ACCREDITED IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

The National Council on Accreditation

Accreditation Handbook

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Canadian Public Relations Society | Société canadienne des relations publiques

Advancing Public Relations & Communications Management | Pour une gestion optimisée des relations publiques et des communications

Accreditation Handbook

National Council on Accreditation

Information for Candidates

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CHAPTER ONE

YOUR PROFESSION – YOUR SOCIETY

HISTORY

Tracing the origins of public relations is open to endless debate. While some people firmly believe that public relations began in earnest with the leaders of the Roman Empire, others cite historical events ranging from the Reformation to the Boston Tea Party. No matter when the practice began or how it progressed, the basis of public relations remains the same – a desire to influence opinion or initiate action through the effective planning, management and execution of communication.

Public relations gained maturity and popularity during the early years of the 20th century and emerged as a distinct vocation in North America by the early 1920s, thanks in large part to the efforts of such American pioneers as Ivy Lee, Pendleton Dudley and Edward Bernays, and their Canadian colleagues Herbert Lash, Charles Vining and Rielle Thompson.

Early practitioners often worked as press agents. Many were moonlighting news reporters who were employed by clients wanting to get their names into newspaper columns, or to keep them out.

The Second World War brought about a major shift in the focus of public relations as governments and business tried to rally support for the war effort. The practice came of age during the conflict and was gradually recognized as an essential component of business operations. During the postwar years, hundreds of people were hired to provide communications expertise to federal, provincial and municipal government agencies, industrial and service-based corporations, professional and trade associations, social welfare and charitable groups, and advertising agencies.

The changing face of public relations was quickly evident as wartime veterans working in public relations were joined by younger practitioners from the traditional media and

from new disciplines like business management, law and social sciences. This mix of experience, skills and ideals led to a new respect for the field of public relations – now marked by a keen sense of social responsibility, professionalism and, most important, recognition as a management function.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE PROFESSION

Advocating that public relations is a true profession is still somewhat of a challenge. Many people recognize only the traditional professions of medicine, law, religious orders and the military. Others have expanded this definition to include accounting, dentistry, nursing, engineering and architecture as more recent, but established professions. Journalism and public relations are often identified as emerging professions.

What exactly is a profession? The basis of a recognized or confirmed professional status is found in five major characteristics:

- systematic theory in which all the knowledge and skills necessary to practice the profession have been recognized and from which practitioners can rationalize their activities;
- formal education and / or a period of internship before being allowed to practice in accordance with the rules and regulations of the profession's governing body and regulatory authority (doctors, nurses, teachers and lawyers are licensed, military officers are commissioned and clergy are ordained);
- sanction of the community – giving credibility, status and recognition which, in turn, confers upon it certain powers, privileges and responsibilities; among the most important being a profession's control over its own educational programs, and regulation and discipline of Membership and accreditation;
- other privileges such as confidentiality between professionals and their clients or employers; and
- an over-riding responsibility of its practitioners to conduct all professional activities in the public interest, as demonstrated by a formally recognized Code of Ethics.

Achieving professional status – and the recognition and authority that comes with it – makes a significant impact. Most notably, it sends a message that users of such services should employ recognized members of that profession – people who are recognized as professional. Currently, there is no Canadian or provincial legislation defining either the practice of public relations or the qualifications of its practitioners; it is an unregulated profession. As a result, anyone may retain the services of a self-designated public relations person, even though the outcome may be less than ideal.

A recognized code of ethics, adopted and adhered to by a profession, protects the public by requiring its members to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and within the dictates of prescribed conduct. This code of professional standards may be formal or informal and is designed to protect both the public and the profession by prohibiting acts which may jeopardize the credibility of the profession and the interests of the public.

A culture consisting of unique values, norms and symbols is integral to each profession. First among the values is belief in the essential worth of the services it provides. Among the norms are standards of behaviour covering every relationship with clients and colleagues, as well as group-approved methods for challenging theory and introducing new techniques. A number of professions have their own symbols – the collar of the clergy, the uniform of the military or the iron ring of the engineer. Virtually every profession is steeped in the concept of an identity retained for life.

As an emerging profession, public relations is slowly establishing itself as having a recognized body of knowledge, although it has no unique powers, privileges or responsibilities conferred upon its practice. The Canadian Public Relations Society and similar societies throughout the world are helping advance the practice through a framework of professional cultures and regulative codes of ethics, but because people who practice public relations are not bound through legislation, true recognition as a profession is difficult to achieve.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CANADIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY

During the mid-1940s, a group of Montreal public relations people explored the need for a greater exchange of knowledge. On March 23, 1948, 16 professionals formally established the Canadian Public Relations Society, with Membership limited to practitioners working in corporations.

Later that year, a group of 57 public relations people in Toronto formed the Public Relations Association of Ontario, designed to focus on their particular needs and open to government employees and consultants as well as corporate practitioners.

Five years later, the two organizations amalgamated to form the Canadian Public Relations Society, Inc. (CPRS). CPRS held its first national meeting and conference May 14, 1953. Today, there are 14 Member Societies representing every region of Canada.

Through the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, a reciprocity initiative was forged to develop formal links with public relations societies worldwide and explore opportunities for international co-operation. As of September 2004, CPRS and the following public relations organizations have agreed to recognize each other's professional accreditation on a reciprocal basis in accordance with signed reciprocity agreements: Public Relations Society of America, Public Relations Institute of Australia; Institute of Public Relations, Ghana; Public Relations Institute of Ireland; Public Relations Institute of New Zealand; Puerto Rico Association of Public Relations Professionals; Institute of Public Relations of Singapore; Public Relations Society of Slovenia; Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa; and Chartered Institute of Public Relations, United Kingdom.

CANADIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY – MISSION

The Canadian Public Relations Society, as a distinct Canadian association, seeks to:

- group all public relations practitioners in Canada and to foster their professional interests;
- advance the professional stature of public relations, in cooperation with its regional Member Societies and with like-minded organizations in other countries; and
- oversee its practice for the benefit and protection of the public interest.

CPRS PUBLIC RELATIONS DEFINITION

Public relations is the ***strategic management*** of ***relationships*** between an ***organization*** and its ***diverse publics***, through the use of ***communication***, to achieve ***mutual understanding***, ***realize*** organizational ***goals*** and serve the ***public interest***.
(Flynn, Gregory & Valin, 2008)

OUR VALUES

We believe that the ethical and strategic practice of public relations and communications management makes a positive contribution to the profession, our employers and to the communities we serve. As members of CPRS, we are committed to the following values:

An Ethical Practice that is:

- Transparent (honest, open, willingness to share information)
- Accountable (to our priority publics, our clients, our employers, our profession and to society)
- In the public interest
- Built on integrity and independence

A Strategic Practice that is:

- Managed and accountable
- Aligned with the overall goals and objectives of the organizations we serve
- Intentional and deliberate
- Measurable and relevant

Achieving Mutual Benefit through:

- Meaningful engagement with our priority publics
- Creating strong and reciprocal relationships

- Engaging in symmetrical and balanced communication
- Developing programs that are socially responsible

Demonstrating Leadership and Engagement through:

- Volunteer opportunities within the profession and the communities we serve
- Mentorship programs
- Commitment of resources (advisory, financial and human) to advance the profession

A Commitment to Continuous Learning through:

- Professional development
- Advancing the body of knowledge
- Teaching and scholarship
- Sharing of knowledge

Declaration of Principles

The National Society, in setting forth its Declaration of Principles and Ethics of Professional Conduct, strives to:

- affirm that the obligations of a public trust are inherent in the practice of public relations;
- promote and maintain high standards of professional practice and conduct among the membership, so as to ensure that public relations shall be esteemed as an honourable profession;
- safeguard good taste and truthfulness in all material prepared for public dissemination and in all aspects of the public relations practitioner's operations;
- ensure that membership represents surety of ethical conduct, skill, knowledge and competence in the practice of public relations;
- foster increased attention to public relations as a course of study in universities, colleges, institutes and other similar educational organizations in order to further the proficiency, knowledge and training of anyone engaged in or interested in entering public relations;
- adhere to the Global Protocol on Ethics in Public Relations of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications; and
- subscribe to the principles of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Members of the Canadian Public Relations Society pledge to uphold the letter and spirit of this Code of Professional Standards.

Society Members strive to improve their individual professional proficiency and advance their knowledge and competency through continuing research and professional development. Paramount in this respect is the achievement of professional accreditation.

1. A member shall practice public relations according to the highest professional standards.

Members shall conduct their professional lives in a manner that does not conflict with the public interest and the dignity of the individual, with respect for the rights of the public as contained in the Constitution of Canada and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

2. A Member shall deal fairly and honestly with the communications media and the public.

Members shall neither propose nor act to improperly influence the communications media, government bodies or the legislative process. Improper influence may include conferring gifts, privileges or benefits to influence decisions.

3. A member shall practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth, and shall not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information.

Members shall not make extravagant claims or unfair comparisons, nor assume credit for ideas and words not their own. Members shall not engage in professional or personal conduct that will bring discredit to themselves, the Society or the practice of public relations.

4. A member shall deal fairly with past or present employers / clients, fellow practitioners and members of other professions.

Members shall not intentionally damage another practitioner’s practice or professional reputations. Members shall understand, respect and abide by the ethical codes of other professions with whose members they may work from time to time.

5. Members shall be prepared to disclose the names of their employers or clients for whom public communications are made and refrain from associating themselves with anyone who would not respect such policy.

