

# PUBLIC RELATIONS B.A.

## Program Overview

The field of public relations is one of the fastest-growing and most rewarding professions in today's information-based global economy.

As Public Relations majors at Rider University, students learn how organizations and individuals proactively manage communication challenges and opportunities in real world contexts. Expert professors, as well as professionals in the field, help students sharpen their skills through hands-on assignments and class lead discussions using case studies and current trends. Throughout the program, students explore the importance of cultivating and maintaining productive relationships with clients, the media and opinion leaders. In the capstone course, students work with local corporate or nonprofit clients to learn all facets of planning and executing a public relations campaign.

Outside the classroom, Rider's Public Relations majors are encouraged to gain experience by working as interns in a variety of fields including fashion, sports, healthcare, government or a number of other exciting industries. In addition, students have the opportunity to join the nationally recognized Rider chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/departments/communication-journalism-club-activities/>).

The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) is the foremost organization for students interested in public relations and communication. The organization seeks to advance the public relations profession by nurturing generations of future professionals. As a chartered chapter of the national organization, Rider University's Public Relations Major meets rigorous academic standards for public relations education, and subscribes to the highest ethical principles and diversity in the profession.

At the local level, the Rider University Chapter offers opportunities to meet leaders in the field through agency tours, guest speakers, workshops, professional mentoring, and trips to regional and national conferences. The Rider Chapter also provides opportunities to build your public relations portfolio through the chapter's activities including social media, event planning, and public relations consulting activities. Dr. Nancy Wiencek (<http://www.rider.edu/faculty/nancy-wiencek/>) is the advisor.

For more information, please visit the Rider University Chapter of PRSSA on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/prssarider/>).

## Curriculum Overview

Core classes in the Public Relations major include public relations, publication design, feature writing, advanced speech, public relations writing and strategy, communication research methods, and cases and campaigns in public relations.

To round out the major, students also choose at least one other class to build their skills in areas such as social media, podcasting, intercultural communication, event planning, web design, photography, marketing, advertising, or grant writing and fundraising. In addition, students also choose at least one class to explore a career focus through classes focused on organizational communication, health communication, politics and law, sports communication, international communication, arts marketing or an internship.

## Degree Offered

- B.A. in Public Relations

## Contact

**Nancy Wiencek, Ph.D., APR**

Associate Professor and Chairperson

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**Program website:** Public Relations (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/continuing-education/public-relations/>)

**Associated Department:** Department of Communication, Journalism and Media (<http://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-education-sciences/liberal-arts-programs/communication-journalism/>)

## Related Programs (<http://www.rider.edu/comm/>)

- Communication Studies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/liberal-arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/communication-studies/>)
- Journalism (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/liberal-arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/journalism/>)
- Graphic Design (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/undergraduate/graphic-design/>)
- Radio and Podcasting (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/undergraduate/radio-podcasting/>)
- Sports Media (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/undergraduate/sports-media/>)
- Social Media Strategies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/liberal-arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/social-media-strategies-minor/>)
- Health Communication (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/liberal-arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/health-communication/>)
- Event Planning and Production (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/college-liberal-arts-sciences/undergraduate/event-planning-minor/>)
- Arts & Entertainment Industries Management (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/westminster-college-arts/sfpa/programs/arts-management/>)
- Marketing (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/norobrodsky-college-business/undergraduate/marketing/>)

## Public Relations Program Requirements

(48 credits)

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Requirements</b>		
See Continuing Education Programs Core Requirements ( <a href="http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/continuing-studies/core-requirements/">http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/continuing-studies/core-requirements/</a> )		
<b>Communication, Journalism and Media Core</b>		<b>21</b>
Complete all of the following courses:		
COM 104	Speech Communication	
COM 105	Communication, Culture and Media	

