

Newsletter of the Commission on Public Relations Education

July 2019 Vol. 1#1

New PR Council Policy Mandates Members to Pay Interns

The PR Council (PRC), an association of 110 top U.S. public relations firms, will pay U.S. interns at least minimum wage for their market, effective January 1, 2020. The new policy, which will be added to the PRC Code of Ethics, states that, as a matter of principle, paying interns is in the best interest of the intern and the hiring firm, even if the student is receiving course credit.

The PR Council is an active member of CPRE and participated in the production of the 2017 report, *Fast Forward: Foundations and Future State, Educators and Practitioners*, which calls for student interns to be paid. Kim Sample, CPRE Board member and chair of the PR Council, noted, “We are pleased that our Council Board approved this policy, which will help attract the most talented and diverse intern candidates to our Member agencies.” Gail Heiman, PRC Board chair and president, Weber Shandwick, commented, “I am proud that our industry is putting a stake in the ground on this issue and hope others will follow.” Currently, 43 percent of government, for-profit, and not-for-profit internships in the U.S. are unpaid.

Students enrolled in public relations programs at public and private non-profit colleges and universities who secure internships with PRC member agencies will benefit from the new policy.

Diversity and Inclusion Work Group Report Posted Online

Diversity and Inclusion, one of the work groups created to make recommendations based on our 2017 *Fast Forward* report, is the first to post its report on our website www.commissionpred.org. These reports are not copyrighted and are designed to be available to public relations faculty and professionals worldwide. Other teams that are completing their work and will post their final reports on site include Faculty/Adjuncts, Writing, Nomenclature, Ethics, and Online Education.

Strategic Planning Committee Moves Ahead

The work of the Strategic Planning Committee, as discussed at our February and April Board meetings, is well underway. The Committee is developing a three- to five-year Strategic Plan

for the Commission, with the process delegated among four subcommittees. The full Board will review and vote on the plan upon its completion, expected by the end of the year.

The Mission and Vision Subcommittee has developed a survey that will play a critical role in guiding our mission and long-term strategy, including the work of all the subcommittees. The survey should take 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Subcommittee Chair Tina McCorkindale emphasizes that responses will be confidential and not connected to the responder in any way. If you haven't done so already, please respond now:

CPRE Non-board members: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KMQFG2M>

CPRE Board members: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WCLFH5J>

Nominating Committee Begins Process in August

Immediate Past Co-chair (Professionals) Kathy Lewton leads the Nominating Committee for 2020 officers. Joining her on the Committee are Neil Foote and Mickey Nall, both members of the 2019 CPRE Steering Committee. In accordance with CPRE Policies and Procedures (approved by the Board in 2018), the Committee will issue an open call for nominations in August. Following the receipt of applications, the Committee will select and propose a slate for approval by Board members via email ballot no later than mid-September. Open positions for 2020 are: Co-chair, Educators; Vice Chair; and Secretary-Treasurer. Co-chairs serve a two-year term; other officers are elected for one year.

Elizabeth Toth, Co-chair, Educators, will complete her two-year term in December. Judy Phair, Co-chair, Professionals, will begin the second year of her term in January 2020.

New IPR Report Labels Disinformation Major Problem in U.S.

The inaugural [*Disinformation in Society Report*](#) from the Institute for Public Relations (IPR) says that most Americans believe the spread of deliberately misleading or biased information is a serious problem in the U.S. According to the report, 63% viewed disinformation – or deliberately misleading or biased information – as a “major” societal problem, on a par with gun violence and terrorism. IPR surveyed 2,200 adults with Morning Consult for the report. Tina McCorkindale, IPR president and CEO and CPRE Board member, adds, “One surprising finding was how significant a problem both Republicans and Democrats rated disinformation.”

The report also indicated that almost two-thirds of Americans surveyed said that public relations professionals, advertisers, and marketers are responsible for spreading disinformation. PRSA President Debra Peterson praised the report and noted, “The core answer to the public’s fears about disinformation is acting and communicating truthfully, because without truth there can be no trust, and without trust, the work of public relations professionals cannot be effective. PRSA and its members must not only help the public

understand how to discern truth, but also must speak out against egregious examples of disinformation.”

CPRE Important Dates and Activities

In August, CPRE will present a panel, led by Elizabeth Toth, on the ***Fast Forward*** work group reports at the AEJMC Toronto Conference. It will take place on Wednesday, August 7, from 7 to 8 a.m.

In October, CPRE will be involved in four sessions at the **PRSA International Conference** in San Diego, CA.

- **First up will be the West Coast Industry/Educator Summit on Friday, October 18, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at San Diego State University.** All Board members are invited to attend; invitations will be sent in August. The Summit will feature an opening panel of industry leaders and educators, followed by roundtable discussions and reports on key issues in public relations education from the viewpoints of employers and educators. We also expect to have SDSU public relations student leaders on hand. This is the third Summit sponsored by CPRE.
- **The Educators Academy Super Saturday, October 19, CPRE-Sponsored Panel: “A Menu of Options: How to Meet EPR Ethics Course Guidelines by 2020.”**
- **Our third annual Board meeting will take place Sunday, October 20.** Tentative time is 9 to 11 a.m. at the Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina Hotel. We will have phone-in access for those who are not able to attend in person. **Draft minutes of the April meeting are attached; we will vote to approve them at the October meeting.**
- **CPRE Conference Session, October 22 (Tuesday) (TBA). Shared Challenges: Educators, Practitioners Unite on Ethics.**

Thank you to our Board members and friends for your service to CPRE. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions, comments, or would like more information on anything discussed in our “new” newsletter. We hope to see you in San Diego.

Judy and Elizabeth

Judy Phair, Co-chair, Professionals

Elizabeth Toth, Co-chair, Educators