Members shall be prepared to disclose publicly the names of their employers or clients on whose behalf public communications is made. Members shall not associate themselves with anyone claiming to represent one interest, or professing to be independent or unbiased, but who actually serves another or an undisclosed interest.

6. A member shall protect the confidences of present, former and prospective employers / clients.

Members shall not use or disclose confidential information obtained from past or present employers / clients without the expressed permission of the employers / clients or an order of a court of law.

7. A member shall not represent conflicting or competing interest without the expressed consent of those concerned, given after a full disclosure of the facts. Members shall not permit personal or other professional interests to conflict with those of an employer / client without fully disclosing such interests to everyone involved.

8. A member shall not guarantee specified results beyond the member's capacity to achieve.

9. Members shall personally accept no fees, commissions, gifts or any other considerations for professional services from anyone except employers or clients for whom the services were specifically performed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CPRS ACCREDITATION PROCESS

PURPOSE

The purpose of the CPRS accreditation process is to assess a Member's depth of experience and competence in the professional practice of public relations and to recognize this achievement through the designation of accreditation. Once accredited, Members must remain current in the profession. As a candidate for accreditation, you must pass a three-part accreditation exam process with a minimum overall average score of 65 per cent and subscribe to the CPRS Code of Professional Standards (see Chapter one). Upon successful completion of the three-part process, you will be recognized as an Accredited Public Relations practitioner (APR) and authorized to use the APR designation. Each year thereafter, and upon payment of national membership dues, you are authorized to use the APR designation.

ACCREDITATION MAINTENANCE

Accredited members are also encouraged to take part in the voluntary accreditation maintenance program. This program was designed to strengthen the value of the APR designation for the benefit of practitioners, their employers or clients and the public at-large. The program demonstrates the accredited member's continuing training and professional development as well as leadership in public relations, ensuring the APR designation retains its relevancy and value.

To participate, accredited Members must record qualifying activities using the online form in three broad categories (training, professional activities & community service). These activities carry the respective unit value as set out in the accreditation maintenance program on the website. Once a candidate has 15 units, including a minimum of 5 Training units, the request may be submitted to the National Office. A minimum of 15 units is required every five years to keep maintained status.

The application is reviewed and the National Council on Accreditation will recognize the accredited Member's maintenance of the APR designation. Maintained Members are listed in a special section of the CPRS National website.

Participation by non-practicing, retired APRs is waived.

APPLICATION AND PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS

The accreditation process is a measure of the extent of your practical experience and competence in the field as judged by peers. You may pursue this designation once you have satisfied the following eligibility requirements:

1) you have been employed full-time in a public relations position or have owned your own public relations business for at least five years*;

2) you spend at least half of your professional time involved with specific public relations activities; and

3) you are a member in good standing of the Canadian Public Relations Society.

* Equivalent work credit (up to six months) may be awarded for a public relations practicum or cooperative education experience successfully completed while attending a recognized college or university.

Applications must be received by the CPRS National Office by **11:59 PM EDT**, **December 1** (or be subject to a $50.00 late fee). Your application must include three references of people familiar with your work who are willing and able to attest to your eligibility and professional conduct. **Two of three references must be accredited Members of the Society.** Your references may not include members of the CPRS National Council on Accreditation, or your subordinates at your workplace. Payment of $495.00 + HST should accompany your application.

Applicants who have applied to enter the accreditation process, but whose eligibility was not recommended by the Deputy Presiding Officer (Eligibility), may appeal to the Deputy Presiding Officer (Appeals) (see Appeals Section).

By December 30, please send the following by email to accreditation@cprs.ca:

1) a current resume outlining in detail your experience in the field; please ensure to include employer and company names and for the purpose of establishing the five years of experience, please include the months and years of employment.

2) a work sample overview (*see Chapter Four for guidance*), explaining the nature and scope of the proposed work sample project or campaign and the extent of your role and ownership of the program or project;

ELIGIBILITY

Soon after the closing date for applications, the Deputy Presiding Officer (Eligibility) of the National Council on Accreditation carefully reviews all applications and related materials, and notifies the National Office which applicants are eligible to proceed as candidates for the accreditation process. By January 31, the CPRS National Office informs all applicants of their status. Those who are eligible to proceed are advised of the scheduling of accreditation components.

Those applicants whose eligibility was not recommended will receive an explanation from the Deputy Presiding Officer (Eligibility). If the application was deemed not eligible due to lack of experience the candidate may supply additional information on work experience to the Deputy Presiding Officer (DPO) Eligibility care of the National Office. After receiving this additional information, the decision of the DPO Eligibility as to experience is final. If the candidate does not have sufficient experience to enter the process, the candidate may request a refund of the accreditation fee. A $50 administrative fee will be charged to process this refund. The applicant may then apply again at a later date when sufficient experience has been acquired.

If, in the view of the DPO Eligibility, the candidate's work sample overview does not demonstrate sufficient scope and ownership to be eligible, the candidate may submit a new work sample overview the following year or may withdraw from the process and request a refund. A $50 administrative fee will be charged to process this refund.

You can increase your chances of success by taking the time to review your proposed work sample project with a senior APR mentor or your local accreditation chair. Make sure to read the work sample overview guidance and work sample guidance carefully before preparing your submission.

Any candidate who is eligible to proceed following the work sample overview assessment, but who defers submission of the full work sample, is not entitled to a refund but may simply submit the full work sample the following year at no additional charge. For more information, see "**Deferrals**" on page 21.

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process after having passed the eligibility review, the candidate will forfeit $295 of their fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and with payment of full fees for that year.

FORM OF ACCREDITATION EXAMINATION

The accreditation examination consists of three components:

1) a work sample which must be received by the CPRS National Office no later than **11:59 PM EDT, April 1**;
2) a written examination, with a maximum completing time of 3.5 hours, held in October;

3) an oral examination lasting from 45 to 60 minutes, held in October.

Through these three components, examiners will be considering the following attributes of a public relations professional:

- the breadth of skills acquired and demonstration of the ability to transform theory into action;
- the range of communications tools effectively used;
- reaction to challenges in problem solving, issues management, etc.;
- relevance of answers to questions asked;
- readability of the written word through composition, grammar, spelling and syntax;
- articulation of the spoken word;
- ethics, including adherence to the CPRS Code of Professional Standards;
- objectivity;
- logic;
- imagination;
- persuasiveness;
- personal composure.

To be successful, candidates must achieve a minimum score of 60 per cent on all three components of the accreditation examination AND an overall score of 65 per cent.

The Society has established a team of accredited examiners and graders in every region of the country to evaluate the three components of the accreditation process. The individuals are all accredited Members of the Society. Regional Examiners, in consultation with the Chief Examiner and CPRS National Office, coordinate the evaluation of work samples by graders. In order to ensure impartiality, work samples are normally evaluated by a grader outside the candidate's region.

Regional Examiners also oversee the conduct of the written and oral exams, and may call upon the assistance of the local Accreditation Chair or another Accredited Member of the Local Society. Three graders evaluate each written exam. Given that written examinations are identified only by a code number, the candidate's privacy is maintained.

THE PREPARATION PROCESS

Preparation for the accreditation process requires even very seasoned practitioners to review their accumulated theoretical and practical public relations knowledge and experience. You should begin preparing for the accreditation process soon after your eligibility is confirmed. We encourage you to look for advice and guidance from fellow CPRS Members, particularly those involved with the accreditation committee of your Local Society. The experience and insights of accredited colleagues will assist you in all phases of the process, especially for the work sample, which must be prepared over the winter and received by the National Office by the submission deadline, **April 1**.

Candidates should also review successful work samples and previous exams, which are available on the CPRS website (Member Area), along with a selection of resources material and webinars to help prepare. Candidates should note that acceptable work samples must be initiated, completed and evaluated within the **three years prior** to your application for eligibility.

The Study Guide and Reading List are both helpful resources and can be found in Chapters Ten and Eleven, respectively, of the Accreditation Handbook. The Reading List identifies many of the leading books and periodicals devoted to public relations and will help orient candidates to prepare for the written and oral exams. In addition, the online educational resource centre at Mount Royal University houses work samples submitted by public relations practitioners that serve as helpful models.

Your studies should concentrate on the principles of public relations and how communications can contribute to organizational solutions and the practical application of public relations theories and techniques to current issues.

THE PROCESS SCHEDULE

The accreditation process follows a calendar which makes it easier for you to schedule work and study time.

October, November

A few months before the December application deadline, you should carefully evaluate your commitments for the following year. Will you have the time, resources and motivation required to complete the accreditation examination? Once you have decided to proceed:

- consult a member of your Local Society's accreditation committee for guidance and assistance;
- identify possible subjects for your work sample and select the most appropriate;
- collect relevant reference materials;
- discuss your work sample topics and possible forms of presentation with your local Accreditation Chair;

- identify three colleagues, **two of whom are accredited Members of CPRS**, who are willing to attest to your skills as a practitioner – these references are required as part of your formal application; and
- complete the Accreditation application form and make sure it is received by the CPRS National Office by the **December 1** deadline.

Candidates who failed or deferred their work sample in the past three years must confirm with CPRS National Office that they intend to resubmit a work sample and may be asked to resubmit a new Work Sample Overview before the December 1 deadline.

January

Verification of eligibility. Candidates start work sample.

