GUIDELINES 2024

CEPR — Certification in Education for Public Relations

The Global Standard in Public Relations Education

Certification in Education for Public Relations (CEPR)
is a voluntary program of quality-assurance endorsement
for studies in public relations at colleges and universities worldwide.

Established in 1989 by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)
and affiliated with the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA),
CEPR is a program with evolving standards based on findings of
the Commission on Public Relations Education (www.commpred.org).
The Commission was founded in 1973 and is co-sponsored by
PRSA and the Public Relations Division (PRD)
of the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC).

The review process is administered by PRSA Educational Affairs, a standing committee to the
PRSA Board, with final decisions and the conferring of certification decided by the PRSA Board.

CEPR is applicable to academic programs in public relations studies
at the undergraduate and master's levels,
to colleges and universities both internal and external to the U.S.,
and to programs housed in various types of academic units in communication and business.

GLOBAL SCOPE
Programs with CEPR credentials, located on four continents,
have been assessed according to indigenously appropriate applications of standards.
Although active participation in PRSA and PRSSA is encouraged for all schools,
master's degree programs and those located outside the U.S.
might provide students with professional affiliations through other organizations.
It is strongly recommended that the school applying for certification
be affiliated with PRSA and/or a member association of the
Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management.

**CEPR credentials distinguish those programs that provide the faculty, curriculum and resources
needed to prepare students for professional public relations positions and career growth.**
Certified programs are listed in the annual PRSA Member Services Directory,
and they are highlighted in information provided by PRSA regarding schools where public relations is taught.

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LEVELS OF STUDY – A school may apply for a review of undergraduate and/or master's level studies. A separate fee ($750) and a separate application (see concluding pages of this document) are required for each level, but concurrent review of both levels can reduce school's expenses, which include travel, lodging and meals for two site visit reviewers. A review of one level typically requires two or three days on site; a dual review typically requires three or four days on site. Travel time is in addition to on-site time.

TYPES OF ACADEMIC UNITS – Programs of public relations studies in departments accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism & Mass Communications usually meet CEPR standards. ACEJMC accredits programs of journalism and mass communication; public relations units within those programs are part of the overall accreditation, but they do not receive accreditation specific to public relations. Programs housed in other structures (such as schools of business or speech) that do not qualify for accreditation in mass communication may also meet CEPR standards. A public relations program that provides the courses required for a PRSSA chapter charter is likely to qualify for CEPR credentials. Schools outside the U.S. may have affiliations other than PRSA/PRSSA and still offer coursework appropriate for the public relations profession, but general standards of best practices will still apply.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS –

A LETTER OF INTENT to apply should be e-mailed to jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and to SGonders@gmail.com. This informal memo in no way obligates the school to move any further in the process. It helps with predicting the likely need for reviewers in coming months.

AN APPLICATION FOR REVIEW should follow the outline on the last few pages of this CEPR Guidelines document. It can be submitted in Word or pdf format, and it should be sent electronically to jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and to SGonders@gmail.com at least three months in advance of preferred site visit dates.

    Information in the application is NOT arranged in order by the eight standards. It is instead arranged in order of topics (resources, curriculum, faculty, etc.). This logical arrangement should be relatively easy for applicant schools to compile because it is how academic units typically file information. Tips and examples are provided for each of the seven sections (A-G) of the application. It is the reviewers' job to determine what information is most appropriately applicable to each of the eight standards. Supporting information may be submitted in additional electronic documents and/or with a link to a website. Some schools provide all of the requested information in a single document with appendices (but no hyperlinks embedded in the application document; other schools prefer to provide some of this information and/or additional evidence separate from the application document.

PREFERRED SITE VISIT DATES are likely to be accommodated for schools that apply at least three months in advance – the earlier the better because requests are addressed in the order received. Preferred dates are most often in the spring semester. Schools with site visits and reports completed prior to September 1 are eligible for the conferring of certification during the current year's fall International Conference; schools with site visits any later are eligible for the conferring of certification in conjunction with the following year's International Conference.

    Schools sometimes want to schedule back-to-back ACEJMC and CEPR site visits. A school should notify jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and to SGonders@gmail.com as early as possible (such as when the ACEJMC site visit dates are confirmed) that a CEPR site visit is requested following a scheduled ACEJMC site visit. If contacted far enough in advance, the public relations representative on the ACEJMC team can sometimes extend time on campus for the CEPR review, thus saving on travel expenses. The closer the preferred dates are to the PRSA International Conference in the fall, the more difficult it is to coordinate back-to-back site visits. The easiest site visit dates to arrange for back-to-back ACEJMC and CEPR reviews are usually in January or February.

THE PROCESS

QUESTIONS – Before, during or after a review, both applicant schools and reviewers are encouraged to address any questions to the CEPR coordinator (SGonders@gmail.com). The coordinator welcomes the opportunity to help schools prepare for reviews and to assist site visit teams with their assessments.

