



**Commission on Public Relations Education  
Industry-Educator Summit on Public Relations Education  
May 12, 2015  
Summary Report**

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**Commission on Public Relations Education  
Industry-Educator Summit on Public Relations Education  
May 12, 2015**

**BACKGROUND**

The Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE) is an independent body of public relations educators and practitioners representing 15 professional societies in public relations and related fields of communications. Since 1975, it has presented research-based recommendations on public relations education. Colleges and universities throughout the world have adopted these recommendations—enhancing the relevance and quality of public relations education. The Commission’s most recent report offering guidance on the development of public relations undergraduate education is “The Professional Bond” (2006).

The Commission is currently in the process of developing a new report on public relations education at the undergraduate level. Throughout 2014, quantitative and qualitative research has been conducted in the U.S. and at international forums where professionals and educators gathered. Six focus groups were held involving 50+ professionals and educators, using tailored discussion guides. The CPRE Industry-Educator Summit, described on the following pages, will be a major source of input for the report, and we will continue to gather input via crowd-sourcing, a transparent, inclusive process for seeking opinions and ideas.

Findings from the Summit and the additional research will be considered by Commission members in preparing the next report on public relations education.

## **The Commission on Public Relations Industry-Educator Summit**

Approximately 50 public relations industry leaders and educators met for a day on May 12, 2015, to discuss topics related to undergraduate public relations education, with a heavy focus on how best to prepare students for a career in public relations. Industry leaders included CEOs and COOs of major agencies, CCOs of major corporations and not-for-profit organizations, as well as senior counselors and educators. (See Appendix A on Page 21 for a complete list of participants, including some who participated via teleconference.)

Participants also represented all of the major industry professional and academic associations including Public Relations Society of America, Arthur Page Society, PR Council, PRSA Foundation, Institute of Public Relations, Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, National Communication Association, Universal Accreditation Board, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, European Public Relations Education and Research Association, Chartered Institute of Public Relations International Communications Consultancy Organization, and the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations.

The Summit was hosted by Ketchum at its New York offices.

Much of the day was focused on having employers provide input and ideas on this statement:

***We need someone with an undergraduate public relations degree at the entry level who can:***

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Five related topics were also explored in small group discussions:

- *Beyond Campus*—Undergraduate education outside the campus setting;
- *Diversity Begins on Campus*—Strategies for increasing diversity in the public relations profession;
- *Outside the Classroom*—Internships and experiential learning;
- *Beyond Entry Level*—Executive graduate programs, continuing education opportunities, and how educators can help agencies and corporations with in-house training programs;
- *Beyond Borders*—Developing a global body of knowledge.

## **PART ONE: DEFINING THE SITUATION**

Keynote speakers Rob Flaherty, President and CEO Ketchum, and Elizabeth Toth, Ph. D., Professor and Chair, Department of Communication, University of Maryland, set the stage for the discussions with overviews of the industry and educator perspectives.

Their complete PPT presentations are included in Appendix B, beginning on Page 26. Among the highlights:

Rob Flaherty:

- Half of everything needed now didn't exist ten years ago.
- People under the age of 35 know more about how people communicate, share information and form opinion than people older than 35.
- Some core skills still apply but the context is very, very different.
- The changes in the past few years shake the foundation of skills taught for decades.

Elizabeth Toth:

- Industry leaders and educators have much in common and share great enthusiasm. We are not “Mars and Venus,” but have shared goals – developing talented people for our profession – and shared concerns – the profession is changing so quickly, it's difficult for all of us to keep up.
- Undergraduate public relations education is not day-after-day in the public relations classroom.
  - Students spend two-thirds of their time being educated in the liberal arts, and in related courses from marketing to organizational development – plus dozens of hours in internships, campus leadership, PRSSA and more. The result is graduates who are both well-rounded and well-grounded in public relations.

## **PART TWO: BUILDING CONSENSUS ON KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES**

Participants gathered in seven small groups of professionals and educators, to fill in the blank on the statement:

*We need someone with an undergraduate public relations degree at the entry level who can \_\_\_\_\_.*

Everyone in the group offered ideas, and then the group ranked the ideas in priority order.

Participants reconvened to share their recommendations and reach a consensus.