February

Now is the time to work on the report relating to your selected work sample (see Chapter Three). Map out the content and flow of the report and prepare a rough abstract outlining the theme and purpose of the work. It is extremely important that you discuss your draft work sample with your local Accreditation Chair to ensure it meets the requirements of ownership, scope and adheres to the R-A-C-E formula, in addition to supplying information about the budget to finance the project.

March

Once you have completed your formal work sample, submit it by email in a PDF file using this naming convention: SurnameFirstnameWS for the work sample and SurnameFirstnameApp for the appendices. Submissions should be sent to accreditation@cprs.ca no later than **11:59 PM EDT, April 1** or if April 1 falls on a holiday, by 11:59 PM on the next business day. Work sample files that arrive at CPRS National Office after the stipulated deadline will have 10 marks deducted from the final work sample grade. If you have any questions about submitting an electronic file please contact CPRS National Office.

April

The CPRS National Office issues confirmation that your work sample has been received and forwards the material to the Regional Examiners and graders. If you do not receive this confirmation by April 10, please contact the CPRS National Office.

May, June

The graders and Regional Examiners evaluate the work samples and report the results to the Chief Examiner, care of National Office. By the end of June, the Chief Examiner advises you whether you have received a passing grade on the work sample and are eligible to proceed.

April to September

Your work sample is just one portion of your accreditation process – once it is submitted, you should begin researching and reading in preparation for the examinations. Prepare comprehensive notes related to the practice of public relations and the code of conduct upheld by the National Society. This puts you in good stead for the formal examinations in October.

October

Examinations are generally scheduled for the third week of October in your local community or the nearest large centre. Exact dates for the examinations are available on the accreditation process schedule on the CPRS National website. Written and oral examinations are now fully decentralized to Local Societies to minimize travel for candidates and examiners. If professional obligations impede your participation in the examinations please consult the National Office as soon as possible.

December

You receive formal notice of your performance in the accreditation process. Successful candidates may begin using their new APR designation immediately upon notification. You will also be recognized as an accredited Member with the presentation of your certificate and accreditation pin at the annual National Conference of the National Society, or at a Local Society event. **Congratulations!**

APPEAL PROCESS

WORK SAMPLE

Candidates who do not receive 60% or over on the work sample are considered to have failed the work sample component and may not proceed to exams in October. These candidates should submit a new work sample overview the following year (or within three years[1]) by the December 30 deadline and submit the full work sample by the April 1 deadline. These candidates will have to pay a $50 administrative fee to re-submit.

[1] *A candidate who has failed the work sample must submit a new one within the next three years; otherwise, all fees paid will be forfeited. A candidate who has not passed the work

Notwithstanding, candidates who have received a marginal grade (55%-59%) on their work sample may choose the mentoring option rather than accept the failing grade. In this case, unsuccessful candidates review their work sample with the Chief Examiner and then submit an acceptable revised work sample to the Chief Examiner by the deadline specified by the Chief Examiner. If a candidate chooses the mentoring option, such candidate may only receive a maximum grade of 60% on the revised work sample but successful submission of the revised work sample will allow the candidate to proceed to exams in October.

WITHDRAWAL BEFORE PROCEEDING TO EXAMS

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process before sitting exams in October, the candidate will forfeit $295 of their fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and on payment of full fees.

WRITTEN AND ORAL

Written and oral examinations receiving a grade between ***55%-60% will be automatically appealed.*** The Deputy Presiding Officer (Appeals) will appoint three different graders to review the examination. The appeal examiners grade according to the same marking guidelines. The appeal examiners do not have access to the original grades or comments on the candidate. The decision of the appeal panel is final. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the candidate will have the opportunity to re-try the examination/s within the next two-year period. Candidates receive notice of outcome by email or by letter with summary comments about their performance on the written or oral examinations. Please note that a mark of less than ***55%*** on the written and/or oral examinations is NOT eligible for appeal. The Accreditation Council has deemed that this is reflective of too weak a performance to be considered for an appeal.

Candidates should note that following a third unsuccessful attempt at the written and/or oral examinations, they will be required to wait **a minimum of one full year or one full examination cycle**, whichever is greater, before being able to reapply for accreditation. Candidates are expected to use this time to improve in their areas of weakness. An individual reapplying for accreditation will be required to submit the full

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sample component within three years of the accreditation application is considered withdrawn but may choose to begin the process again in any subsequent year on payment of full fees.

accreditation fee, new references, a new work sample overview and a new work sample.

EXTRAORDINARY APPEAL

An extraordinary appeal may also be granted if a candidate's examination experience is so unusual that in the view of the Deputy Presiding Officer (Appeals) additional consideration is appropriate.

DEFERRALS

All requests for deferrals should be made in writing to CPRS national office: accreditation@cprs.ca

Candidates who have started the accreditation process, but did not submit a work sample, may have their files reactivated during either of the next two accreditation cycles. They must confirm, in writing, their intention to re-enter the program before the December 1st deadline for new applications.

Following submission of a successful work sample, should the candidate be unable to complete the accreditation process because of extenuating personal or professional circumstances, they may request a deferral of the written and oral components. A written request must be submitted to the CPRS national office.

Please note that candidates must still complete the remaining components (written and oral examinations) within the next three years of having completed the project addressed in their work sample (otherwise, the grades obtained on the work sample become obsolete since the work sample must be initiated, completed and evaluated within three years).

If a candidate is unable to complete the accreditation process within the stipulated three-year time frame, the accreditation fee is forfeited. Candidates may reapply at a future date.

UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

If examiners come to a consensus that a candidate does not yet have the level of experience and competence required of a general practitioner, that candidate is not granted accreditation. To enhance the professional development aspect of the accreditation experience for unsuccessful candidates, the Chief Examiner advises them of their area(s) of weakness so they may use this constructive feedback to improve their overall proficiency before reapplying for accreditation.

Candidates who received a total aggregate mark within five (5) points of the minimum passing grade of 65% will be given an option to redo **any or all** of the three components of the examination which were below 65% in order to attain a passing average within three years. There is a nominal $50 fee to retake the examinations.

Special Leave: An allowance of one additional year may be granted to candidates upon approval of Council for special leave (i.e. parental leave, elder care, critical illness, etc.).

CHAPTER THREE

PREPARING YOUR WORK SAMPLE OVERVIEW AND WORK SAMPLE

The structure of the accreditation examination process recognizes that a single evaluative instrument cannot adequately assess your professional knowledge and competence. Consequently, CPRS combines three methods – each one providing a different insight into your approach to communications practice. Together, they give examiners a comprehensive view of your ability to approach public relations work with integrity, professionalism, intelligence, and strategic and executional skills. The Work Sample is an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate excellent writing skills as well as skillful project management.

WORK SAMPLE OVERVIEW GUIDANCE

Each APR candidate must submit a Work Sample Overview (WSO) and Curriculum Vitae in pdf format to accreditation@cprs.ca on or before the deadline (**11:59 PM EDT on December 30** or the next business day if this is not a business day). The naming convention for the Work Sample Overview is: SurnameFirstnameWSO, e.g., SmithJaneWSO

Form and Content

The Work Sample Overview describes the project you intend to submit for the work sample component of the accreditation process and is contained in a one-page (300 – 500 words) description that outlines the scope of the project and your role and ownership in it. Your Curriculum Vitae must set out your public relations experience to ensure you meet the minimum experience requirement of five years of full-time public relations experience.

Candidates are encouraged to use the RACE formula to organize their Work Sample Overview and it is noted that each eligible Work Sample project must also include a budget component. The word count (maximum 500 words) must appear at the top of the page. A cover page is not required; it is sufficient to include the candidate's name, member ID number, date, proposed title of the work sample project and word count at the top of the first page. The name, member ID number, date and title of the work sample do not factor into the total word count.

SCOPE

For the project scope, the Deputy Presiding Officer of Eligibility will review to assess:

1. An overview of the project, meaning that the project is multifaceted, incorporating a variety of communication approaches (Single deliverable program, e.g. one seminar or one report, will generally not meet minimum scope guideline).

2. The organizational and public relations goals the project was intended to serve and how these relate to the evaluation of your project, meaning the project must clearly serve a stated public relations goal and the overview mentions how this links to an organizational goal and the overview refers to the ability to evaluate the outcome, not just the output of the program or project.

3. The approximate date of your project; the project must have been completed (evaluation finished) within three years prior to the full work sample submission date of April 1.

If a candidate does not meet the minimum scope standard, s/he can elect to proceed with the work sample, addressing the weaknesses identified, in order to increase the likelihood of success. No appeal is required. The candidate's alternative is to voluntarily withdraw from the accreditation process until a suitable project is available that meets the scope standards.

ROLE AND OWNERSHIP

For the project role and ownership, the Deputy Presiding Officer of Eligibility will review to assess:

1. Your involvement in the decision to launch the project, or the point at which you became the lead public relations practitioner for the project and your involvement must pre-date the commencement of the analysis.

2. Your role in the research, analysis, communication and evaluation related to the project and you must have had some direct involvement in at least three of the four RACE elements.

3. Whether you worked alone, as team leader, or as a member of a team. If you worked alone, that is fine or if you were the team leader then you must have been responsible from the start of the project and ensure you meet the requirements of #2 above. If you were a member of a team, you must have been solely responsible for activities serving a specific PR objective.

4. The staff or consultant support available for the project and your involvement in the project or program must not be limited to staff or consultant supervision.

If a candidate does not meet the minimum ownership standard, the work sample project is disqualified the candidate may appeal to the DPO (Appeals) care of the National Office within 15 days of receipt of the decision with the submission of a new

Work Sample Overview providing additional information that clearly sets out the role and ownership.