VALUE – The primary mission of CEPR is to strengthen public relations education. Therefore, deficiencies should not be hidden. In fact, the applicant school should clearly communicate the program's needs so that reviewers can document them in the report. This can strengthen the program's case for acquiring resources in the future.

APPLICATIONS – Letters of intent and applications for review should be submitted to jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and to swalton@gmail.com. Schools applying for two levels of review should submit a separate application and fee for each level.

Application information should be arranged by topic – NOT in order by the eight standards.

After the application has been received, and the fee has been remitted to the office of Jeneen Garcia, the CEPR coordinator can appoint a site visit team.

$900 FEE – A $900 fee is applicable to each level of review.

Applicant schools are also responsible for the travel, lodging and meal expenses of the site visit team. Total costs are typically about $2,000, but this can be mitigated by scheduling a two-level review and/or back-to-back reviews with ACEJMC.

SITE VISIT REVIEWERS –

THE SITE VISIT TEAM can be appointed by the CEPR coordinator only after the application has been received and the fee has been remitted. After official notification of the site visit team appointments, the reviewers and the primary contact person at the school will confer about travel arrangements and the on-site itinerary.

The school is responsible for providing travel, lodging and meals as requested by the reviewers. An on-campus work space should also be provided for the exclusive use of the reviewers. The work space should have internet access, and the reviewers may request computers and/or printers for their exclusive use while on site. Travel arrangements may be made by the reviewers for reimbursement by the university, or the reviewers can request that the university book travel for them. Travel should be at the lowest reasonable cost – typically coach rather than first-class flight bookings, for example. The school should accommodate reasonable requests from the team in regard to housing and meals, not to include the cost of any alcoholic beverages. Reviewers may schedule travel time to allow sightseeing at their own expense before or after the site visit.

Advance work should be completed by the reviewers to as great an extent as possible in order to take full advantage of on-site time. For example, telephone and/or e-mail interviews with key constituencies can be completed in advance of arrival on campus. Reviewers can confer about primary responsibilities for review of each of the standards. Using information from the application to write preliminary assessments of the standards in advance of the site visit can help the reviewers determine questions to ask during the site visit. In order to complete this preliminary work, the reviewers often request additional documents or other information beyond that provided in the application.

GIFTS OR ENTERTAINMENT for the reviewers are inappropriate, although it is acceptable to give them token souvenirs with the insignia of the university or the program.

SITE VISIT ITINERARY –

THE ON-SITE AGENDA is arranged in collaboration with the primary contact person at the school at the direction of the site visit reviewers. The team should strive to observe every class taught in the public relations program, or at least a representative sample of the classes and the faculty in the unit. The team can request meals on their own and meals or meetings with key constituencies. It is up to the team to determine which agenda items they will attend separately and which they will attend together. The reviewers may also request time in the agenda to confer privately with each other.

TIME ON-SITE IS TYPICALLY THREE DAYS – the time frame can be extended by an additional day or two for a program requesting a two-level review.

Arrival is typically late on a Sunday, Monday or Tuesday in time for an introductory evening meal with key on-campus constituencies. This provides a relaxed atmosphere for the reviewers to get acquainted with the head of the public relations program, the department chair, the dean and/or public relations faculty.

The bulk of the reviewers' activities (observations of classes and meetings with key constituencies) will begin early on the second day (Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday). It is important for the team to be on campus for one day of Monday-Wednesday classes and one day of Tuesday-Thursday classes.

On the last day, prior to departure from campus, the reviewers will brief the school on their initial impressions. This should be in full recognition that the final assessment will not be determined until the report completes the multiple layers of the review process. A draft of the report should be submitted to the school within a few weeks after the site visit to check for factual accuracy. Then the report should be submitted to the CEPR coordinator. Educational Affairs may suggest additional revisions to the report prior to submission for PRSA Board consideration.

THE SITE VISIT

REVIEWERS –

Two-person teams typically include one educator and one APR-credentialed practicing professional from different geographical areas.

Scenarios to avoid include:
• appointment of a reviewer who has lived in the geographic area where the university is located,
• partnering the same two reviewers repeatedly, and
• repeatedly sending a reviewer to any one school.

Preference is given to full-time educators from programs that are certified. However, retired educators are often experienced reviewers, and preference may be given to reviewers with needed language skills or other appropriate expertise.

Any possible conflict of interest should be divulged by a prospective reviewer. Even the perception of a possible conflict of interest should be avoided if the reviewer has any substantial relationship to the unit under review, the university or the region.

KEY CONSTITUENCIES –

• students in the program;
• members of PRSSA and/or other student organizations;
• faculty in the public relations program;
• faculty outside of the unit who are familiar with the program;
• administrators, such as the department chair, college dean, provost or chief academic officer, and/or university president;
• practicing professionals affiliated with the program;
• alumni of the program;
• internship providers and employers of graduates from the program.

