



**NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM**

**Sponsoring Institution(s):** Missouri Western State University

**Program Title:** Public Relations

**Degree/Certificate:** Bachelor of Science

**Options:** N/A

**Delivery Site(s):** Missouri Western State University

**CIP Classification:** 090101

\*CIP code can be cross-referenced with programs offered in your region on MDHE's program inventory [highered.mo.gov/ProgramInventory/search.jsp](http://highered.mo.gov/ProgramInventory/search.jsp)

**Implementation Date:** Fall 2015

**Cooperative Partners:** N/A

\*If this is a collaborative program, form CL must be included with this proposal

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Dr. Jeanne Daffron, Provost		December 1, 2014
_____ Name/Title of Institutional Officer	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Dr. Christopher Bond, Associate Professor	816-271-4504
_____ Person to Contact for More Information	_____ Telephone



**STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS**

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Year	1	2	3	4	5
Full Time	47	59	74	85	98
Part Time	0	0	0	0	0
Total	47	59	74	85	98

**Please provide a rationale regarding how student enrollment projections were calculated:**

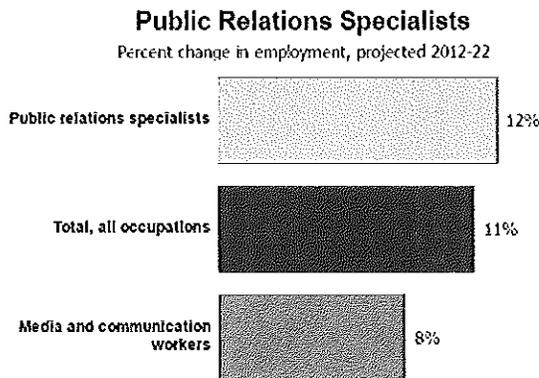
The merger of the communication studies and journalism departments at Missouri Western last academic year presented several opportunities for course integration and program growth. Currently, public relations serves as an emphasis area within MWSU's speech communication degree. As of Summer 2014, 77% (47 students) of the students in our speech communication major and pre-major were enrolled in the public relations emphasis. A new public relations degree will serve as a catalyst in integrating both the communication studies and journalism/convergent media disciplines into one cohesive degree. This new degree will allow us to offer higher quality and relevant class offerings pertinent to a public relations career. The public relations emphasis has experienced a gradual growth within the last five years, at an average of 15% per year. The numbers above reflect a 25% growth in years one through three, and then a 15% growth in years four and five, back at our current trend to a possible plateau in years five and beyond due to departmental faculty size and teaching load. Due to the launch of a new degree with new courses and affiliations and partnerships with the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the Public Relations Student Society of American (PRSSA), we expect a larger increase of majors in the first three years. These affiliations will increase our internship base and enhance the employment possibilities for our students locally, regionally and internationally.



Provide a **rationale** for proposing this program, including **evidence of market demand and societal need supported by research**:

**Market Demand:** Due to the continued convergence of both traditional and social media into the public relations practice, this proposed degree will allow students to gain the theoretical background and a diverse, applied skill set to excel within the growing public relations industry. Currently, our public relations students do not receive enough convergent media training. This new proposed degree will allow our public relations students to gain these skills including multimedia authoring, news writing, graphic design, video production and photography—just to mention a few. Several sources (PR News 2014; Shatkin 2013 & PR NewsOnline 2013) indicated a public relations job growth within the next eight to ten years between 12 and 23 percent. According to the United States Department of Labor (2014), as of 2012, there are approximately 229,100 jobs within the public relations industry with an expected 12 percent growth, or 27,400 new jobs, between 2012-2022. This is higher than the average of all other occupations, including media and communication positions at eight percent (see Table 1).

Table 1.



Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

For St. Joseph, the Northwest Missouri region, and the Northern Kansas City area, the need for public relations will continually rise as industry is projected to grow, especially within the animal health sciences in the St. Joseph area. According to the St. Joseph Economic Development Partnership (SJEDP, 2014), “St. Joseph is a nationally-recognized leader in animal health and life sciences, and a pivotal component of the KC Animal Health Corridor – where nearly one-third (32 percent) of the \$19 billion global animal health industry is located.” This degree will allow placement of our graduates into this growing industry, where many are

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working now. Additionally, MWSU and St. Joseph are strategically located within 44 percent of the United States manufacturing sites which need public relations practitioners for both brand and product management. Additionally, the SJEDP projects more jobs and manufacturing in alternative energies including wind, solar and the ethanol.

There are no other bachelor degree programs in public relations in our region of the state.