PUBLIC RELATIONS EXPERIENCE

For the candidate's public relations experience, the Deputy Presiding Officer of Eligibility will review to assess:

That the candidate meets the minimum experience requirement of five years of full-time work in public relations. This is a strict standard and will be assessed based on the month and year of employment in each public relations position listed in the candidate's curriculum vitae. A candidate should include some detail on the duties of the role to allow the DPO Eligibility to determine if this was fully a public relations role or if only part of the time was spent on public relations work, in which case it may count for 50% of the time.

If the candidate does not meet the eligibility requirements (five years of full-time experience in public relations and three positive references, of which two are APRs) or the work sample is deemed ineligible, the candidate is not eligible to enter the accreditation program and may request a refund of the accreditation fee, minus a $50 + tax administrative fee or may request a deferral to re-enter the following year, if less than a year of experience is missing.

Candidates should note that a decision by the DPO Eligibility that the candidate is eligible to proceed, following assessment of the Work Sample Overview, does not guarantee that the full Work Sample will receive a passing grade. The full Work Sample submission is due on April 1 of each year and is graded based on the grader rubric (please see Work Sample Guidance for more information).

Deferral before submission of the full work sample

If the candidate has been judged eligible following the review of the Work Sample Overview but is unable to submit the full work sample by the April 1 deadline, s/he should send by email a deferral request to national office and national office will confirm the deferral has been accepted. The candidate must then contact national office [accreditation@cprs.ca] by December 1 to confirm the s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by December 30, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae.

Withdrawal before submission of the full work sample

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process after having passed the eligibility review, the candidate will forfeit $295 of their fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and with payment of full fees for that year.

WORK SAMPLE GUIDANCE

REGULAR WORK SAMPLE (PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN OR EVENT)

Each APR candidate must submit a Work Sample (and appendices, if desired) in pdf format to accreditation@cprs.ca on or before the deadline (**11:59 PM EDT on April 1** or the next business day if this is not a business day). The naming convention for the Work Sample is: SurnameFirstnameWS, e.g., SmithJaneWS and the naming convention for the appendices is: SurnameFirstnameApp1, e.g., SmithJaneApp1. Work sample submissions that arrive at CPRS National Office after the deadline will have 10 marks deducted from the final work sample grade.

The Work Sample allows examiners to gain insight into a candidate's ability to plan, analyze and execute within the context of current public relations theory and practice. A Work Sample is a description of a public relations campaign, special project, outstanding event or other public relations exercise. Because it is intended to portray the candidate's competence at the time of being accredited, the work sample is considered eligible if it was initiated, completed and evaluated within three years prior to the APR application.

One important requirement, which is reviewed in the work sample overview when it is assessed for eligibility, is the candidate's "ownership" of the project, in other words, the extent of the candidate's responsibility for strategic planning and involvement at every stage of the project. The work sample should demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to execute, the key elements of public relations planning and programming, and clearly reflect to readers the candidate's role as initiator, planner, controller and evaluator.

Form and Content

Candidates should include their name, member ID number, date, and title of the work sample at the top of the first page. The name, ID, date and title are not included in the word count. The word count for the Executive Summary should appear at the top of the Executive Summary section and the word count for the discussion section should appear at the top of that section. A cover page is not required.

The Work Sample consists of:

- an executive summary of no more than 500 total words, providing a clear, comprehensive overview of the submission; and
- a report or analytical discussion of no more than 2500 total words, detailing the candidate's planning, execution and evaluation of the project.

Marks will be deducted (up to five marks on the executive summary and up to five marks on the main body of the report) if the work sample executive summary or report exceeds or falls significantly below the stipulated word count. To eliminate this possibility, we encourage candidates to write within prescribed limits and include the word counts on both the work sample executive summary and case study portion. References and footnotes are not included in the work count.

In addition to these required elements, the candidate may include appendices with collateral material such as news releases, brochures, photographs, scripts, newsletters, links to videos, etc. The total appendices must be under 10 MB, therefore provide links to large files if necessary. Complete budgets may also be included as appendices, but discussion of them must appear in the main body of the submission.

Appended materials will be considered by evaluators for their illustrative value only, not as evidence of proficiency or of the program's quality. Therefore, please do not include in the appendices information or materials that are crucial to the understanding of the subject of the work sample – evaluators may or may not review the appendices in detail.

Candidates are encouraged to use the RACE formula to organize their submission. Graders will be looking for certain elements of form and content, as reflected by the grading rubric on the marking sheet, such as your role in the strategic planning, budget, SWOT analysis and lessons learned. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the grader marking sheets. The work sample should demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of, and ability to execute, the key elements of public relations planning and programming, and clearly reflect to readers the candidate's role as initiator, planner, controller and evaluator.

The submission should be written in the style of a formal business report; a helpful article on business report style can be found here[2]. In addition to narrative style, the submission can include tables, graphs, or other non-narrative elements. Citations of sources should follow APA style.

Evaluation Criteria

[2] University of Melbourne: library.unimelb.edu.au/libraries/bee - Helpsheet Giblin Eunson Library

Senior APR examiners use the standard score sheet and their professional judgment in determining how well the candidate applies these elements to the subject of the work. It must be clear to them that the submission is a legitimate example of public relations work, and that all key elements of the overall planning, execution and evaluation process are both present and adequate. The work sample counts for 20% of the total accreditation score.

The examiners will grade the following elements of the work sample:

- Executive Summary: Explains the key points of the project, without requiring reference to the subsequent report. Refers to each element of RACE, as appropriate to the submission.
- Research Background / situation identification: Makes clear reference to the problem or opportunity and the organization's key objectives and how this PR program/project and/or academic materials plays a role in advancing those objectives.
- Research methodology: Includes discussion of more than one research methodology (formal or informal). If only one form of research was conducted, the candidate must explain if other options were considered and why they were rejected.
- Summary of research findings: Spells out what results came from the research, and how these are relevant for analysis, design or planning purposes, if appropriate to the submission.
- Stakeholder identification and analysis: Identifies the who and why of key stakeholders
- Vulnerabilities and opportunities: Spells out vulnerabilities and opportunities or does SWOT analysis
- Communication objectives: Refers to objectives that require more than just creating awareness. The link between program objectives and organizational objectives must be evident. Objectives should be SMART.
- Appropriateness of tools and techniques: Explains the tools and techniques selected, based on research, objectives and stakeholders. Employs at least one two-way communication tactic.
- Creativity of program: Uses an imaginative mix of tools and techniques, given available resources.
- Key messages / consistency: Identifies key messages that speak to the benefits of the program and its positioning.
- Action plan/implementation: Outlines the steps, timelines and responsibilities in the action plan and its implementation.

- Budget: Illustrates the relationship between the plan and its costs. In situations of confidentiality, percentage breakdowns are acceptable.
- Evaluation Results/outcomes: Links this section back to the original objectives, both PR and organizational. Strong work samples will use both qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Methodology: Discusses the methods used to determine the success of the program.
- Lessons for the future or lessons learned: The candidate's analysis of what worked / what didn't / what should be changed in the future.
- Report structure, organization and clarity of ideas: Has a logical structure and flow and causes the reader no difficulty in understanding all components of the program.
- Spelling and grammar: Contains only minimal spelling and grammar errors. A pattern of spelling or grammar errors should be taken to illustrate a deficient standard.
- Overall presentation, appearance: Is neat and professional. Glitz is not required to achieve a pass mark. Business report writing standards are evident.

Deferral before submission of the full work sample

If the candidate has been judged eligible following the review of the Work Sample Overview but is unable to submit the full work sample by the April 1 deadline, s/he should send by email a deferral request to national office and national office will confirm the deferral has been accepted. The candidate must then contact national office by December 1 to confirm the s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by December 30, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae.

Withdrawal before submission of the full work sample

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process after having passed the eligibility review but before proceeding to exams, the candidate will forfeit $295 of the accreditation fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and with payment of full fees for that year. Any such request must be made before the October exam date for that calendar year.

Failing grade on the full work sample

60% is the passing grade for the work sample. A candidate who has received a marginal grade (55%-59%) on the work sample may choose the mentoring option rather than accept the failing grade. In this case, the unsuccessful candidate reviews the work sample with the Chief Examiner and then submits an acceptable revised work sample to the Chief Examiner by no later than 30 days after the date on the email advising the candidate of the original work sample grade. For this type of resubmission, 60% is the highest possible grade that may be awarded to the candidate if the resubmission is successful.

A candidate who fails the work sample component may not proceed to exams in October but can re-enter the following year. The candidate must contact national office by December 1 to confirm s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by December 30, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae and submit the revised full work sample by the April 1 deadline. The three-year rule applies to this situation; if the work sample was completed more than three years before the submission date, it is considered stale-dated and a different work sample project must be approved as eligible, through the eligibility review of the Work Sample Overview. A candidate who has not passed the work sample component within three years of the accreditation application is considered withdrawn but may choose to begin the process again in any subsequent year on payment of full fees.

WORK SAMPLE GUIDANCE FOR THE EDUCATOR WORK SAMPLE

Educator work samples may be submitted by a full-time educator teaching public relations at a post-secondary institution. Such a work sample must have been completed within the previous three (3) years.