SITE VISIT REPORTS –

<u>Reviewers will write a separate report for each level under review</u>. Sources may include information from the application, from the site visit, and from off-site research, and reviewers may request additional documents or other information at any time. Recognizing that history and environment are unique to each school, a program will be <u>assessed for compliance with CEPR standards within the parameters of its own mission</u>. Recognizing that history and environment are unique to each school, site visit reviewers will assess each program for compliance with CEPR standards within the parameters of its own mission. <u>The report should fairly document the strengths of the program, without excessive exaggeration, but with recommendations/expectations for improvement</u>.

<u>Cover page</u> – The first page of the report should be dated with a header that identifies the document as a review for certification or recertification, with introductory information from Section A of the application; name and location of the institution; credentials held by the institution; contact information for administrators in the academic unit in which public relations is housed; credentials held by the unit; and academic degree(s) under CEPR review. It should also provide phone numbers, e-mail addresses and basic credentials of the reviewers.

<u>Overview</u> – Following the cover page and preceding assessment of standards, the report should provide background on the history of the program and/or what is unique or noteworthy about the program. A statement about the educational philosophy and goals of the program, including ethics, diversity and global perspectives, can provide a smooth transition to conclude the overview and begin analysis of compliance with the standards.

<u>Specifically defined evidence</u> – Throughout the assessment of standards, reviewers should identify documents reviewed, classes observed and the number of interviews conducted with each key constituency.

<u>Recommendations/expectations</u> – The report should conclude with constructive recommendations for improvement. Any significant deficiencies can rise beyond the level of recommendations and be stated as expectations for achievement prior to the next recertification review. The site visit reviewers can register one of several opinions:

(1) certification based on compliance with all standards;

(2) certification based on compliance with six or seven standards if non-compliance is manageable as an expectation prior to the next recertification review in six years;

(3) pending certification based on deficiencies that can be remedied prior to a follow-up review specific to one or two standards within 18 months (specifics on follow-up reviews to be determined on a case-by-case basis); or

(4) denial of certification if non-compliance is significant and/or widespread.

THE REPORT

• **FAIR ASSESSMENT –** Reviewers should assess the program within the parameters of its own mission. They should <u>fairly document the strengths of the program without excessive exaggeration</u>.

• **RECOMMENDATIONS/EXPECTATIONS –** The report should conclude with <u>constructive recommendations for improvement</u>. Any significant deficiencies can rise beyond the level of recommendations and be stated as <u>expectations for achievement prior to the next recertification review</u>.

APPLICATION and FEE	SEP-OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR-JUN	JUL
SITE VISIT DATES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	SEP	OCT
REPORT (factual accuracy) reviewers to applicant	20-FEB	20-MAR	20-APR	20-MAY	20-JUN	20-SEP	30-OCT
REPORT (factual accuracy) applicant to reviewers	01-MAR	01-APR	01-MAY	01-JUN	01-JUL	01-OCT	10-NOV
REPORT reviewers to Ed Affairs	15-MAR	15-APR	15-MAY	15-JUN	15-JUL	30-OCT	30-NOV
REPORT (revisions) Ed Affairs to reviewers	01-APR	01-MAY	01-JUN	01-JUL	01-AUG	20-NOV	20-DEC
REPORT (revised) reviewers to Ed Affairs	15-APR	15-MAY	15-JUN	15-JUL	15-AUG	20-DEC	20-JAN
REPORT (opinion) Ed Affairs to PRSA Board	25-APR	25-MAY	25-JUN	25-JUL	25-AUG	10-JAN	10-FEB
BOARD DECISION	10-MAY	10-JUN	10-JUL	10-AUG	10-SEP	10-FEB	10-MAR
NOTIFICATION (decision) Ed Affairs to applicant	20-MAY	20-JUN	20-JUL	20-AUG	20-SEP	20-FEB	20-MAR
CONFERRING of CERTIFICATION (International Conference)	Current year	Current year	Current year	Current year	Following year	Current year	Current year

THE TIMELINE

• SIX-YEAR CERTIFICATION –

A certified program must complete a recertification review every six years to assure continued compliance with evolving CEPR standards.

Application should be submitted as early as possible because applications are processed in the order received; it is not always possible to accommodate later requests.

Application should be submitted no later than January in the year that a school is due for recertification. A program that does not complete recertification review before September 1 will drop to pending status. Application must be submitted by the end of the calendar year with a site visit scheduled the following spring semester to remain on the roster of certified programs.

Application should be submitted to jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and to SGonders@gmail.com, and the fee to PRSSA Executive Director Jeneen Garcia, about three months in advance of preferred site visit dates.

The report goes through a four-step review process:

(1) factual accuracy – Within a few weeks of the site visit, the reviewers should submit their report to the applicant school to check for factual accuracy (not judgments); the applicant school should respond within 10 days.

