 or consent of instructor

Experience on campus in areas directly related to public relations and mass media; or off-campus experiences or on-the-job training related to public relations.

PRL 445 Communication Law in a Digital World		3 credit hours
Fall and Spring	Civic Learning exploratory	

A survey of communications law, including libel, privacy, free press/fair trial, reportorial privilege, access, and broadcast regulation. Same as MMJ 445.

PRL 480 Strategic Communications Campaigns		3 credit hours
Spring		Prereq: PRL 221, 222, 333, 334, & senior standing or consent of instructor Coreq: PRL 498

Course focuses on the research, writing, and evaluation of strategic communications plans. Emphasis will be on common plan elements such as the situation analysis, desired communications outcomes, target audiences, key messages, strategies, tactics, and timelines-by-tactics.

PRL 490 Independent Study		1-2 credit hours
Fall and spring		Prereq: consent of instructor

Course is designed to encourage student initiative and to provide a degree of flexibility in the departmental program. Normally the subject is not sufficiently or appropriately covered in departmental course offerings.

PRL 498 Portfolio Development Seminar		No credit
Fall		Prereq: PRL 221 & senior standing

Each student must develop physical (“book”) and digital interactive portfolios containing an appropriate body of work that demonstrates to a potential employer that the student is ready to make the transition to the professional workplace. Coursework requirements include job searches and actual job applications. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading. PRL 498 and 499 should be taken together in the student’s final semester.

PRL 499 Senior Competency Seminar		No credit
Spring		Prereq: PRL 221, 222, 333, 334, & 480

A comprehensive exam over major aspects of the study of public relations. A minimum grade of 60 is required. If the minimum grade is not achieved, one retake may be permitted if Pulliam School faculty members judge the first attempt to be an earnest effort with a score reasonably close to the required minimum. PRL 498 and 499 should be taken together in the student's final semester.

SNR/SNT 489 (PRL) Senior Year Internship/Project		4-12 credit hours
Fall, Immersive, Spring, Summer		

A practical professional experience in public relations. In special circumstances, and with permission of a majority of Pulliam School faculty, a significant experience in mass media, and not specifically in public relations, may be accepted. Pass/Fail grading.