An Educator work sample project can be a full public relations campaign; a social media campaign anchored in a public relations program; a detailed academic course curriculum with associated lesson plans, course outline, learning outcomes and assessments/marking rubrics (for one semester, minimum 12 weeks, two hours a week); an instructional book/manual for a specific course or area of study (e.g., crisis communication manual) – either self-published or peer reviewed; or a case study developed for a specific course or program. Most commonly, an Educator work sample project is a discussion of a public relations course curriculum or program, particularly where such course or program was developed as a new project to meet a specific organizational and learning objective.

In order to submit an Educator work sample, the candidate must be a full-time instructor (minimum 12 hours a week of classroom and/or online teaching) in a government-approved and government-audited communication/public relations program (diploma, degree or certificate) at a government-licensed and government-regulated college and/or university in Canada. The candidate must also be a Canadian

Public Relations Society (CPRS) member in good standing, with **a minimum of five years of practical experience in the field prior to entering the academy to focus on teaching or five years of cumulative field and teaching experience.** The candidate should ideally have some practical experience in addition to teaching experience.

Candidates are encouraged to take note of the eligibility assessment criteria and the work sample marking sheet, particularly the Communications (2) section to grade the academic work sample in order to ensure that all required elements are included in the submission.

Each APR candidate must submit a Work Sample (and appendices, if desired) in pdf format to accreditation@cprs.ca on or before the deadline (**11:59 PM EDT on April 1** or the next business day if this is not a business day). The naming convention for the Work Sample is: SurnameFirstnameWS, e.g., SmithJaneWS and the naming convention for the appendices is: SurnameFirstnameApp1, e.g., SmithJaneApp1. Work sample submissions that arrive at CPRS National Office after the deadline will have 10 marks deducted from the final work sample grade.

The Work Sample allows examiners to gain insight into a candidate's ability to plan, analyze and execute within the context of current public relations theory and practice. A Work Sample is a description of a public relations campaign, special project, outstanding event or other public relations exercise. Because it is intended to portray the candidate's competence at the time of being accredited, the work sample is considered eligible if it was initiated, completed and evaluated within three years prior to the APR application.

One important requirement, which is reviewed in the work sample overview when it is assessed for eligibility, is the candidate's "ownership" of the project, in other words, the extent of the candidate's responsibility for strategic planning and involvement at every stage of the project. The work sample should demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to execute, the key elements of public relations planning and programming, and clearly reflect to readers the candidate's role as initiator, planner, controller and evaluator.

Form and Content

Candidates should include their name, member ID number, date, and title of the work sample at the top of the first page. The name, ID, date and title are not included in the word count. The word count for the Executive Summary should appear at the top of the Executive Summary section and the word count for the discussion section should appear at the top of that section. A cover page is not required.

The Work Sample consists of:

- an executive summary of no more than **500 total words**, providing a clear, comprehensive overview of the submission; and
- a report or analytical discussion of no more than **2500 total words**, detailing the candidate's planning, execution and evaluation of the project.

Marks will be deducted (up to five marks on the executive summary and up to five marks on the main body of the report) if the work sample executive summary or report exceeds or falls significantly below the stipulated word count. To eliminate this possibility, we encourage candidates to write within prescribed limits and include the word counts on both the work sample executive summary and case study portion. References and footnotes are not included in the work count.

In addition to these required elements, the candidate may include appendices with collateral material such as news releases, brochures, photographs, scripts, newsletters, links to videos, etc. The total appendices must be under 10 MB, therefore provide links to large files if necessary. Complete budgets may also be included as appendices, but discussion of them must appear in the main body of the submission.

Appended materials will be considered by evaluators for their illustrative value only, not as evidence of proficiency or of the program's quality. Therefore, please do not include in the appendices information or materials that are crucial to the understanding of the subject of the work sample – evaluators may or may not review the appendices in detail.

Candidates are encouraged to use the RACE formula to organize their submission. Graders will be looking for certain elements of form and content, as reflected by the grading rubric on the marking sheet, such as your role in the strategic planning, budget, SWOT analysis and lessons learned. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the grader marking sheets. The work sample should demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of, and ability to execute, the key elements of public relations planning and programming, and clearly reflect to readers the candidate's role as initiator, planner, controller and evaluator.

The submission should be written in the style of a formal business report; a helpful article on business report style can be found here[3]. In addition to narrative style, the submission can include tables, graphs, or other non-narrative elements. Citations of sources should follow APA style.

[3] University of Melbourne: library.unimelb.edu.au/libraries/bee - Helpsheet Giblin Eunson Library

Evaluation Criteria

Senior APR examiners use the standard score sheet and their professional judgment in determining how well the candidate applies these elements to the subject of the work. It must be clear to them that the submission is a legitimate example of public relations work, and that all key elements of the overall planning, execution and evaluation process are both present and adequate. The work sample counts for 20% of the total accreditation score.

The examiners will grade the following elements of the work sample:

- Executive Summary: Explains the key points of the project, without requiring reference to the subsequent report. Refers to each element of RACE, as appropriate to the submission.
- Research Background / situation identification: Makes clear reference to the problem or opportunity and the organization's key objectives and how this PR program/project and/or academic materials plays a role in advancing those objectives.
- Research methodology: Includes discussion of more than one research methodology (formal or informal). If only one form of research was conducted, the candidate must explain if other options were considered and why they were rejected.
- Summary of research findings: Spells out what results came from the research, and how these are relevant for analysis, design or planning purposes, if appropriate to the submission.
- Stakeholder identification and analysis: Identifies the who and why of key stakeholders
- Vulnerabilities and opportunities: Spells out vulnerabilities and opportunities or does SWOT analysis
- Communication objectives: Refers to objectives that require more than just creating awareness. The link between program objectives and organizational objectives must be evident. Objectives should be SMART.
- Appropriateness of tools and techniques: Employs a wide range of traditional and online teaching technologies based on research, objectives and stakeholders. Engages the learner experientially.
- Creativity of program: Uses an imaginative mix of tools and techniques, given available resources.
- Key messages / consistency: Learning outcomes follow Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives, which distinguishes knowledge according to six

increasingly-difficult domains (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation).

- Action plan/implementation Outlines the steps, timelines and resources required to implement and to assess the curriculum in terms of the learning outcomes.
- Budget: Not always relevant for the course developer/instructor, who is not typically in a position to determine/access required funds to deliver the curriculum. If the Budget component is not relevant for a career educator's submission, the marks for the Budget component will be redistributed across the other categories in that section.
- Assessment Student Feedback forms; administrative evaluation; employer evaluation
- Evaluation Results/outcomes: Links this section back to the original objectives, both PR and organizational. Strong work samples will use both qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Methodology: Discusses the methods used to determine the success of the program.
- Lessons for the future or lessons learned: The candidate’s analysis of what worked / what didn’t / what should be changed in the future.
- Report structure, organization and clarity of ideas: Has a logical structure and flow and causes the reader no difficulty in understanding all components of the program.
- Spelling and grammar: Contains only minimal spelling and grammar errors. A pattern of spelling or grammar errors should be taken to illustrate a deficient standard.
- Overall presentation, appearance: Is neat and professional. Glitz is not required to achieve a pass mark. Business report writing standards are evident.

Deferral before submission of the full work sample

If the candidate has been judged eligible following the review of the Work Sample Overview but is unable to submit the full work sample by the **April 1** deadline, s/he should send by email a deferral request to national office and national office will confirm the deferral has been accepted. The candidate must then contact national office by **December 1** to confirm the s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by **December 30**, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae.

Withdrawal before submission of the full work sample

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process after having passed the eligibility review but before proceeding to exams, the candidate will forfeit $295 of the accreditation fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and with payment of full fees for that year. Any such request must be made before the October exam date for that calendar year.

Failing grade on the full work sample

60% is the passing grade for the work sample. A candidate who has received a marginal grade (55%-59%) on the work sample may choose the mentoring option rather than accept the failing grade. In this case, the unsuccessful candidate reviews the work sample with the Chief Examiner and then submits an acceptable revised work sample to the Chief Examiner by no later than 30 days after the date on the email advising the candidate of the original work sample grade. For this type of resubmission, 60% is the highest possible grade that may be awarded to the candidate if the resubmission is successful.

A candidate who fails the work sample component may not proceed to exams in October but can re-enter the following year. The candidate must contact national office by **December 1** to confirm s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by **December 30**, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae and submit the revised full work sample by the **April 1** deadline. The three-year rule applies to this situation; if the work sample was completed more than three years before the submission date, it is considered stale-dated and a different work sample project must be approved as eligible, through the eligibility review of the Work Sample Overview. A candidate who has not passed the work sample component within three years of the accreditation application is considered withdrawn but may choose to begin the process again in any subsequent year on payment of full fees.

WORK SAMPLE GUIDANCE FOR THE ACADEMIC WORK SAMPLE

Public relations program graduates may submit an Academic work sample for the work sample component of the accreditation process. A public relations program graduate is a communication/public relations practitioner who has completed a full-time program (undergraduate college or university diploma or degree, or graduate college certificate or university master) at a government-licensed and -regulated college or university (national or international). For the academic work sample, the candidate can choose to submit work on a research project involving both primary and secondary research anchored in public relations research methodologies and measurement. Where this research project had been submitted as part of the requirements of the study program (thesis, dissertation, capstone submission, course project), the candidate must in any case fulfill the form and content requirements set out below for the Work Sample.

The candidate must be a CPRS member in good standing, with **a minimum of five years of practical experience in the field** (can include time spent on co-op placement work) prior to applying to the APR program. This experience can be gained either prior to or in tandem/coincident with attending/completing the academic program.