(2) revisions – The reviewers will submit the report for review by Educational Affairs, which may suggest revisions.

(3) opinion – Educational Affairs will submit the report with the committee's opinion to the PRSA Board. Educational Affairs usually supports the opinion of the site visit reviewers, but the committee does not have to do so.

(4) decision – The PRSA Board will make the final decision on the application.

Conferring of certification – A school will be notified by Educational Affairs when the PRSA Board makes a decision, and schools that are approved will be invited to designate a limited number of representatives to attend the conferring of certifications, which is typically held during the PRSA Assembly that immediately precedes the fall International Conference. An application approved prior to September 1 is eligible for the conferring of certification at that year's International Conference; an application approved after September 1 is eligible for the conferring of certification in conjunction with the following year's International Conference.

Standard One: PUBLIC RELATIONS CURRICULUM

Undergraduate – **The public relations curriculum should be adaptable to changes in the profession and sufficient to prepare students for career growth in the field. In accord with the Commission report, it should be well grounded in liberal arts, communication and business disciplines. Available courses specific to public relations should include (1) principles; (2) writing/content creation with writing as a key component of each course; (3) research; (4) campaigns/case studies; (5) ethics (including global perspectives and other responsibilities of the profession); and (6) experiential learning. Through academic advising, students should be fully aware of requirements, prerequisites and opportunities in electives and/or minors. Students should be able to progress through the program in a timely manner.**

Evidence required in application sections:

B-01. Statement of educational philosophy and goals of the program in public relations education, including ethics, diversity and global perspectives.

E-01. Minimum credits required by the institution for this degree.

E-02. Requirements and electives in the public relations program, including credits per course, frequency of offerings and measures of assessment for each course.

E-03. Curricular and extracurricular experiential learning opportunities for students (internship, practicum, cooperative education, service learning, student-run agency/firm).

E-04. Statement of the inclusion of writing, ethics, diversity and global perspectives in course content.

E-05. Faculty-student ratio for survey and skills classes during each of the last three years.

E-06. Alumni – a sample of 20 graduates (e-mail and telephone contact information).

E-07. Internship providers – a sample of 10 (e-mail and telephone contact information).

E-08. Emloyers of graduates – a sample of 10 (e-mail and telephone contact information).

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

- A review of syllabi for appropriate content.
- Interviews with current students to assess their perceptions about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing them for career growth in public relations.
- Interviews with alumni to assess their perceptions about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing them for career growth in public relations.
- Interviews with internship providers and/or employers of graduates about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing students for career growth in public relations.
- Observations of classes.
- Review of course evaluations.

The five-course minimum endorsed by the Commission in 2006 was expanded to six courses in fall 2018. In recognition of the time required for academic changes in curriculum, schools are expected to demonstrate that changes are in progress by 2020 with fully compliant curriculum implemented by 2022.

It is not the purpose of CEPR to prescribe specifics of the arrangement and titles of courses – only to provide expected content areas. This content can be manifest in whatever curricular arrangement is appropriate to the program's institutional and cultural environment. However, it is not enough for students to complete general writing or research courses; content must be specific to public relations. The report should provide hard data on degree requirements, course offerings, faculty-student ratios and other information descriptive of the curriculum, with the following expectations specific to public relations:

- **Principles**
- **Writing/content creation** with writing as a key component of all public relations courses
- **Research** applicable to theory and outcomes measurement/assessment
- **Campaigns/case studies**
- **Ethics (including global perspectives and other responsibilities of the profession)**
- **Experiential learning**

This section of the report should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include creation of a new course or strengthening of some area of pedagogical deficiency.

Graduate – **Master's degree programs may be designed to prepare students for professional public relations careers and/or for entering doctoral programs. Both types of programs should teach public relations and management techniques and leadership, business and communications skills. A professional program should also include courses in an area of public relations specialization, as well as an internship, practicum or cooperative educational experience. Master's programs that are designed to prepare students for doctoral programs should have the same outcomes as professional master's programs, with additional instruction in theory and social science research methods. These academically focused programs should require a thesis.**

Evidence required in application sections:

B-01. Statement of educational philosophy and goals of the program in public relations education, including ethics, diversity and global perspectives.

E-01. Minimum credits required by the institution for this degree.

E-02. Requirements and electives in the public relations program, including credits per course, frequency of offerings and measures of assessment for each course.

E-03. Curricular and extracurricular experiential learning opportunities for students (internship, practicum, cooperative education, service learning, student-run agency/firm).

E-04. Statement of the inclusion of ethics, diversity and global perspectives in course content.

E-05. Faculty-student ratio for survey and skills classes during each of the last three years.

E-06. Alumni – a sample of 20 graduates (e-mail and telephone contact information).

E-07. Internship providers – a sample of 10 (e-mail and telephone contact information).

E-08. Emloyers of graduates – a sample of 10 (e-mail and telephone contact information).