COM 107	Writing for the Media	
COM 131	Fundamentals of Video Production	
COM 264	Digital Media: Theory and Practice	
COM 301	Communication Law	
COM 302	Communication Ethics	
<b>Public Relations Track</b>		<b>21</b>
COM 204	Advanced Speech Communication	
COM 212	Digital Publication Design	
COM 240	Public Relations	
COM 316	Feature Writing	
COM 341	Public Relations Writing and Strategy	
COM 348	Communication Research Methods	
COM 440	Cases & Campaigns in Public Relations	
<b>Select one skills-based course from the following:</b>		<b>3</b>
COM 203	Introduction to Social Media	
COM 232	Podcasting I	
COM 252	Intercultural Communication	
COM 261	Introduction to Web Design	
COM 280	Issues in Event Planning	
COM 360	Advanced Publication Design and Presentation	
COM 361	Photography	
MKT 200	Marketing Principles	
MKT 205	Advertising Principles	
ENG 322	Grant Proposals, Fundraising and Development	
<b>Select one career-focused course from the following:</b>		<b>3</b>
COM 253	Organizational Communication	
COM 254	Intro to Health Communication	
COM 304	Rhetoric for Politics and Law	
COM 347	Sports Communication	
COM 393	International Communication	
AAD 202	Commun/Marketing in Arts	
COM 491	Internship in Communication	
Total Credits		48

## Program Overview

The Public Relations Certificate is designed for students who have or are pursuing a baccalaureate degree and wish to specialize in the area of public relations. The program includes courses in writing for the media, publication design, speech communication, as well as other areas of public relations. Upon completion of the program, students with a baccalaureate degree receive an official Public Relations Certificate.

## Admission Requirements

Minimum admissions requirements for the public relations certificate are:

- a baccalaureate degree or be a candidate for a baccalaureate degree (usually at Rider);
- junior standing or beyond (may take some courses before admission to the program);
- a 2.5 GPA in all undergraduate work or evidence of acceptable public relations experience.

This program is available only to students enrolled in Continuing Education Programs.

## Program Completion and Certification

Students will receive their certificates after successfully completing the eight required courses. Students without a baccalaureate degree will receive their certificates after completing the eight required courses and the baccalaureate degree. The notation Public Relations Certificate will appear on the student's Rider transcript when the certificate is awarded. Students leaving CEP for any other Rider undergraduate program before earning the certificate will not be eligible for the certificate.

## Contact

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Associate Professor and Chairperson

Fine Arts 232

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## Certificate Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b> <sup>1</sup>		
COM 104	Speech Communication	3
or COM 290	Professional/Strategic Speech	
COM 107	Writing for the Media	3
COM 212	Digital Publication Design	3
COM 240	Public Relations	3
COM 316	Feature Writing	3
COM 341	Publicity Methods	3
COM 440	Cases & Campaigns in Public Relations	3
<b>Select one of the following:</b> <sup>1</sup>		<b>3</b>
COM 131	Fundamentals of Video Production	
COM 253	Organizational Communication	
COM 280	Issues in Event Planning	
COM 347	Sports Communication	
COM 348	Communication Research Methods	
Total Credits		24

## Courses and Descriptions

### COM 104 Speech Communication 3 Credits

Examines basic communication principles and strategies of public speaking. Various genres of oral communication are studied, with an emphasis on extemporaneous and impromptu forms of delivery. Students research, prepare, and deliver speeches that are then used as the focal point for the discussion of effective speaking and listening. A number of speeches are videotaped. Students who received credit for COM 104S may not take this course. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Essential Competencies element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

### COM 105 Communication, Culture and Media 3 Credits

Provides a detailed investigation and analysis into the nature, history, scope, adequacy, and limitations of mass communication and examines the reciprocal influence of the media on culture and society. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

**COM 107 Writing for the Media 3 Credits**

Introduces students to interviewing and persuasive writing techniques for print and electronic public relations and advertising formats. Teaches techniques for creating effective digital audio-visual aids and working with digital audio and video.