Each APR candidate must submit a Work Sample (and appendices, if desired) in pdf format to accreditation@cprs.ca on or before the deadline (**11:59 PM EDT on April 1** or the next business day if this is not a business day). The naming convention for the Work Sample is: SurnameFirstnameWS, e.g., SmithJaneWS and the naming convention for the appendices is: SurnameFirstnameApp1, e.g., SmithJaneApp1. Work sample submissions that arrive at CPRS National Office after the deadline will have 10 marks deducted from the final work sample grade.

The Work Sample allows examiners to gain insight into the candidate's ability to plan, analyze and execute within the context of current public relations theory and practice. The APR is a professional assessment and the focus is on the candidate demonstrating an ability to apply public relations knowledge, theory and practice. The academic work sample is considered eligible if the candidate has already graduated from the program and the project passed evaluation in the academic institution, within three years prior to the candidate's application. That said, a candidate may need to refer again to the original data and notes in order to reframe the project to fulfill the structure and form requirements of the APR work sample and therefore, it is best if all original data and notes are available for the candidate to consult.

One important element is the candidate's purpose for the project, for example, whether the research carried out was related to employment and then implemented by the client/employer, or whether the research was done solely as an academic initiative. The graders will be looking at how the research can be or was applied to real life situations and the "lessons for the future" discussion needs to be framed with an applied approach.

If the candidate's academic research is not of such a nature that would showcase the candidate's ability to apply public relations knowledge and skills, it may be desirable to choose a different project undertaken in the course of the candidate's work experience in the field. In this case, the candidate would rely on the regular Guidance for Work Samples.

Form and Content

Candidates should include their name, member ID number, date, and title of the work sample at the top of the first page. The name, ID, date and title are not included in the word count. The word count for the Executive Summary should appear at the top of the Executive Summary section and the word count for the discussion section should appear at the top of that section. A cover page is not required.

The Work Sample consists of:

- an executive summary of no more than **500 total words**, providing a clear, comprehensive overview of the submission; and
- a report or analytical discussion of no more than **2500 total words**, detailing the planning, execution and evaluation of the project.

Marks will be deducted (up to five marks on the executive summary and up to five marks on the main body of the report) if the work sample executive summary or report exceeds or falls significantly below the stipulated word count. To eliminate this possibility, we encourage you to write within prescribed limits and to show the word counts on both the work sample executive summary and case study portion. References and footnotes are not included in the work count.

In addition to these required elements, the candidate may include appendices with collateral material such as news releases, brochures, photographs, scripts, newsletters, links to videos, etc. The total appendices must be under 10 MB, therefore provide links to large files if necessary. Complete budgets may also be included as appendices, but discussion of them <u>must appear</u> in the main body of the submission.

Appended materials will be considered by evaluators for their illustrative value only, not as evidence of your proficiency or of your program's quality. Therefore, <u>please do not include in the appendices information or materials that are crucial to the understanding of the subject of the work sample – evaluators may or may not review the appendices in detail.</u>

Candidates are encouraged to use the RACE formula to organize their submission. Graders will be looking for certain elements of form and content, as reflected by the grading rubric on the marking sheet, such as your role in the strategic planning, budget, SWOT analysis and lessons learned. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the grader marking sheets. The work sample should demonstrate your knowledge of, and ability to execute, the key elements of public relations planning and programming, and clearly reflect to readers your role as initiator, planner, controller and evaluator.

The submission should be written in the style of a formal business report; a helpful article on business report style can be found here[4]. In addition to narrative style, the submission can include tables, graphs, or other non-narrative elements. Citations of sources should follow APA style.

Evaluation Criteria

Senior APR examiners use the standard score sheet and their professional judgment in determining how well you apply these elements to the subject of your work. It must be clear to them that your submission is a legitimate example of public relations work, and that all key elements of the overall planning, execution and evaluation process are both present and adequate. Your work sample counts for 20% of your total accreditation score.

The examiners will grade the following elements of the work sample:

- Executive Summary: Explains the key points of the project, without forcing the grader to refer to the subsequent report in order to have a high-level understanding of the project. Refers to each element of RACE, as appropriate to the submission.
- Research background / situation identification: Sets out the key objectives and opportunities and how this public relations project plays a role in advancing those objectives.
- Research methodology: Includes discussion of more than one research methodology (formal or informal) and the reasons for choices of methodology or of one over another.
- Research Summary of findings: Sets out the results of the analysis of research methodology and explains why the choices are relevant for analysis and evaluation and any other relevant considerations in the research design.
- Analysis: Stakeholder identification and analysis: Identifies the who and why of key stakeholders
- Analysis: Vulnerabilities and opportunities: Spells out vulnerabilities and opportunities or does SWOT analysis

[4] University of Melbourne: library.unimelb.edu.au/libraries/bee - Helpsheet Giblin Eunson Library

- Communication: Appropriateness of tools and techniques - based on research, objectives and stakeholders.
- Communication: Creativity of program - uses an imaginative mix of tools and techniques, given available resources.
- Communication: Key messages / consistency
- Communication objectives: Refers to objectives that require more than just creating awareness. Objectives should be SMART. Candidate's identification of objectives should demonstrate an awareness of how to make the research applicable in public relations practice.
- Communication: Implementation - Outlines the steps, timelines and responsibilities in the action plan and its implementation.
- Budget: If a traditional budget is not appropriate, candidate should provide an accounting of time resources, computer resources and institutional resources used to carry out the project.
- Evaluation: results/outcomes: This section links back to the original objectives and uses both qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Methodology: Discusses the methods used to determine the success of the program and reasons for choice of methodology.
- Lessons for the future or lessons learned: The candidate's analysis of what worked / what didn't / what should be changed in the future.
- Report structure, organization and clarity of ideas: Has a logical structure and flow and causes the reader no difficulty in understanding all components of the program.
- Spelling and grammar: Contains only minimal spelling and grammar errors. A pattern of spelling or grammar errors indicates a deficient standard.
- Overall presentation, appearance: Is neat and professional. Business report writing standards are evident.

Deferral before submission of the full work sample

If the candidate has been judged eligible following the review of the Work Sample Overview but is unable to submit the full work sample by the **April 1** deadline, s/he should send by email a deferral request to national office and national office will confirm the deferral has been accepted. The candidate must then contact national office by the following **December 1** to confirm the s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by **December 30**, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae.

Withdrawal after determination of eligibility

If exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from continuing and the candidate decides to withdraw completely from the accreditation process after having passed the eligibility review but before proceeding to exams, the candidate will forfeit $295 of the accreditation fee and receive a refund of $200. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a completely new work sample, and with payment of full fees for that year. Any such request must be made before the October exam date for that calendar year.

Failing grade on the full work sample

60% is the passing grade for the work sample. A candidate who has received a marginal grade (55%-59%) on the work sample may choose the mentoring option rather than accept the failing grade. In this case, the unsuccessful candidate reviews the work sample with the Chief Examiner and then submits an acceptable revised work sample to the Chief Examiner by no later than 30 days after the date on the email advising the candidate of the original work sample grade. For this type of resubmission, 60% is the highest possible grade that may be awarded to the candidate if the resubmission is successful.

A candidate who fails the work sample component may not proceed to exams in October but can re-enter the following year. The candidate must contact national office by **December 1** to confirm s/he will be using the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, s/he must submit the Work Sample Overview for the new project by December 30, along with an updated Curriculum Vitae and submit the revised full work sample by the April 1 deadline. The three-year rule applies to this situation; if the work sample was completed more than three years before the submission date, it is considered stale-dated and a different work sample project must be approved as eligible, through the eligibility review of the Work Sample Overview. A candidate who has not passed the work sample component within three years of the accreditation application is considered withdrawn but may choose to begin the process again in any subsequent year on payment of full fees.

GUIDANCE FOR CHALLENGE ESSAY OPTION / ABC HOLDERS

Candidates holding an ABC designation have the option to apply for the APR program using the ABC route, comprising a “Challenge Essay” and an oral exam. If accepted to this ABC route, the candidate will submit an essay in lieu of work sample and then complete the oral exam only. The essay topics are provided to the candidate after s/he has received notification of eligibility. Of course, an ABC-holder candidate may prefer to go the regular APR route of submitting a work sample then taking the written exam and oral exam.

The Challenge Essay is worth 50 per cent of the total accreditation mark, combined with the oral exam (50 per cent). To earn accreditation, the ABC-holder candidate must attain an overall average of at least 65 per cent for the two components, with no individual component mark below 60 per cent.

The “Challenge Essay” consists of two questions: a question on the RACE formula and a question on ethics and public relations. Candidates must answer both questions thoroughly using a minimum of 700 words per question with a maximum of 2,500 words for the entire essay submission. All completed essays must be provided as a PDF file not exceeding 10 MB, using this naming convention – SurnameFirstnameCE e.g., SmithNancyCE.pdf - and be identified with the candidate’s name, CPRS member ID number, and date. The name and identification are not included in the word count.

In addition to the content of the applicant’s answers, graders will be assessing the writing skills of candidates as evidenced through the answers to the questions. Candidates are expected to refer to and to use the most recent edition of The Canadian Press *StyleBook* and *Caps and Spelling*. Essay questions may require the applicant to cite public relations literature and principles. Any public relations related literature is appropriate (including the CPRS Code of Professional Standards) and it should be adequately cited in endnotes. Sources citations must follow APA style.