E-10. Titles of a sample of 10 recent student theses.

E-11. Citations for any recently published student works.

E-12. A statement about the capstone experience, which could be a thesis, project and/or comprehensive exam.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

- A review of syllabi for appropriate content.

- Interviews with current students to assess their perceptions about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing them for career growth in public relations.

- Interviews with alumni to assess their perceptions about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing them for career growth in public relations.

- Interviews with internship providers and/or employers of graduates about the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing students for career growth in public relations.

- Observations of classes.

- Review of course evaluations.

Standard Two: PUBLIC RELATIONS FACULTY

It is essential that the faculty makeup represents diversity. Doctorate-holding faculty, professors of practice, and adjunct instructors should all be skilled in effective teaching with experience in the practicing profession. They should have specialized pedagogical training for online teaching, program quality control and assessment, and they should stay current on emerging communication platforms, tools and issues. Faculty members should be effective mentors who prepare their students well for careers in public relations. Those who are research faculty should ensure that their research strengthens their ability to teach and mentor students effectively. Part-time faculty should be selected based on experience and ability to teach and mentor, and they should be well-supervised to ensure the consistent quality of public relations courses. Faculty should be actively engaged in the field and with other professionals.

Graduate – **Faculty teaching in master's degree programs should have professional experience and remain professionally engaged in addition to their academic credentials. They should be involved in professional development programs through professional societies, media organizations and other venues, and they should lead professional development programs to share their research findings and expertise with others. A Ph.D., Ed.D. or equivalent terminal doctorate is the preferred qualification for teaching public relations; in most cases, a master's degree and professional experience should be the minimum acceptable credentials.**

Evidence required in application sections:

F-01.   Full-time and part-time faculty credentials and responsibilities, including:

   (a) list of faculty by name, rank, tenure/non-tenure status, gender, ethnicity and/or national origin;

   (b) degrees earned (year, title, field, institution);

   (c) professional experience in the field (years, position, description);

   (d) service (years and nature of service);

   (e) scholarship (full citations of presentations and publications);

   (f) awards received (years, titles, organizations);

   (g) professional affiliations (years, organizations, leadership positions);

   (h) workload (courses taught each academic year compared to similar units).

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with current students to assess their perceptions about the faculty.

• Interviews with alumni to assess their perceptions about the faculty.

• Interviews with faculty to assess their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

• Observations of classes.

• Review of course evaluations.

Tips: FACULTY

The review should provide detailed information on faculty credentials and responsibilities.

It is essential that the faculty makeup represents diversity with an appropriate mix of academic credentials and experience in the practicing profession. Faculty with advanced level academic degrees are particularly essential for master's level programs, and experience in various sectors of the practicing profession is important at all levels.

This section should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include an additional faculty line, professional experiences for existing faculty and/or the recruitment of guest speakers.

Standard Three: RESOURCES, EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

The public relations program should have equitable access to unit budgetary assets, library resources, computer and other technology tools. Technology should be current and comparable to that used in the field.

Graduate – **Master's level programs should have increased autonomy to manage facilities and budget with support for global initiatives of master's students and faculty, such as travel grants and international internships, as well as proper technology to support social and digital media skills.**

Evidence required in application sections:

C-01.   Library holdings and other learning resource tools.
C-02.   Technological currency of classroom and learning facilities compared to similar academic units.
C-03.   Budget allocations compared to similar academic units.
C-04.   Scholarships, grants and gifts to the program.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Inspection of equipment and facilities.
• Interviews with current students to assess their perceptions about the adequacy of resources, equipment and facilities.

Standard Four: PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENTS

The quality of the program's students and recruitment of outstanding students into public relations is at the foundation of a successful educational program. It is essential that student makeup represents diversity, and students should also receive adequate career counseling.

Evidence required in application sections:

B-02.   Assessment criteria, methods and results, including summative findings (achievement of goals) and formative findings (application to improvement of the program).
B-03.   Admissions and retention criteria for the university and for the program.
B-04.   Admissions data for at least each of the last three years – number of applicants and acceptance percentage by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.
B-05.   Matriculation data for at least each of the last three years – number of students and graduation rate by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.
C-05.   Awards received by students (year, title, organization).
E-10.   For the master's level, titles of a sample of 10 recent student theses.
E-11.   For the master's level, citations for any recently published student works.
F-02.   Academic advising and career counseling, including methods and recordkeeping.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with faculty about recruitment and retention efforts.
• Interviews with current students about why they chose this program, as well as adequacy of advising and counseling.
• Interviews with alumni about why they chose this program and if they are satisfied with the program.

The review should assess whether the public relations program is getting its fair share of resources compared to similar units within the university and/or within the unit's area.

This section should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include dedicated space for PRSSA or additional technology for the program.

The review should assess recruitment, retention, academic and career advising, matriculation and accomplishments of students. It is essential that the makeup of the student body represent diversity.