There were a number of topics discussed by the group as a whole, including:

- The industry is changing rapidly and professionals are struggling to keep up with evolving strategies and tactical options. This presents a related challenge for educators, who have to adapt content and teaching methods equally quickly.
- There are misperceptions about what's actually being taught in undergraduate programs – most of the items included on a “don't teach this” list (such as press kits, query letters, how to do a VNR, etc.) are rarely taught, according to the educator participants.
- Despite some public comments to the contrary, the industry participants absolutely believe that writing is an essential core skill, and perhaps even more challenging today because students need to be prepared to write effectively across platforms and for multiple purposes.
- The hierarchy of higher education is complex, and educators can do a better job of helping industry understand the nuances of accreditation, recommended core coursework, certification, etc.
- While universities don't allow programs and majors to be turned on a dime, feedback from industry is vital in terms of adapting existing courses, adding resources, and changing methods.

Another interesting discussion topic was the differences between various industry sectors. It was clear that there's no one-size-fits-all. Some employers say “just teach them the core things and we'll do on-the-job training ourselves,” while others say they don't have the training resources and need entry-level people ready to dig in on day one.

Similarly, some industry participants said that traditional media relations skills are less important, while others (mostly corporate) said that their company management is still very interested in securing coverage in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* and similar mainstream outlets. The group generally agreed that students need to know both – how to work across the entire spectrum of traditional, contemporary and emerging media channels.

Participants also had lively discussions about whether some skills are “traditional” or “new,” and eventually decided that some skills are truly “evergreen” in that they don’t change but rather are adapted, as part of a continuum that continuously evolves.

From a very long list of desired characteristics, skills and knowledge that were proposed by the small groups, the participants came to a general consensus on what’s core, what’s a competency and what’s a personal characteristic, to form the basis for CPRE’s next report on undergraduate curriculum guidelines and recommendations to educators.

While there was not 100% agreement on every item, the following summarizes the general consensus of participants.

## **I. Desirable characteristics of an entry-level public relations practitioner**

A number of personal traits and interpersonal skills required of a public relations practitioner were identified.

### **Personal Traits:**

The participants at the Summit described entry-level public relations practitioners as individuals who have **integrity** and **ethics**, and who are willing to hold themselves **accountable**. Such practitioners are also **sensible** and **resourceful**. Entry-level public relations practitioners should exhibit **intellectual curiosity** (also described as **aggressive curiosity**). Going hand in glove with curiosity is the desire to be **life-long learners**. Finally, entry-level practitioners must have a strong **work ethic** and be **driven**.

### **Interpersonal Skills:**

Participants also required soft skill competencies. Entry-level public relations practitioners must have **self-awareness**, be **adaptable** and be **assertive**. They also must be **collaborative**, good **listeners** and be **sensitive** to individual and cultural differences.

## **II. Skills needed by an entry-level public relations practitioner**

In addition to the personal traits and interpersonal skills required of an entry-level practitioner, the participants identified the following skills as essential:

- **Problem solving**
- **Conducting research and analyzing the data, going beyond reporting the numbers to identify the implications**
- **“Connecting the dots”**
  - Practitioners must be able to make connections among disparate things. They must understand how the world works and connects to their clients, organizations or causes.

- **Strategic planning**—being able to set clear goals and measurable outcomes
- **Advancing organizational goals**
  - Practitioners must understand how the public relations function fits within the overall organizational goals, and its role in advancing those goals.
- **Project management**—knowing how to not only plan but effectively execute a tactic, a project or a program
- **Content creation and storytelling**, with a particular emphasis on storytelling.
  - As one participant observed, “Developing content is essential, but it’s essential that we can wrap it into a compelling story.”
- **Writing**
  - Discussion first focused on social media, then shifted to agreement that writing for traditional channels is equally important and concluded with consensus that writing for all platforms is essential.
- **Clear verbal and graphic communications**

### III. Knowledge needed by an entry-level public relations practitioner

Participants identified the following knowledge areas that are of importance for entry-level public relations practitioners:

- **The role and value of public relations** – and the ability to translate this for a client, CEO or Board
- **Measurement**
  - Understanding what to measure and how to measure
- **Data analytics and insights**
  - Understanding analytics, but also understanding what it all means. Being able to interpret the data and draw insights from it is crucial.
- **Communication and public relations theories**
  - Including network and chaos theories, persuasion and influencing behaviors
  - Some said don’t bother teaching the history of public relations, others said this knowledge is valuable because it provides context and a solid understanding of how public relations has evolved.
- **Cross-cultural and global communication.**
  - Having, or developing, a global antenna, a “global sensitivity filter”
- **Understanding influence and how it operates today.**
  - “Knowing how to change minds, hearts and behavior”
- **Business processes and planning.**
- **“Business acumen,”** described as understanding how business works, to provide the contextual significance of public relations
- **The newest techniques.**
  - New grads should know the skills that are new to the PR profession, the things older professionals don’t even know yet.”

Industry leaders also emphasized the importance of “real world” experience, and educators noted that this kind of experience is an integral part of undergraduate programs today.



The CCO of a global corporation summed up “the core” as:

***“Know how to write and speak.***

***Know how to run a project and work as part of a team.***

***Think globally.”***

Many agreed – although there were divergent opinions about whether all employers have the capacity to provide training beyond this core, or count on undergraduate programs to prepare undergraduates with the full set of skills and knowledge.

## **PART THREE:**

### **Additional Topics Related to Undergraduate Education**

Five small groups tackled key challenges in public relations education, including diversity, globalism, experiential learning, continuing education and educator/practitioner interaction.

#### **TOPIC ONE: BEYOND CAMPUS**

##### **Undergraduate education outside the campus setting**

Public relations education does not end when a student steps off campus. It can, and does, continue through internships, but also through online classes, certification programs and interactions with professionals. This group explored ways that educators and professionals can enhance the student experience through off-campus or other “real-world” interaction with professionals.

##### **Educators**

- Counsel students on:
  - Pace of practice, work hours
  - Business-place conduct, dress, punctuality.
- Leverage PRSSA to connect students with industry professionals.
- Participate in Ketchum’s Mindfire project.
- Examine the University of Florida’s student-run agency as a model of student/professional mix.
- Help students shift to a “service” understanding of the practice, rather than just a plan- or product-based understanding.
- Encourage students to work with nonprofits and NGOs.
- Get students on the road—domestically and abroad
  - i.e., attending Cannes creativity festival, visiting agencies, newsrooms, etc.
- Participate in the Educator Fellowship program of the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, where educators are placed with public relations agencies and within organizations for two weeks in the summer.

## **Professionals**

- Provide real-world challenges for students to work on with faculty supervision
  - Incentivize via competitions, possible job placements.
- Pay students to do something outside of the office and bring learning back as Golin has done with its “unternship.”

## **Educators & Professionals Working Together**

- Organize professional-led courses that take place in professionals’ offices rather than in the classroom to make teaching less of a burden on one professional.
- Swap jobs. Bring professionals to campus and put educators in agencies.
- Forge team teaching models that combine educators and practitioners.

## **TOPIC TWO: DIVERSITY BEGINS ON CAMPUS**

### **Strategies for increasing diversity in the profession**

The challenge of having a diverse university of public relations professionals to work in agencies, corporations, not-for-profit organizations and other settings is one that is of significant concern to industry leaders and educators. This group focused on five related questions about diversity.

#### **Does diversity still begin on campus?**

- Diversity does begin on campus, but somewhere between getting the degree and staying long enough to be promoted (five years), minority employees tend to “fall out” either from their particular organization and go elsewhere, or the practice entirely.

#### **What can be done to attract minority students into public relations?**

- Consensus that trying to recruit high school and grade school students into public relations as a major is too big and broad an effort.
- Some questioned whether a bigger pipeline of diverse students would translate into more hires. One participant observed that there are 35,000 public relations majors now. Not all will get jobs.

#### **Should equal or greater emphasis be on retention of young professionals?**

- The group agreed recruitment and retention are needed. Retention once the minority students have jobs may even be a bigger issue than recruitment, at least at the campus level.
- A new, yet-to-be-released study, funded by PRSA Foundation, found there are some significant areas of concern among minority students about feeling comfortable in agency and corporate environments.
- If agencies and corporations want a diverse group of entry-level candidates, they must be prepared to welcome, mentor, nurture and support these students.
- One agency does training on “unconscious bias,” a very rigorous effort that is required of employees. The agency has received very good feedback on the program.
- One corporate executive indicated he believes corporations do a better job of recruiting with a wider lens because they have more different types of job opportunities.