Use of reference material to complete this “Challenge Essay” is required, but candidates should refrain from citing long quotations from reference materials. Instead, essay answers must reflect a fundamental understanding of the source material and the ability to synthesize this information and to reflect application of this information to real-life situations. Examiners are looking for evidence of thoughtful, reflective consideration in the answers.

Graders will apply a strict standard in regard to writing style, spelling and grammar. A very high professional level of writing is expected. Inadequate articulation of objectives will be considered grounds to remove marks. The essays should provide a complete answer to the question asked and demonstrate clear, concise and compelling writing.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAMS

WRITTEN EXAM

The written exam is used primarily to examine your theoretical and practical knowledge, professional ethics, judgment and philosophical approaches to the practice of public relations.

Form and Content

The written examination covers a wide range of topics and issues, including history, theory, fundamentals of practice and professional ethics. Knowledge of the CPRS Code of Professional Standards is necessary. You are expected to be knowledgeable about any area of public relations practice – even those in which you may not have practiced.

The examination is divided into three sections: PR Knowledge and Practice, Professionalism, and Communications Planning. Total writing time allocated is 3.5 hours to allow for completion and review of answers. The suggested completion time of the exam is 3 hours with an additional 30 minutes to give candidates time to read through the examination and proofread their answers. Examples of questions and answer guidelines are available on the CPRS website.

The written examination is worth 45 per cent of your total accreditation evaluation. The minimum passing grade is 60 per cent for this examination, and you must receive a minimum average of 65 per cent overall for the combined marks from your work sample, written examination and oral examination in order to qualify for accreditation.

Taking the Written Examination

The written examination is open-book. While you may take reference material into the exam with you, you should discuss the value of doing this with accredited Members. Some have found it reassuring to have materials with them, while others have found there is little time to review the information unless specific sections have been highlighted beforehand in anticipation of possible questions. **You may NOT bring in or use any material on a memory stick.** The purpose of the written examination is to challenge candidates to express themselves in their own words within a certain time frame, which reflects real-life situations for many practitioners. A career in public relations is more than an open-book examination. PR professionals must have the ability to express themselves, in writing or orally, on the spur of the moment, and to give advice often without the benefit of any notes. Even though you are allowed to bring reference material, the information must be handled only as inspiration. In the end, examination answers must reflect what you understand and are able to compose in your own words, in “real time.” A cut and pasted answer to a question is not a reliable indicator of this skill. Examiners are looking for evidence of your thoughtful, reflective consideration of public relations issues and practices.

Carefully reading each question is the key to successfully completing the written examination. Words like “outline”, “describe” and “discuss” tell you what is expected in a response. You should also watch for questions that require more than one task. For example, questions are often structured so that several points of basic knowledge must first be set out, and then used in a specific way.

Examinations will take place in computer labs at Canadian universities and colleges wherever possible. You must use a computer to complete the examinations. Should a technical problem arise (e.g. no power/equipment failure) the decision to continue resides with the Regional Examiner and the onsite invigilator. (See also Extraordinary Appeals)

Evaluation Criteria

To ensure you have the opportunity to fully present your ideas and to demonstrate your writing skill, all questions on the written examination are designed for essay-style answers. Graders in every region are provided with guidelines on distinguishing between strong, average and weak answers. They use standard marking sheets and marking guidelines which are available on the CPRS website.

While you are expected to turn in a written examination that contains few grammatical, spelling or typographical errors, examiners are prepared to forgive typographical mistakes somewhat more readily in your written exam than in your work sample. However, errors in spelling and grammar that clearly demonstrate a knowledge deficit will weigh against the total mark. You may use the computer’s spell check function. No additional time beyond the three and a half-hour limit is provided for proofreading or spell-checking.

ORAL EXAM

The oral exam complements the work sample and written examination by allowing examiners to explore in greater depth your knowledge of public relations and approaches to practice. In addition, it allows them to evaluate your personal presentation capabilities, as well as your oral language and interpersonal skills.

Taking the Oral Examination

The oral examination is worth 35 per cent of your total accreditation evaluation. The minimum passing grade is 60 per cent for this examination, and you must receive a minimum average of 65 per cent overall on your work sample, written and oral examinations to qualify for accreditation. Your oral examination is a 45-60 minute interview conducted by accredited CPRS Members in person or on the phone. Your performance is evaluated on knowledge, presentation, competence, and poise.

The oral exam is composed of five sections:

1. A warm-up section – usually only one question (about five minutes)
2. Work sample – You will be asked a few questions about your work sample and will have about 10 minutes for this section.
3. General public relations knowledge: You will be asked four questions testing your knowledge of public relations and are allocated an estimated five minutes for each answer for a total of 20 minutes.
4. Current affairs - You will be asked three questions on PR related to current affairs, based on both national and regional stories and issues. You will have about five minutes for each answer for a total of 15 minutes.
5. Wrap up – If time permits, you will be asked one last question or given an opportunity to make a comment.

Depending on the number of candidates, it may take place after your written exam or be scheduled for another day. Your oral examination will be audio recorded so that if a question or concern arises, the audio can be reviewed.

All graders use a standard marking sheet to evaluate oral examinations. The Chief Examiner provides standard questions for the Regional Examiner to include in your oral examination. In addition, examiners may ask questions that arise in the normal course of your conversation relating to your responses to previous questions. The questions may be wide-ranging, covering topics or issues which may or may not have been part of the written examination.

Examiners may not ask you questions that might be deemed to compromise personal or professional integrity, or which may be seen as prejudicial under the laws of Canada. If you believe such a question is being asked, you may refuse to answer. In a situation where you believe the integrity of the oral examination itself is in jeopardy, you may request that the exam be ended. You are responsible for reporting the circumstances directly to the Chief Examiner within 24 hours.

Examiners may also suspend the oral examination if a candidate does not arrive at the scheduled time, if a candidate appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or if a candidate falls ill before or during the exam. In each of these cases, the Regional

Examiner is responsible for reporting the circumstances directly to the Chief Examiner within 24 hours.

Evaluation Criteria

The oral examination gives you the opportunity to present yourself as a confident, knowledgeable professional who is comfortable discussing issues related to public relations. In addition to evaluating your knowledge, oral language skills and ability to clearly articulate ideas, examiners consider appropriate manner and dress, confidence, interpersonal skills and professional commitment.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

CPRS acts in compliance with the Human Rights Code (1990) to accommodate exam candidates with disabilities who need special arrangements to sit for the written and/or oral examinations. Auxiliary aids and services will be provided except where these may fundamentally alter the exam or result in an undue burden. Any individual who has a physical or cognitive impairment or limitations that prevents him/her from taking the examination under standard testing conditions may request special testing arrangements. The types of accommodation that may be provided include large print test booklets, a person to read the examination questions, extended testing time (if requesting extended time, please indicate how much time is needed), and/or a separate testing room.

When submitting your CPRS Accreditation Application form, include a separate letter describing each of the following:

1. Candidate's disability or special need
2. Adaptations the candidate is requesting
3. Documentation from a physician or other appropriate diagnostic authority concerning the disability and special needs.

Documentation from a physician or appropriate authority (e.g., psychologist, vocational specialist, etc.) is required to confirm the candidate's special need and testing adaptation request. Special accommodation requests must be made at least thirty (30) days prior to the published written and oral examination date. This can be done by emailing the CPRS National Office at accreditation@cprs.ca.

Candidates who cannot participate in the written and/or oral examination on the published date, under certain circumstances, can take the examinations within seven (7) working days of the published date. CPRS National Office must receive a request in writing at least sixty days (60) prior to the published National Examination date. Please note that all exam date change requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROCESS

THE ENVIRONMENT

The practice of public relations is inextricably bound to influencing public opinion, attitudes and behaviour in order to manage the relationship between an organization and the environment in which it exists. By creating and maintaining effective relationships which foster mutual understanding with internal and external publics, public relations assists organizations to achieve their mission and goals.

Just as the practice of public relations has become more sophisticated through the years, so has the methodology of influencing opinion. This process involves a series of complex, logical activities planned and executed by a seasoned PR practitioner. This combination of skills, knowledge, planning and communication provides a formula for effective public relations which has been identified as:

1) fact finding and feedback;
2) planning and programming;
3) action and communication;
4) evaluation.

The Canadian Public Relations Society and the Public Relations Society of America recognize this four-step public relations process as the R-A-C-E formula: Research, Analysis, Communication and Evaluation. What is important is that the R-A-C-E process represents the steps imbedded in all accepted models designed for planning and implementation of programs for positive results in business.

Application of the R-A-C-E formula depends on a practitioner's knowledge and skills related to public relations practice. As a candidate for accreditation, you should become familiar with the RA-C-E formula as a guideline for the planning and implementation of an effective public relations program.

Successful public relations practitioners are people who understand the realities of human nature. A familiarity with the humanities and social sciences is essential for anyone wishing to establish, influence or modify public opinion and prevailing attitudes. The R-A-C-E formula is a valuable tool for anyone concerned with such endeavours. Materials identified in the Reading List (last chapter) explain the role of social science and the importance of research, analysis, communication and evaluation.

RESEARCH

Before launching an effective public relations program, you must understand an organization's environment – especially the prevailing attitudes and issues as they are perceived by employees, shareholders and residents of the community or communities in which a program will run.

The attitudes and issues identified through this research dictate the approach and scope of any public relations activity. For example, research may show that attitudes toward the organization are generally positive, indicating the need for a less aggressive, perhaps more focused, public relations program. Less favourable results may indicate the need for immediate and intensive attention to address specific concerns.