This section should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include ideas for recruitment or suggestions for stronger engagement of students with the program.

Standard Five: ASSESSMENT

Quality academic programs should have routine and systematic assessment built into the curriculum and the program. Assessment should determine whether or not the program is meeting its objectives (summative assessment); it should also identify specific actions to be taken for improvement (formative assessment).

Evidence required in application sections:

A-02.   Credentials held by the institution.
A-04.   Credentials held by the unit.
B-02.   Assessment criteria, methods and results, including summative findings (achievement of goals) and formative findings (application to improvement of the program).
E-07.   Internship providers – a sample of 10 providers with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with current students about achievement of course objectives.
• Interviews with internship providers about their involvement in evaluating the performance of interns.
• Review of the findings of measurements of achievement of program objectives.
• Interviews with faculty and/or administrators about the formative application of measures of objectives (how findings are applied to improve the program).

Standard Six: PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The involvement of alumni and other practicing professionals in mentoring students into the profession is strongly desired. The program should help students begin to cultivate the professional relationships they will need throughout their careers. The opportunity to network through PRSA/PRSSA and/or other professional organizations is essential to preparation for the practicing profession of public relations. Ongoing dialogue among educators and practicing professionals is also essential so that evolving industry needs can be translated into curricula and experiential learning.

Evidence required in application sections:

D-01.   Organizations public relations students may join and types of activities available for students.
D-02.   Opportunities for public relations students to interact with practicing professionals.
D-03.   Professional contacts – a sample of 10 practicing professionals (other than alumni) engaged with the public relations program with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.
E-06.   Alumni – a sample of 20 graduates with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.
F-02.   Academic advising and career counseling – methods and recordkeeping.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with current students about the adequacy of career counseling.
• Interviews with alumni about their involvement with the program.
• Interviews with practicing professionals about their involvement with the program.
• Consideration of awards received by the program, faculty and students from sources external to the university.
• Consideration of student and faculty service internal and external to the university.

Standard Seven: RELATIONSHIPS WITH TOTAL UNIT AND UNIVERSITY

To provide adequate public relations education, the program must depend upon other programs and faculty within their unit and throughout the university who teach general education, liberal arts, business and/or communications courses. The perception and reputation of the public relations program, its faculty and students are factors in the quality of teaching and mentoring that will occur external to the program. Receiving the resources necessary for good public relations education is also partly dependent upon these factors.

Evidence required in application sections:

A-03.   Contact information for administrators in the academic unit in which public relations is located.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with administrators to assess the reputation of the public relations program and its level of support.

• Interviews with faculty external to the program to assess the reputation of the public relations program.

• Consideration of university-wide awards received by the program, faculty and students.

Standard Eight: DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

It is important that public relations education prepare students to serve and work in a diverse society. Educators must emphasize the importance of diversity and the roles of minority groups in teaching students to understand, communicate effectively and relate to a multicultural/global society. It is also essential that no intimidation or threat be allowed to compromise the safety and security of students in pursuit of their studies.

Graduate – **Course content should include global influences on the practice of public relations, and support should be provided for global initiatives.**

Evidence required in application sections:

A-03.   Contact information for administrators in the academic unit in which public relations is located.

B-01.   Statement of educational philosophy and goals of the program in public relations education
        (should include ethics, diversity and global perspectives).

B-04.   Admissions data for at least each of the last three years – number of applicants and acceptance percentage
        by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.

B-05.   Matriculation data for at least each of the last three years – number of students and graduation fate
        by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.

E-04.   Statement of the inclusion of ethics, diversity and global perspectives in course content.

Additional evidence to be gathered by reviewers:

• Interviews with current students to assess their appreciation for ethics, diversity and global perspectives.

• Consideration of gender, ethnic diversity, multi-national representation and/or multilingual representation
  in the program.

The review should assess the perception and reputation of the public relations program among people external to the program.

This section should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include development of inter-disciplinary projects or increased competition for awards of recognition, as well as any other initiatives to enhance the perceived value of the public relations program.

**Tips: DIVERSITY and
       GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES**

The review should assess how well students are prepared to serve and work in a diverse global society. They should be aware of how the practice of public relations differs throughout the world.

This section should conclude with a summary of strengths and recommendations, followed by the reviewers' judgment for compliance or non-compliance. Appropriate recommendations could include increased emphasis on ethics and/or diversity issues, or greater consideration of gender, ethnic diversity, multi-national representation and/or multi-lingual representation in the program. Consideration could also be given to appropriate access for students and faculty with disabilities.