Internationally, the jobs in public relations and public affairs will grow at the same rate as in the United States. The Holmes Report (2012) indicated public relations and public affairs have “generally benefited from two significant trends: firstly, the growth in importance of data analytics and therefore research; and secondly, global growth.” More industry is expanding into Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Pacific creating a need for public relations practitioners. Our student interest in International PR has increased and has resulted in a recent and an upcoming study abroad opportunity for students to work in the PR industry abroad.

**Societal Need:** According to the book, *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR* (2004), public relations and public affairs are becoming more and more important in how companies build their respective brands for consumers to buy their products. Due to the advent of both new and social media, brand loyalty is created by public relations, not advertising or marketing. Industry has slowly moved away from marketing a product to promoting a brand and creating a reputation and consumer loyalty through public relations functions. Due to the instant access to social media, public relations is not only needed, it is vital to the success of industry. An industry can be attacked instantly via social media if a consumer has an unsavory interaction with a product or a company. It is the public relations practitioner who assists and manages the crisis among the industry, the business and the consumer.

Consumer engagement and analytics—both functions of public relations—are also crucial to the success of both small and large businesses. Due to the instant access to social media governmental entities, businesses, corporate CEOs, celebrities and politicians face public scrutiny and possible crises on a daily business. The need for public relations practitioners, publicists, and researchers has never been greater as these people and businesses manage their reputation daily in the global marketplace (PRSA 2014).

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Form SE - Student Enrollment Projections



**PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

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A. Total credits required for graduation: 124

B. Residency requirements, if any: Students must complete thirty (30) of the last forty-five (45) credits at Missouri Western.

C. General education: Total credits: 42-46

Courses (specific courses OR distribution area and credits): **ALSO SEE ATTACHED MAJOR FORM**

**GENERAL STUDIES REQUIREMENTS**

<b>CATEGORY ONE: BASIC SKILLS (12-14 credits)</b>		Grade
1. MAT110 or MAT112 or MAT116 or MAT130 or MAT137 or MAT147 or MAT167	3/4/5	_____
2. ENG104 and 108 or ENG112	6	_____
3. COM104	3	_____

<b>CATEGORY TWO: NATURAL SCIENCES (8-10 credits)</b>		
Minimum of 8 credits with lab from two of the following groups.		
1. BIO101 or 105	4	_____
2. CHE101(4) or 104(5) or 111(5)	4/5	_____
3. ESC111	4	_____
4. PHY101(4) or 107(4) or 110(4) or 210(5)	4/5	_____
5. PHY104	4	_____

<b>CATEGORY THREE: SOCIAL SCIENCES (9 credits)</b>		
Minimum of 9 credits with at least one course from each of the two following groups.		
1. ECO101 or 260 or 261 or GEO100 or PSY101 or SOC110 or 120	3	_____
2. HIS140 or 150 or PSC 101	3	_____
3. Additional course from group 1 or 2	3	_____

<b>CATEGORY FOUR: HUMANITIES (9 credits)</b>		
One course each from three of the following four groups.		
1. HIS200 or 210 or 230 or HUM203 or 204 or 205	3	_____
2. ENG210 or 220 or PHL210 or 230 or REL250 or 251 or 252	3	_____
3. ART100 or MUS101 or THR113	3	_____
4. Any 3-credit hour 100-level or higher foreign language course.	3	_____

<b>CATEGORY FIVE: PHYSICAL HEALTH (4 credits)</b>		
1. PED101	3	_____
2. MIL105 or any PE lifetime sports activity class	1	_____

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D. Major requirements: Total credits: 61-62

<b>MAJOR REQUIREMENTS</b>		<b>(61-62 Credits)</b>	
		Credit	Grade
COM104	Oral Communication	3	
COM205	Introduction to Mass Media	3	
COM210	Presentational Communication	3	
COM215	Introduction to Public Relations	3	
COM222	Communication Theory	3	
COM305	Interpersonal Communication	OR	
COM324	Small Group Communication	3	
COM314	Persuasion	3	
COM320	Research Methods in Communication	3	
COM338	Survey of Rhetorical Theory	3	
COM342	Intercultural Communication	OR	
COM345	Nonverbal Communication	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>	
<b>APPLIED LEARNING</b>			
COM361, COM460 or departmental approved course		2-3	
COM444	Public Relations Practices	1	
COM481	Senior Portfolio	1	
COM477	Client Management & Practices	1	
JOU210	Journalism Lab: Newspaper Production	OR	
JOU212	Journalism Lab: Yearbook Production	2	
JOU214	Journalism Lab: Broadcast Production		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7-8</b>	
<b>PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS SEQUENCE</b>			
JOU104	Introduction to Digital Photography	3	
JOU202	Reporting for the Media	3	
JOU224	Web Content & Design	OR	
JOU328	Multimedia Authoring	3	
JOU308	Copy Editing	3	
COM382	Public Relations Writing & Design	3	
COM410	Organizational Communication	3	
COM411	Crisis PR & Risk Communication	OR	
COM412	Health Communication	3	
COM415	Public Relations Campaigns	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>24</b>	