## **Why do organizations want diversity?**

- Some participants questioned the motivations behind the push for diversity on the part of some organizations. Are agencies and corporations who are asking recruiters for a “diverse slate of candidates” clear about why, and the role those diverse hires will play within the organization? In other words, what is the real reason organizations say they want diversity? Is it a genuine commitment, reflected in their actions in terms of welcoming and mentoring, or is it more superficial?
- “We need a workforce that reflects our customer base,” said one corporate practitioner. “And we need to hire agencies that bring us a diverse team.” Another said, “Great creative thinking comes from people of diverse backgrounds.”

## **Should diversity efforts be focused on race or should other factors also receive attention?**

- Everyone talks about diversity strictly in terms of ethnicity and race. Gender is not discussed. But look at our classrooms; they are 90% female at entry level. That flips at senior executive levels.
- Ethnic and racial diversity are an issue on some campuses, but not on all. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work.

The group concluded that diversity can begin on campus, but that’s only the start if the goal is for organizations to have a diverse employee workforce. There is concern, however, that the pipeline of students is already very full in terms of overall numbers, such that there are more students than there may be jobs. So trying to recruit more minority students may be counter-productive. The group made the following recommendations, which are meant to work together:

- Continue efforts to recruit a more diverse group of students who are already on campus into public relations undergraduate programs by articulating and “selling” the career, but don’t stop there.
- Simultaneously, counsel these students to put together a strong academic profile with electives that strengthen their preparation for the business and behavior-change and results-management world along with a lot of experiential learning (internships, student agencies, etc.);
- And if these efforts translate into more minority students being hired, ensure that they continue to work in our industry by ensuring that employers are prepared to welcome, mentor, and make these new employees feel comfortable. Training for all employees along with formal programs to monitor and support the diverse new hires are required.

## **TOPIC THREE: OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

### **Internships and experiential learning**

This session focused on ways to improve internship and experiential learning experiences for the benefit of both students and employers/internship providers.

In general, the group expressed a preference for off-campus internships. Industry professionals, in particular, argued that students learned more and developed better workplace skills by getting outside of their campus “comfort zone.” For similar reasons, they also were not advocates of virtual internship experiences. One participant noted that, at his company, interns are assigned a work project that they “own.” To accomplish their assignment, they also must work with office teams. They become part of a team, building bonds, learning teamwork principles and making connections for the future. In fact, he said, the internships are a “tryout” for future employment with his company—and students know that.

The group made the following specific recommendations:

- Internships should be available for professors as well as students, so that the professors will become familiar with today’s workplace climate/culture and will be able to better align their classroom instruction with preparing students to take maximum advantage of their internships. Some companies already provide summer internships for professors, and these programs seem to be highly successful.
- Successful internships for students and employers require a clear understanding of the terms of the internship and involvement/commitment to the process by both sides. Employers prefer to work with colleges and universities that have an established structure for internships and for selecting students who are the best match for an employer. They avoid universities that do not put the time and resources into this level of involvement (a disadvantage for schools that may not have budgets to do so).
- At the same time, employers recognized that their “blue chip” universities do not have enough minority candidates for internships. All agreed that diverse students are underrepresented in internship positions and advocated programs to recruit more students from universities with more diverse populations, including HBCUs and HSIs.
- Internships should:
  - Involve students in meaningful projects, based on real needs of the employer (not “made-up” or clerical work);
  - Provide value for both the student and the employer;
  - Provide some form of compensation for the interns’ work;
  - Whenever possible, provide a pipeline for students to future employment.