CERTIFIED PROGRAMS
Year of initial certification • Year due for recertification review

9 POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Technological University Dublin-Ireland
2010 • 2023 (Public Relations) (pending)

Technological University Dublin-Ireland
2017• 2023 (Political Comm) (pending)

Ball State University-Indiana
2011 • 2023 (Public Relations) (pending)

Quinnipiac University-Connecticut
2016 • 2029 (Public Relations)

Rowan University-New Jersey
2017 • 2023 (Public Relations) (pending)

Syracuse University-New York
2017 • 2029 (Public Relations)

University of Florida-Gainesville
2023 • 2029 (Public Relations)

University of Florida-online
2023 • 2029 (Public Relations)

Loyola University-Chicago
2023 • 2029 (Public Relations)

The Global Standard in public relations education

2 - Argentina
2 - Ireland
1 - Colombia
1 - New Zealand
1 - Peru
1 - United Arab Emirates
5 - Florida
4 - New Jersey
3 - Illinois
3 - Ohio

2 - California
2 - Connecticut
2 - Indiana
2 - Iowa
2 - Kentucky
2 - Maryland
2 - Michigan
2 - Missouri
2 - New York
2 - Tennessee
2 - Virginia

1 - Alabama
1 - Georgia
1 - Louisiana
1 - Mississippi
1 - Oklahoma
1 - Oregon
1 - Pennsylvania
1 - Utah
1 - West Virginia
1 - Wisconsin

46 UNDER-GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Brigham Young University-Utah
1990 • 2028

Eastern Kentucky University
1991 • 2024

Ball State University-Indiana
1993 • 2023 (pending)

University of Maryland-College Park
1998 • 2023 (pending)

University of Memphis-Tennessee
2001 • 2025

California State University-Fullerton
2002 • 2028

Ohio Northern University
2003 • 2028

Rowan University-New Jersey
2004 • 2023 (pending)

Radford University-Virginia
2004 • 2023 (pending)

Western Kentucky University
2004 • 2025

Universidad Argentina de la Empresa
2004 • 2024 (public relations)

Universidad Argentina de la Empresa
2018 • 2024 (global communications)

Southeast Missouri State University
2006 • 2026

University of Cincinnati-Ohio
2007 • 2026

University of Waikato-New Zealand
2009 • 2029

Universidad de Medellin-Colombia
2010 • 2028

Ferris State University-Michigan
2010 • 2023 (pending)

Syracuse University-New York
2010 • 2029

Monmouth University-New Jersey
2010 • 2029

Lee University-Tennessee
2010 • 2023 (pending)

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
2011 • 2023 (pending)

Seton Hall University-New Jersey
2012 • 2024

Universidad de San Martin de Porres -Peru 2012 • 2025

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)
2012 • 2026

Illinois State University
2013 • 2025

Temple University-Pennsylvania
2013 • 2026

University of Central Missouri
2014 • 2026

Drake University-Iowa
2014 • 2026

Loyola University-New Orleans
2014 • 2026

Wayne State University-Michigan
2015 • 2028

Kent State University-Ohio
2016 • 2029

Quinnipiac University-Connecticut
2016 • 2029

University of Florida-Gainesville
2016 • 2029

University of Florida-online
2023 • 2029

Iowa State University
2017 • 2029

University of Oregon
2018 • 2024

West Virginia University
2019 • 2025

Samford University-Alabama
2019 • 2025

Canadian University Dubai-U.A.E.
2020 • 2026

Biola University-California
2021 • 2027

Mississippi State University
2021 • 2027

Georgia Southern University
2021 • 2027

Morgan State University-Maryland
2021 • 2027

University of Central Oklahoma
2023 • 2029

Loyola University-Chicago
2023 • 2029

Palm Beach Atlantic University
2024 (pending)

APPLICATION FOR REVIEW

submit a Word or pdf document to jeneen.garcia@prsa.org and SGonders@gmail.com
at least three months in advance of preferred site visit dates

NO EMBEDDED HYPERLINKS

CEPR

Certification in
Education for
Public Relations

Section A. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

A-01.   **Name of institution and location.**
Example: University of the Arctic - North Pole, Arctic Zone

A-02.   **Credentials held by the institution.**
Example: Accredited by the Far North Accrediting Council

A-03.   **Contact information for administrators in the academic unit in which public relations is housed.**
Example:
Jorge Perez, dean of the College of Business, 555-123-4567, perez@arctic.edu
Fran Claus, chair of the Department of Journalism, 555-123-5678, claus@arctic.edu
Terry Smith, head of the Public Relations Program, 555-123-6789, smith@arctic.edu
Also include a mailing address for the key contact person in the program.

A-04.   **Credentials held by the unit.**
Example: The College of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, and the Department of Journalism is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

A-05.   **Academic degree under CEPR review.**
Example: Bachelor of Science in Communication - Public Relations

Section B. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

B-01.   **Statement of educational philosophy and goals of the program in public relations education, including ethics, diversity and global perspectives.**

B-02.   **Assessment criteria, methods and results, including summative findings (achievement of goals) and formative findings (application to improvement of the program).**
Methods could be exit interviews with graduating seniors, focus groups with alumni and surveys of graduates' employers. How did findings indicate achievement of the program's goals? How were findings applied to improving the program?