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Form PS – Program Structure

E. Free elective credits: 16-21  
(Sum of C, D, and E should equal A.)

The number of free electives is contingent upon a student's accumulated hours in Category 1 and 2 within General Studies. Some math classes in Category 1, Basic Skills and science classes in Category 2, Natural Sciences sections are worth various credit-hour amounts. Additionally, a student may take their applied learning experience (internship) for 2-3 hours in the public relations major.

F. Requirements for thesis, internship or other capstone experience:  
2-3

Students must have a 2.5 cumulative GPA to register for an applied learning (internship) course for 2-3 hours. If a student does not have a 2.5, this student will have the option to take a workplace analysis course.

Typically, during the last semester, a student will take both senior portfolio, COM 481, and PR Practices, COM 444. Both classes contain capstone experiences where a student will complete papers, create portfolios and final projects as a culmination of their previous major course work.

G. Any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation:  
N/A



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PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

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Institution Name Missouri Western State University  
Program Name BACHELOR OF SCIENCE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
Date 12/1/2014

(Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.)

**1. Student Preparation**

- Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.  
The proposed public relations degree contains pre-major qualifications that must be met. This pre-major already exists for our current departmental majors. A student must take nine hours with a C or better for admissions into the program including our introduction communication course, COM 104, Oral Communication, ENG 104, College Writing & Rhetoric, and Introduction to Public Relations, COM 215, as a possible major course option (see attached major form). Outside of these nine hours, there are no additional preparation or requirements to enroll in the proposed degree program other than the typical admission standards.
- Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.  
This proposed degree is designed to provide students with diverse skills spanning from writing, graphic design, research methodology and data collection, multimedia skills, event planning and campaign creation—just to name a few. This diverse skill set allows those students to also seek diverse careers including positions in communication companies, television and radio stations, corporations, the publishing industry, not-for-profit organizations, government and educational institutions.

**2. Faculty Characteristics**

- Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.  
All faculty members in the Department of Communication and Journalism at MWSU have a doctoral degree in communication, public relations, English, journalism or convergent media. Our faculty have a diverse set of skills and professional backgrounds and are well equipped to teach the proposed degree.

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- Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here. Since the proposed degree is a restructuring of existing course offerings, our current faculty will teach 90 to 95% of the proposed course offerings. Our faculty have the knowledge and skills to teach both the existing and proposed courses. However, due to unforeseen faculty load and demands, an outside faculty member may be asked on occasion to teach a particular section.
- Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation. Due to the applied learning focus of this degree and the partnerships with local and regional businesses, the opportunities for professional activities are countless. Throughout their coursework, students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with public relations and corporate professionals. A new partnership with the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)-Kansas City Chapter will allow students and faculty to attend specialized trainings, conferences, workshops and other events. A new event that students can participate in is "shadow day" hosted by PRSA of Kansas City. This is offered two or three times a year enabling students to work with a public relations professional in Kansas City for a day. Students will now also have the opportunity to work in a public relations student firm through PRSSA at MWSU. Many faculty are already mentoring students with various applied public relations research projects in preparation for various regional or national conferences. Additionally, the growth of the public relations profession internationally coupled with student interests in international PR has created momentum for a yearly study abroad trip for our public relations students. These trips provide students experiential learning by allowing them to not only present their own research but to also work in one or more public relations firms within an international setting while examining cultural work ethics and procedures.

### 3. Enrollment Projections

- Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years. Due to the current growth pattern and projections, this proposed degree is expected to garner 15-20 new majors yearly for the next five years. Some attrition could occur due to lower university enrollments or other unforeseen confounding variables. At the end of year five, we anticipate slightly less than 100 majors in the new public relations major.
- Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years. This program is designed for fulltime students and most students majoring in this degree will attend full-time.