**COM 131 Fundamentals of Video Production 3 Credits**

Introduces students to basic video production theories, techniques, and applications. Students will gain competency in a number of video production areas including: production planning, camera operations, lighting, sound, and digital non-linear editing. Individual and group production exercises will involve planning and executing video productions in both studio and non-studio settings. This class is designed to prepare students from any major to effectively create, produce, shoot, and edit basic video production assignments including public service announcements, video news releases, educational/instructional videos, and marketing/promotional spots.

**COM 201 Communication Theory 3 Credits**

Explores selected theories, models, and research methods in human communication, the dynamics of the communication process in various settings, and the role of communication in human interaction.

**COM 204 Advanced Speech Communication 3 Credits**

Provides students with the opportunity to further their study and practice of various types of speech communication. Moving beyond an introductory perspective, this course focuses on the development of critical, analytical, and pragmatic aspects of speech. The focus is divided between the discussion of theoretical models and a demonstrated competence of that material.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 104 or COM 290.

**COM 205 Theories of Persuasion 3 Credits**

Analyzes the motivations that lead individuals and audiences to beliefs and actions and the techniques of achieving objectives through persuasion. Attention, interest, empathy, ethos, fear, and techniques of speakers, and those who use persuasion professionally are studied.

**COM 210 News Reporting and Writing 3 Credits**

Develops skills in hard-news reporting. Employs off-campus reporting assignments to refine information-gathering techniques such as interviewing, observation, and use of government documents and other contextual materials. Includes reporting and writing about police news, state and local government, the criminal justice system, science, business, and sports.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 102.

**COM 211 Copy Editing 3 Credits**

Teaches all phases of copy editing for news and public relations: marking of copy, online editing, fact checking, building and shaping news and feature stories, applying mechanical style, building an ear for graceful English, and safeguarding against legal and ethical problems. Provides comprehensive review of grammar, spelling and punctuation, along with intensive practice in writing headlines and captions and editing wire copy.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 102.

**COM 212 Digital Publication Design 3 Credits**

Students will explore the relationships between theory and practice, tradition and innovation, history and ever changing technological and aesthetic trends in publication design. Students will learn to use graphic image and typography as design elements in print media, such as newspaper and newsletter, as well as online media, such as e-magazine and e-book. Students will also learn the interactivity design for online publications. The course directs students to apply these concepts and skills to the production of published materials with digital publishing systems.

**COM 233 Writing for Broadcast 3 Credits**

Introduces diverse and highly structured writing styles and formats used in writing for broadcast. With focus on effective and creative writing using broadcast style, students will be exposed to the fundamentals of writing dramatic and non-dramatic material for radio and television including station IDs and liners, public service announcements and commercials, news and public affairs programs, and short dramatic and documentary scripts. Through lectures, case discussions, in-class assignments, and critiques, emphasis will be on the practical application of basic rules and conventions common to broadcast writing from copy preparation to on-air delivery.

**COM 240 Public Relations 3 Credits**

Introduces current theories and practices of public relations, with emphasis on facilitating two-way communication with various publics. Explores approaches to public relations problems by critically analyzing case studies and applying theories and techniques to realistic situations.

**COM 253 Organizational Communication 3 Credits**

Focuses on the ongoing communication processes in organizations. This course examines how and why organizations develop policies and procedures that both encourage and yet constrain creativity and autonomy in employees. It also introduces various management skills to balance the dynamic in organizations. Finally, the course introduces students to various communication technologies that enable communication processes in organizations. Students will also have opportunities to participate in creating organizational dynamics through role-playing exercises, case studies, and other kinds of experiential learning.

**COM 261 Introduction to Web Design 3 Credits**

Introduces students to digital graphics, text, audio and video for Web design using Adobe Creative Suite. Students will learn the basics of audio, video, graphic, and interactive software along with theories of design and perception that underlie effective presentation of digital messages.