## TOPIC FOUR: BEYOND ENTRY LEVEL

### Executive graduate programs, continuing education and in-house training programs

Continuing education opportunities are numerous, whether they be found inside public relations firms/agencies or corporations through in-house training programs, or through the wide range of programs available through colleges and universities, professional societies and associations, the trade press, and commercial enterprises. But how much and what kind of continuing education do public relations practitioners need over the course of their careers? The following were the results of the small group discussion:

- ***Sales and presentation***
  - How to pitch and retain businesses
  - Developing a sales culture
- ***Management training***
  - How to be a manager
  - How to manage teams
- ***Basics of business***
  - Finance
  - Understanding the client's business
- ***Ongoing communications training***
  - Understanding and translating data into effective communication
- ***Specialization in PR education programs***
  - Certificate-based, specialized programs that have clear delivery and practical implications
- ***Case studies-based programs***
  - Learning from case studies: "how did you do that" and "why did it work (or not work)"
- ***Programs tackling current trends***
  - Learning about the meaning of buzzwords in the field
- ***Short-term, highly accessible programs*** available to people at different stages of their career
- ***Within the organization, training*** that speaks to people's needs and that brings practical value to the business

- ***Inviting PR scholars/experts into the organization*** for knowledge sharing (i.e., tapping into the alumni network)

The group then considered how educators and practitioners could best collaborate to provide that continuing education. The following considerations emerged:

- Instilling the idea of life-long learning in practitioners—strengthening the mindset;
- Packaging scholarly articles into easily accessible format for practitioners to leverage in their work; producing scholarly work that is both meaningful and useful to universities and to practitioners;
- Fostering informal programs or meet-ups that involve both educators and practitioners to share ideas and best practices.



## TOPIC FIVE: BEYOND BORDERS

### Developing a global body of knowledge

Leading public relations employers and educators know well the “business case” for addressing today’s inter-connected, interactive and interdependent world. Public relations organizations of various types and sizes expect expertise and services from global-communications knowledgeable practitioners. This group explored the global knowledge, skills and abilities needed by an entry-level public relations practitioner.

The group first noted the context within which public relations operates globally today and then addressed questions of whether a global set of knowledge/skills/abilities (KSAs) can be developed.

#### Context

- ***Is a global KSA framework workable?***
  - Need flexibility to account for variations globally. For example, Asia Pacific still measures in more traditional ways, while the United States is more about online metrics. A global knowledge/skills/abilities framework is possible if we allow local entities to weight certain skills because one size does not fit all.
  - At the same time, however, a global framework could be seen as aspirational, which is a good thing. It will drive growth and maturity.
  - Need to be aware of double binds. If you can’t bridge the gap, get as close as possible.
- ***What are the difficulties practicing in a global environment?***
  - Need for a partner on the ground not just for execution.
  - Recognition of a leapfrogging phenomenon in technology. Evolution is not linear.
  - Need for balance. Global standards may be adjusted to tailor to local needs and reality but not at the cost of being at odds with headquarter’s principles.
  - Everything is local; nothing is local. It affects everything.
  - One way to educate staff in multi-companies is to rotate staff around the world.
- ***What are the difficulties in teaching global public relations?***
  - Need to learn from case studies in other countries.
  - Educators have difficulty inserting global content in courses. Mindset needs to change and room must be made. It becomes a competitive advantage to be global and think globally.
  - Should we allow flexibility to international audiences whose first language is not English to have lower marks in writing?
  - Writing proficiency is a problem in all mother tongues. The problem is universal.
  - Idea of a writing test before admission. Remedial courses before admission.

## **Global Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- ***Global Knowledge***
  - Awareness of local sensitivities and cultural issues
  - Understanding of ethical issues. Ethics is a by-product of culture. It varies with the market, and we must deal with that dilemma.
  - Understanding of legal issues. There are cultural differences regarding intellectual property, for example.
- ***Global Skills and Abilities***
  - Speak more than one language (although while language skills are an asset, in some roles they are not essential)
  - Have a global antenna
  - Embrace complexity and diversity

## **PART FOUR:**

### **The Road Ahead:**

### **From the Summit to the Next Commission Report**

As the Summit concluded, participants shared ideas on how to move this effort forward—which includes “How we work together to make this happen.”

The ideas include:

- Bringing together educators and industry leaders is essential and needs to be ongoing – one Summit is one moment in time. Also, we need to broaden involvement to include professionals from other sectors, such as not-for-profit, smaller agencies and businesses, government, counseling.
- Summit participants need to become more involved with the Commission’s work—including personal commitment.
- CPRE needs to complete the full diagnostic of skills/traits.
- Educators could work with agencies to pilot three-to-four progressive, “rock star” courses.
- Industry could provide seed grants to support PRSA diversity initiatives.
- Industry and educators need to figure out how to balance the needs of academic programs with actual job opportunities—prevent over-production of graduates.
- Industry should create opportunities for hands-on, in-person mentoring/learning. In other words, “Being there.”
- Educators should develop curricula based on the vision of agencies.
- The Commission should identify opportunities for the Summit participants to reconvene to continue the discussion— possibly in conjunction with AEJMC in August or to coincide with the PRSA International Conference, Nov. 8-10, in Atlanta.



## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Industry-Educator Summit on Public Relations Education

Tuesday, May 12, 2015, Ketchum | New York. New York

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## **APPENDIX B – Keynote Presentations**

# WHAT INDUSTRY NEEDS:

Thought Starters on the Future  
of Public Relations Education

**Rob Flaherty, President and CEO, Ketchum**



An illustration on a dark blue background featuring a clock, a microscope, and a stylized head with gears. Dashed white lines connect the clock to the microscope and the head. A small icon of a person with a magnifying glass is also visible.

# WHAT INDUSTRY NEEDS:

Thought Starters on the Future  
of Public Relations Education

**Rob Flaherty, President and CEO, Ketchum**

## WHAT I DON'T KNOW

A lot about being a professor or dean

The realities of updating a curriculum

The timetable required

The inertia to be overcome

The legacy requirements that haven't changed

The rigorous standards required

## WHAT I DO KNOW

The changes over the past few years shake the foundation of skills taught for decades

We are in the post-mass-media era

Half of everything needed now didn't exist 10 years ago

Judgment and experience count, some core skills still apply, but the context is very, very different

People under the age of 35 know more about how people communicate, share information and form opinion than people over 35.

## Current Courses 2015

Intro to Mass Communications  
Writing for the Mass Media  
Writing for Communication  
Mass Communications Research  
Theory and Practice of Communication  
Professional Presentation  
Media Relations  
Law of Communication  
Public Relations Campaign Planning and Execution

New Media and PR  
Interactive Multi-Media Design  
Writing for News and Public Relations in a Digital World  
The Ethics of Advocacy  
Global Relations and Intercultural Communications  
Critical Business Skills for Corporate Communications



#### ► **BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS 101:**

Eight key types - consumer, B2B, supply chain, employee, investor, community/NGO, government and media; key characteristics - trust, satisfaction, loyalty, mutuality; history of public relations as a business function.

#### ► **CROSS-PLATFORM WRITING 102:**

News and brand/corporate advocacy communications for convergent media; basics of writing and editing, how to pitch a story.

#### ► **MAGNET CONTENT 103:**

How to create content that people want to view and share – video, audio, interactive, paid vs. organic, authenticity, creative risk taking, measuring virality and engagement.

#### ► **EFFECTIVE EVENT PLANNING 104:**

Work streams across multiple disciplines for event planning, campaign planning (for account planning, see Insight 402).

#### ► **CONTEXT AND CHANNELS 201:**

Engaging audiences through the full PESO spectrum of media (paid, earned, shared, owned), search engines, mainstream mass media trends, online media (blogs, video sharing, social platforms, Twitter), the multi-cultural context.

#### ► **STORYTELLING 202:**

Elements of all stories, hallmarks of great stories, a brand as a story; visual storytelling.

<p>► <b>LISTENING 203:</b> Listening to write a story, to hear diverse points of view, gather criticism, improve service, products and performance; advanced social listening and feedback loops.</p>	<p>► <b>BUSINESS IMPERATIVES 204:</b> Financial performance and marketing, investor expectations, financial efficiency (cost reduction), plus triple bottom line: employees and community in addition to financial priorities.</p>	<p>► <b>ONLINE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT 301:</b> Monitoring and response across platforms and PESO channels; role of community manager, achieving and maintaining relevance, response protocols.</p>
<p>► <b>NEWSJACKING 302:</b> Gaining brand awareness, relevance and engagement by hijacking breaking news and memes trending in popular culture.</p>	<p>► <b>ACTIONS BEFORE WORDS 303:</b> A brand is what a brand does; being a responsible brand and corporation: advising on actions and policy, transparency, sustainability, governance.</p>	<p>► <b>ETHICS &amp; LEGAL IMPLICATIONS 304:</b> Ethical principles related to communications and business behavior; role of general counsel, common types of business litigation.</p>

