

Navigating Change: Recommendations for Advancing Undergraduate Public Relations Education: CPRE 50th Anniversary Report*

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Co-Editors

*Funded by the Weiss Family Trust , Jim Weiss



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The Many CPRE Members' Gifts



2023 Report Overview

- Goals
- Report Process – Seven Topic Areas
- Top-Line Findings
- Principal Recommendations
- Today's Discussion Questions

2023 Report Goals

- To provide public relations education standards for successful preparation of students to enter and advance in their public relations careers.
- To be known as the authoritative voice on public relations education.
- To contribute to the social good.
- To provide a forum for ongoing discussions between practitioners and educators for successful public relations education.



Report Research and Development Team Leaders

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The Commission is also grateful to the active representatives of its member organizations – those individual educators and practitioners who have played a central role in producing this report.



Report Process to Seven Topic Areas

2022

Spring: 4 Brainstorming Sessions of CPRE's Research
Committee members

Summer: 2 Crowdsourcing Surveys with CPRE & PR Council
7 Research Teams Formed (38 members total)



Seven Topic Areas

- The Future of the Public Relations Workplace
- Essential KSAs and the Six-Course Standard
- Critical Strategic Thinking
- Data Insights and Strategy
- Ethics
- DEI
- PR as a Driver of Social Change

Report Process

Fall 2022 2 Arthur W. Page Focus Groups

2023

Jan-Feb Distribution of Survey to 24
CPRE member groups
+ research CPRE panel

March-June Primary and Secondary
Research & Analysis
Reports from 7 Teams



Respondent Info



197 Educators

Experience - 21.5 years

Age – 58.4



269 Practitioners

Experience – 22.65

Mean Age – 48.2

Leading to ...

Navigating Change:

Recommendations for
Advancing Undergraduate
Public Relations Education

The 50th Anniversary Report



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Top-Line Findings



The Future of the Public Relations Workplace
– many workplace challenges



Essential KSAs & the
6- Course Standard

Similarities in
practitioner and
educator priorities



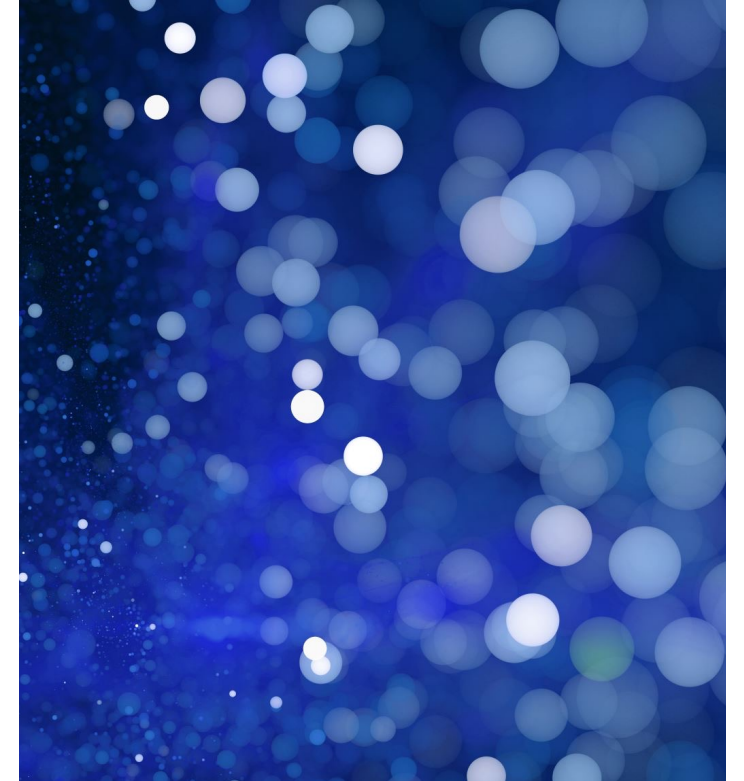
Critical Strategic
Thinking

Most sought after skill
across topic areas



Data Insights and
Strategy

Need for solid grounding
in research & data
analysis



Top-Line Findings



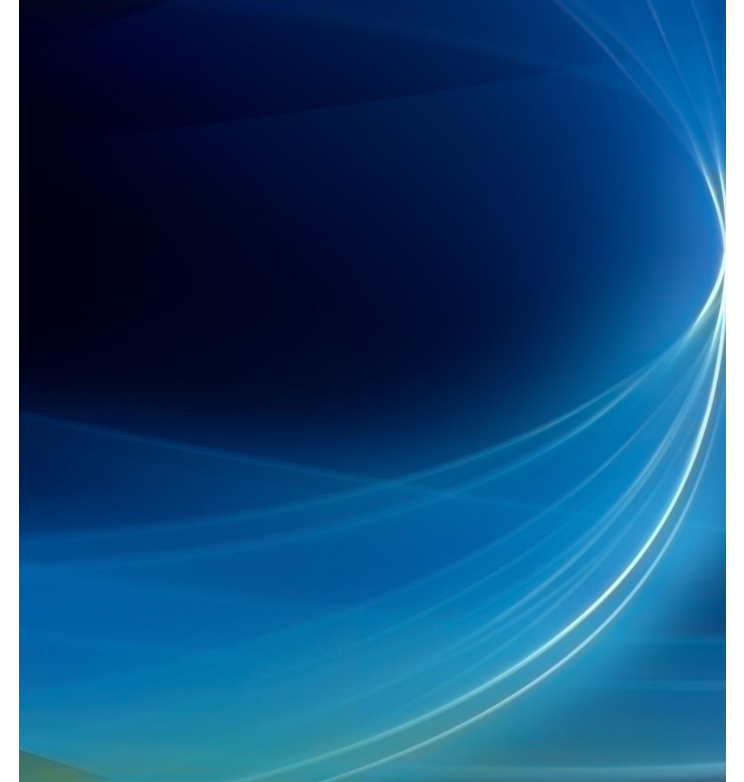
Ethics – an essential but neglected competency



DEI – knowledge valued but not seen adequately developed in entry-level practitioners



PR as a Driver of Social Change – strong survey agreement by practitioners & educators that public relations drives social change





Principal Recommendations

Future of the Workplace

Educators & practitioners should work together to develop experiential learning opportunities for students that will enhance their exposure to professional behavior and workplace expectations, as well as help develop students' soft skills.




Essential KSAs & 6-Course Standard

CPRE must continue to promote the 6-course standard. PR undergraduate programs must include public relations courses in principles, research, writing, campaigns/cases, internship, and ethics.



Critical Thinking

Successful public relations program sequencing of critical and strategic thinking involves:

- o Principles–intro to critical strategic model (through learning objectives)
 - o Writing, Method–practicing the model (learning through failing forward)
 - o Capstone–applying the model to real-world problems (mastering critical strategic thinking).
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Principal Recommendations

Data Insights and Strategy

Educators should integrate Knowledge, Skills and Abilities related to data analytics and AI into academic programs.

Ethics

Public relations educators should continue to incorporate ethics into all courses across the curriculum.

DEI

Educators must understand DEI as an ethical social responsibility that should be embedded in the public relations curriculum.

PR as a Driver of Social Change

Educators must be courageous in addressing challenging issues including gender identity, sexuality, racism, ableism, and poverty.



Today's Thought Questions. How Would You...

- The Future of the PR Workplace – improve onboarding?
- KSAs and the Six-Course Standard – promote industry understanding of the curriculum?
- Strategic Critical Thinking – contribute real-world case studies?
- Data Insights and Strategy – invest in ongoing training of educators and practitioners?
- Ethics – develop core competencies and integrate them in curriculum and industry?
- DEI – actualize a DEI mission for public relations education?
- PR as a Driver of Social Change – build social change classroom discussions?