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#### 4. Student and Program Outcomes

- Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.  
By year three, we anticipate a minimum of 10 graduates per academic year from this degree. The department already averages this number with students majoring in speech communication with a public relations emphasis. Many current students would be able to switch their current program of study to the new degree while others would be too far along with their current course work to do so. Therefore, there may be a one to two year graduation lag from this degree.
- Special skills specific to the program.  
The proposed degree provides public relations students more specific skill sets than the current public relations emphasis area. Students will now gain skills in photography, client management, crisis management, multimedia authoring and video production. These are courses that are currently being offered, but are not required in the current PR emphasis because of the imitation in number of credits for the emphasis. In addition to these skill sets, students will learn AP writing standards, ethics, graphic design, web design, client protocols, analytical skills management, event planning and communication research skills. Throughout their coursework, students will gain knowledge of several software programs including Adobe Illustrator, InDesign and Final Cut Pro, and SPSS: Statistical Program for the Social Sciences. Specifically, students will gain the skills to work with various clients in a diverse array of disciplines. Through these new and current applied skill sets, MWSU students will now be more prepared for the demands of the workplace.
- Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration.  
This is not applicable currently to our proposed degree.
- Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the 50th percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.  
There is not a national standardized assessment test available for public relations. The Department of Communication and Journalism at MWSU may find another set of exit exam questions tailored specifically to public relations graduates. If the new degree is approved, a new assessment tool tailored specifically to public relations majors will be developed. This assessment will be administered in COM 215, Introduction to Public Relations (pretest) and during COM 444, PR Practices (post test). After five years of professional practice post-graduation, students may select to take the certification exam for an APR designation: Accreditation in Public Relations.
- Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.

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Currently, we are creating a database of our alumni and their employment after graduation. In regards to those students who graduated with a degree in speech communication with an emphasis in public relations, 10% attended graduate school at another institution and approximately 55% obtained a position in the public relations field or have a position where public relations is a part of their job duties. We anticipate more students will attend graduate school after graduating with this new degree. Other graduates have created their own businesses or are working for corporations or smaller companies in various positions. Approximately less than 8% of our current graduates are unemployed in the months following graduation. It is worth noting that within the last two years, four recent graduates with an emphasis in public relations have obtained employment at MWSU immediately following graduation. We also have several students working in public relations or marketing at an animal health pharmaceutical company in the region. This industry will continue to attract many of our graduates. Many students also work for public relations or advertising firms in the Kansas City or within the larger Midwest areas. Many of our students also work for our local television and radio stations in various positions.

- Transfer rates, continuous study.  
We anticipate the current transfer rates to increase and anticipate that our retention rates will remain high with the proposed degree.

#### **5. Program Accreditation**

- Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. **If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide a rationale.**  
After five years, the program may want to examine the feasibility of applying for Certification in Education of Public Relations through the Public Relations Society of America. This is an extensive process with only 34 programs certified across the United States and only one in Missouri – at Southeast Missouri State University.

#### **6. Alumni and Employer Survey**

- Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, *including timing and method of surveys*.  
We anticipate our satisfaction rate will be quite high. Alumni will be surveyed three months post-graduation and again two years later. We will also develop a survey for local and regional employers who hire our graduates regarding the skills needed and perceptions of our program graduates. This will assist the program in keeping current with employer demands and required skill sets.
- Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys.  
As stated above, we will develop an instrument to send to employers who hire our graduates. Currently, we survey employers who hire our students as interns. The

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instrument asks about preparedness and certain skill attributes. We also survey the clients that our public relations students use to complete larger campaign projects. These data will continue to be collected and compared to graduate data. The data will be used as a mechanism to improve student skill sets and to assist the department in keeping up-to-date on current employment trends and potential employers for our graduates.

## **7. Institutional Characteristics**

- Characteristics demonstrating why your institution is particularly well-equipped to support the program.

MWSU is an applied learning institution that creates and fosters experiential learning opportunities both within and outside the classroom. Due to this culture and the resources already in place at the university, a degree in public relations will thrive within this environment. The current degree in speech communication with an emphasis in public relations is already the dominant emphasis area within our major program. The public relations discipline is very applied, and for a college student, this degree will provide many “hands on” learning experiences. While public relations practitioners must know and practice communication management and networking skills, they must also obtain many creative and technical skills in web design, photography, multimedia authoring and video production. Currently, our emphasis area does not focus on these areas, but instead, focuses heavily on communication coursework. This proposed degree will align our courses with both the communication and technical skill sets that employers want. Currently, students are only obtaining these technical skills as components in other classes. We have the necessary photography and video equipment, new computers and new computer labs with new design software, and a newly formed department with the faculty who can teach the required new courses. If approved, this program will be the only public relations bachelors degree in Northern Missouri.