**COM 301 Communication Law 3 Credits**

Critically examines the legal limits and privileges affecting freedom of expression, especially in publishing, advertising, film, telecasting, and cyberspace. Places particular emphasis on the historical and philosophical foundations of the freedoms and limitations of communication in the United States.

**COM 302 Communication Ethics 3 Credits**

Analyzes internal and external pressures on the communication professional including economic, cultural, social, and political pressures, assesses the philosophical and practical basis for responding to such pressures, evaluates contemporary media responses to these pressures, identifies those that are of laudable quality and why, and provides guidance as to how individuals and organizations can think and react ethically. Issues addressed include censorship, confidentiality, conflicts of interests, minority and ethnic groups, privacy, sensationalism, and self-criticism.

**COM 316 Feature Writing 3 Credits**

Focuses on problems and requirements of newspaper, magazine, public relations, and free-lance nonfiction writing. Students write features designed for acceptance in print, broadcast and digital media and learn marketing techniques.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 102 or COM 107, English writing concentration, or permission of instructor.

**COM 341 Public Relations Writing and Strategy 3 Credits**

Applies communication theory to writing and editorial processes and production techniques to create public relations materials; includes press releases, industrial publications, social media, trade publications, brochures, newsletters, stockholder reports, and multimedia platforms.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 107, COM 240, or permission of instructor.

**COM 347 Sports Communication 3 Credits**

Critically examines the symbiotic relationship between the mass media and professional sports franchises and major college athletic programs. This course deals with the workings and processes behind executing the proper techniques of sports information and media relations, as well as an analysis of the culture of sports in modern society. Students will develop a practical focus on sports information and promotion, including the role of the sports information director and events promoter, with emphasis on advanced concepts of public relations, publicity and marketing.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 240 or permission of instructor.

**COM 348 Communication Research Methods 3 Credits**

Introduces students to the research methods used to study communication problems and processes. Students will learn how researchers plan and design research studies, explore the methodological considerations of both qualitative and quantitative methods, and have an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in conducting research on communication-related issues.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 105; junior or senior standing.

**COM 360 Advanced Publication Design and Presentation 3 Credits**

Builds on elementary knowledge of graphic design to teach the principles of advanced layout, and computer graphics. Introduces students to industry standard drawing software and builds on their knowledge of layout software gained in the prerequisite course. Provides an understanding of the use of logos, infographics and magazine layout, and of the theoretical bases of color for print production.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 212.

**COM 393 International Communication 3 Credits**

Examines mass media systems and their influence on international communication. Emphasizes media systems of major political powers such as Russia, China, the European community, the United States, and geo-political centers such as Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Using a seminar format, the course explores how a nation's mass media reflect its socio-political environment and national values. Focuses on the international images constructed by the mass media. Note: This course is crosslisted as GLS 393. Students may not get credit for both COM 393 and GLS 393.

**COM 400 Senior Seminar Communication 3 Credits**

Provides students with the opportunity to explore critical issues in communication and journalism in a dynamic and engaging context. Students conceptualize problems, develop hypotheses, review literature, design appropriate techniques of inquiry, conduct their research, and present their findings orally to the seminar and in writing to the instructor. Senior journalism and communication majors only.

**COM 440 Cases & Campaigns in Public Relations 3 Credits**

Critically analyzes public relations case problems in industry, labor, education, government, social welfare, and trade associations. Emphasizes problem solving through the use of communication theories, public relations techniques, creative thinking, and the development of professional goals and standards. Employs realistic simulation exercises and actual case studies to develop and critique students' ability to demonstrate this knowledge in professional situations.

**Prerequisite(s):** COM 341 or permission of instructor.

**MKT 200 Marketing Principles 3 Credits**

This course examines market characteristics, consumer buying habits and motives, and functions of marketing within the framework of the strategic marketing planning process. Concepts and current practices in product development, pricing, promotion, distribution, and international marketing are studied.

**Prerequisite(s):** 15 credits.