B-03.   **Admissions and retention criteria for the university and for the program.**
Example: Admission to the university is moderately selective with a minimum 2.0 ACT score, a 3.0 high school GPA or matriculation in the top 10 percent of the high school class. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA for retention in the university. Completion of 45 hours with a minimum 2.5 GPA is required for admission to the public relations program, and a minimum "C" in each course in the major with a cumulative 2.5 GPA is required for retention in the major.

B-04.   **Admissions data for at least each of the last three years – number of applicants and acceptance percentage by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.**

B-05.   **Matriculation data for at least each of the last three years – number of students and graduation rate by gender, ethnicity and/or national origin.**

Section C. INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESOURCES OF THE PROGRAM

C-01.   **Library holdings and other learning resource tools.**

C-02.   **Technological currency of classroom and learning facilities compared to similar academic units.**

C-03.   **Budget allocations compared to similar academic units.**

C-04.   **Scholarships, grants and gifts to the program.**

C-05.   **Awards received by students (year, title, organization).**

Section D. INFORMATION ABOUT PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

D-01.   **Organizations public relations students may join and types of activities available for students.**

D-02.   **Opportunities for public relations students to interact with practicing professionals.**

D-03.   **Professional contacts – a sample of 10 practicing professionals (other than alumni) engaged with the public relations program with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.**

Section E. INFORMATION ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

E-01. **Minimum credits required by the institution for this degree.**

E-02. **Requirements and electives in the public relations program, including credits per course, frequency of offerings and measures of assessment for each course.**
Example: 39 hours (15 department, 18 public relations, 6 elective)

15 hours department:

3 credits - CM 113 Intro to Communication	3 times/year	2 exams
3 credits - CM 213 Writing for Mass Media	3 times/year	writing projects
3 credits - CM 313 Communication Theories	3 times/year	2 exams
3 credits - CM 413 Communication Law & Ethics	3 times/year	2 exams
3 credits - CM 493 Internship	3 times/year	portfolio

15 hours public relations:

3 credits - PR 333 Public Relations Principles	2 times/year	3 exams
3 credits - PR 343 Public Relations Writing	1 time /year	writing projects
3 credits - PR 353 Public Relations Multimedia	1 time /year	production projects
3 credits - PR 363 Public Relations Ethics	1 time/year	analysis papers
3 credits - PR 383 Public Relations Research	1 time /year	research projects
3 credits - PR 483 Public Relations Campaigns	1 time /year	campaign project

6 hours electives (choose 2 of 5):

3 credits - JO 323 Reporting	2 times/year	writing projects
3 credits - AD 323 Advertising Principles	2 times/year	3 exams
3 credits - TV 323 Video Production	2 times/year	video projects
3 credits - PR 373 Social Media Strategy	1 time /year	online projects
3 credits - CM 333 Diversity in Media	2 times/year	2 exams

E-03. **Curricular and extracurricular experiential learning opportunities for students** (internship, practicum, cooperative education, service learning student-run agency/firm).

E-04. **Statement of the inclusion of ethics, diversity and global perspective in course content.**
Example: CM 113 includes a unit of study on minority media, PR 333 includes a unit of study on global communications, and CM 333 focuses on the strength of ethnic diversity in communications professions.

E-05. **Faculty-student ratio for survey and skills classes during at least each of the last three years.**

E-06. **Alumni – a sample of 20 graduates with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.**

E-07. **Internship providers º a sample of 10 providers with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.**

E-08. **Employers of graduates – a sample of 10 employers with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.**

E-09. **Faculty in other programs – a sample of 10 colleagues at your school who are familiar with the public relations program with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.**

E-10. **For master's level, titles of a sample of 10 recent student theses.**

E-11. **For master's level, citations for recently published student works.**

E-12. **For master's level, a statement about the capstone experience, which could be a thesis, project and/or comprehensive exam.**

Section F. INFORMATION ABOUT THE FACULTY

F-01. **Full-time and part-time faculty credentials and responsibilities.**
- • Name, gender, rank, tenure/non-tenure status, ethnicity and/or national origin.
- • Degrees earned (year, title, field, institution).
- • Experience in the practicing profession of public relations (years, positions, descriptions).
- • Service (years and nature of service).
- • Scholarship (full citations of presentations and publications).
- • Awards received (years, titles, organizations).
- • Professional affiliations (years, organizations, leadership positions).
- • Workload (courses taught each academic year compared to similar units).

F-02. **Academic advising and career counseling – methods and recordkeeping.**

Section G. PREFERRED SITE VISIT DATES

G-01. **First choice of preferred dates.**
Example: Immediately following the ACEJMC site visit scheduled Feb. 1-4.

G-02. **Second choice of preferred dates.**
Example: Late March (after March 10-17 spring break) or early April.