<p>► <b>INFLUENCE, PERSUASION &amp; MUTUALITY 305:</b> Strategies to influence &amp; persuade – balanced with mutual gain.</p>	<p>► <b>GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE 401:</b> The shifting power equation (e.g. to emerging economies, individuals, communities), how issues travel instantly, technology's role in "flattening" the earth; public policy and societal issues.</p>	<p>► <b>PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE 402:</b> Internship or apprenticeship at a company, agency or non-profit to gain hands-on experience and prepare for full-time work.</p>
<p>► <b>NETWORKS 403:</b> Social networks, internal and external business networks, network theory and practical application.</p>	<p>► <b>INSIGHT 404:</b> Understanding motivations, interests, demographics, psychographics and media choices of target audiences; account planning; research techniques to develop insights.</p>	<p>► <b>ADVANCED ANALYTICS 405:</b> Advanced techniques for listening and measurement – social listening, media coverage, attitude &amp; awareness, purchase intent, behavior change; techniques from CRM, interactive, direct response.</p>



1. The Challenge



2. Research



3. Design



4. Strategy



5. Creative



6. PESO





# What *DO* Educators Do? And How Can Industry Help?

ELIZABETH L. TOTH, PH.D.

PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND



## Educators from Venus and Industry Pros from Mars?

Not exactly . . . . .

## We have much in common

- ▶ Both believe in knowledge.
- ▶ Both work in fast-paced workplaces.
- ▶ Many have both industry and education experience.
- ▶ Both believe in preparing the most talented young people possible to enter the field of public relations.

## What Do Educators Do?

### Teaching

#### **In the Classroom:**

Estimated 35,000 students majoring in 700 degree programs

#### **Beyond the Classroom:**

Advise more than 11,000 students in 300+ PRSSA chapters

Advise internships, sponsor competitions, student agencies

Sponsor special events

### Research

#### **Publish research in, on, and for the profession.**

Articles in trade publications, academic journals, books.

We lecture, serve as panelists, make presentations at professional and academic seminars, conferences.

We are columnists, on podcasts and websites.

### Service

Significant leadership to their departments, universities, and professions -- many examples in this gathering

## An Undergraduate PR major is:

- ▶ 120 hours = 40 hours for **PR classes** + 80 hours of being **LIBERALLY educated!**
  - ▶ General Education requirements in liberal arts, sciences, communication, writing
  - ▶ Double majors and minors across the board: Business, Econ, Political Science, etc.
- ▶ **PLUS** 100s of hours in internships, PRSSA, student agencies and more = the **hands-on, real-world experience** you want
- ▶ They aren't just sitting in the PR classroom!

## Challenges to PR Major

- ▶ Delivery of outcomes to keep pace with changing profession
- ▶ Negative perceptions of student writing skills - we agree with you!
- ▶ Negative opinions that industry "prefers liberal arts majors"
- ▶ Mars/Venus or a disconnect between us

## Educators Efforts to Enhance Value

- ▶ Commission on Public Relations Education standards have worldwide recognition
- ▶ Accreditation of Programs through the Accrediting Council for Education In Journalism and Mass Communication
- ▶ Certification in Education for Public Relations through PRSA
- ▶ Listen to our professional advisory boards.
- ▶ Create state-of-the-art campus facilities

## Educators Need Your Help

- ▶ Become personally engaged in public relations education.
- ▶ Help students with "real world" interaction.
- ▶ Support Scholarships. Endow lectures, programs, professorships.
- ▶ Volunteer in the classroom.
- ▶ Join and advocate for organizations to help bridge the gap between business and academia.
- ▶ Support publically the value of public relations education.
- ▶ ***Your word is gospel.***

## Help Designing the PR major

- ▶ Help us with the core, but also the pluses – what needs to be added, broadened, sharpened
- ▶ Contribute cutting-edge ideas that might not be picked up in quantitative surveys

## Looking Forward:

- ▶ Educators are committed to finding the best ways of preparing students
- ▶ If we work together . . . . .

**Mars and Venus  
can get down to earth  
to provide the people you need at the entry-level  
with the right knowledge, abilities, and skills!**

**For more information about the Commission and its work, please contact:**

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