An effective research program identifies the action / reaction equation in an organization's environment. Its purpose is to:

- identify groups within the organization's environment;
- determine current attitudes of these groups toward the organization;
- isolate factors that determine these attitudes;
- identify issues that may alter these attitudes; and
- determine how a public relations program may affect issues and influence attitudes / behaviour.

Some of the most common objectives of public relations research are to:

- identify a problem or opportunity;
- identify or measure the level of understanding of the organization among target groups;
- identify or track current and potential issues;
- shape and pre-test a specific message; and
- evaluate and measure changes in perception.

Popular research methodology and research tools include:

- polling;
- communication audits;
- mail, email and telephone questionnaires;
- person-to-person interviews;
- participant observations;
- content analysis; and
- issues identification and trend tracking.

Valid research must be thorough and complete. If any of the elements within an organization's environment are improperly or inadequately identified and measured, a public relations program will not achieve its objectives.

ANALYSIS

Research provides you with the knowledge and evidence required to proceed with a comprehensive and effective public relations plan. Once the research is complete, the immediate task at hand is to make sense out of the data collected and to develop accurate conclusions. It is in the "analysis" phase that the public relations practitioner uses all the information at hand to develop communication objectives which will assist the organization to improve in specific areas, manage an issue or crisis, or to move in new directions. Without clearly defined and measurable objectives, you will not be able to proceed.

Drawing upon your experience in human relations and social sciences, you can use this information to build an appropriate program. If your analysis of the available data does not allow you to thoroughly understand the problems or to identify opportunities to affect attitudes, your research is probably insufficient. Identify the additional facts and feedback required and revisit your research phase so that your program is built on a solid, defensible foundation.

Once the problems and opportunities are identified, planning appropriate solutions is feasible. While many management principles could be applied to arrive at a viable solution, virtually all are variations of a basic problem-solving process:

- identify the problem(s);
- determine the factors contributing to the problem;
- identify the critical factors;
- identify possible solutions;
- choose the best solutions; and
- apply solutions through the program.

Scott Cutlip and Allen Center, two of North America's most noted practitioners, advocate a similar formula under the title *Strategic Analysis*:

- identify objectives;
- consider alternatives;
- compare risk benefits;
- consider consequences;
- make the decision; and
- plan tactics.

Whatever system of analysis is employed, it is critical to ask yourself three key questions: Where do I want to go? What obstacles are in my way? How do I overcome them? The answers to these questions help you prepare an outline of the program, taking into account the communications resources available. You are then ready for the final phase of analysis – refining the methods you will use to achieve your program objectives.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the action step of the public relations process. In simple terms, communication is a two-way transmission – a message is sent from one person or group of people to another, with feedback coming from the receiver to the sender. These messages are transmitted in many ways, including print and electronic media, direct mail, and person-to-person discussions. They are interpreted by receivers in many ways as well. Variables such as pre-existing emotional factors, ethnic backgrounds and community dimensions have a significant influence on the way a message is received.

Your challenge as a public relations practitioner is to isolate target groups and design messages so precisely that your intended message is easily and clearly received. During the research and analysis phases of this process, you identify those factors which may inhibit effective communications. Things like attitudes, awareness, preconceptions, predispositions, group allegiances, levels of education, language, ethnic background, religious affiliation and household income have a definite influence on your program and may enhance or hinder the effectiveness of your efforts.

Armed with a detailed profile of target groups, you are in a position to design specific messages for each group. These are variations on your main theme, individually tailored to the interests of each group by considering diverse factors which apply to the groups. Proper research and analysis also identify potential barriers to communication activities, referred to in a communications model as "noise". Isolating the noise in the various media of communication helps in the selection of methods to be employed.

When planning the communication elements of the public relations process, keep in mind:

- Target groups or audiences consist of people who live, work, worship and play in the framework of social institutions in cities, suburbs and villages – consequently, each person is subject to many influences, of which the practitioner's message is only one;
- People tend to read, watch or listen to communications that present points of view with which they are already sympathetic or in which they have a deep personal stake;
- The mass media create their own separate communities – those who read newspapers constitute a community separate from those who rely on television, radio or the internet for information; and
- The mass media influence individual behaviour in a number of ways, not all of which are measurable.

EVALUATION

The success of your public relations program is essential if you hope to contribute to your organization's goals. Predetermined goals and objectives are critical, not only for the satisfaction of the practitioner, but also for the organization. The work sample and the written and oral examination will offer the accreditation candidate opportunities to demonstrate their ability to set reasonable and measurable communication objectives and to evaluate their success.

A public relations plan must include a measurement system to gauge the success of the program and to signal where the program may not be reaching its full potential. This is why it is critical to measure and evaluate the impact of your efforts continually during the implementation phase. Cutlip and Center say that "evaluation is an ongoing process that enables executives to make the corrective adjustments required to guide an organization safely through the tides and wind of turbulent seas of opinion." Mindful that communication is a two-way process, they also caution that "… dissemination does not equal communication".

Systematic evaluation includes:

- selecting the rationale for evaluation;
- specifying evaluation objectives;
- collecting data;
- analysing data;

- reporting results; and
- applying the results to decision-making.

Evaluation seeks to ascertain:

- whether target groups are receiving the message(s);
- whether specific target groups are responding to the message(s);
- what lasting impression the message(s) leaves in the minds of the target groups; and
- whether the channels of influence and mechanisms of persuasion generated by the message(s) are recognized in terms of positive and favourable responses.

CHAPTER SIX

GRADING GUIDE FOR ACCREDITATION

THE WORK SAMPLE

The work sample accounts for 20 per cent of the total accreditation evaluation. The minimum passing grade is 60 per cent. Anyone whose work sample does not reach this minimum passing grade is not eligible to continue with the accreditation process. Graders carefully review your work sample to assess its overall application of the R-A-C-E formula, and more specifically *(see also Chapter Three):*

- the explanation of your organization’s key objectives and the extent to which your program or project advanced these objectives;
- the validity of the program and its effectiveness in modifying or changing attitudes, opinions, behaviour or the public relations environment, and in meeting your project objectives;
- the adequacy of your research in identifying factors bearing on the rationale for the program;
- the appropriate analysis of pertinent stakeholders and related environmental issues;
- evidence that the principles of sound public relations practice have been applied in the search for solutions;
- the development of an appropriate budget and its assignment to each element of your program or project;
- employment of a full range of public relations skills in the conduct of an ethically based program and a method for evaluation;
- demonstration of a well-rounded understanding of the ongoing nature of the public relations process;
- your ability to communicate effectively through the written word, particularly the quality of your paragraph and sentence structure, grammar, syntax and readability; and
- the conciseness and clarity of your abstract, and

- whether the word count falls within the prescribed limits of 500 for the abstract (executive summary) and 2500 for the main body. Note the actual word count (by computer) on the first page of your document. The graders need to see it.

THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Your written examination is worth 45 per cent of your total accreditation evaluation. The minimum pass mark is 60 per cent. You must receive at least this minimum passing grade to qualify for accreditation. (There must be unanimous agreement among the examiners that you have attained the minimum passing grade).

Your written examination is graded by each of the examiners using the marking sheets available on the CPRS website.

THE ORAL EXAMINATION

Your oral examination is worth 35 per cent of your total accreditation evaluation. The minimum passing grade is 60 per cent. You must receive at least this minimum passing grade to qualify for accreditation. Your oral examination is a 45 to 60 minute interview. The examiners evaluate your performance using the marking sheets available on the CPRS website.

ATTAINING YOUR ACCREDITATION

In order to ensure fair and accurate evaluation of all candidates, the National Council on Accreditation adheres to a policy of confidentiality and unanimity among members of the examination panel. This holds true for all components of the accreditation process as well as the aggregate grade.

Once the evaluation of all work samples, written examinations and oral examinations is complete, the Chief Examiner reviews the overall evaluation of each candidate's performance. While the passing grade for each of the three components is 60 per cent you must achieve an overall average of at least 65 per cent.

When you accomplish this level of performance, you deserve accreditation and your APR designation. **Congratulations!**

CHAPTER SEVEN

ADMINISTRATION OF ACCREDITATION - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The **National Council on Accreditation** administers, manages and shall have power to develop terms of reference for the Accreditation Program subject to regulations adopted by the National Board of Directors. The Council shall establish and administer the use of the term "Accredited, Public Relations" designated by the suffix, "APR".

a) Develop policy and procedure as it relates to the administration of Accreditation.

b) Develop and deliver the Accreditation examination process.

c) Promote the value of Accreditation.

d) Monitor that only eligible Accredited Members use the designation.

e) Administer Accreditation maintenance.

The National Council on Accreditation shall consist of a Presiding Officer, at least four (4) and not more than nine (9) Accredited Members and two (2) representatives appointed by the Board. a. The members of the National Council on Accreditation shall serve a 3-year term renewable once to a maximum of 6 years, the terms so arranged that retirement is on a rotation basis. b. Members of Council must be Accredited Members in good standing who have maintained their Accreditation through the Accreditation maintenance program.

2. The Presiding Officer is responsible for ensuring that the National Council on Accreditation carries out its mandate.

3. The Chief Examiner is responsible for the development and delivery of the examinations to the eligible candidates in accordance with the guidelines of the National Council on Accreditation. The Chief Examiner is responsible for the recruitment of the Regional Examiners and graders. The Chief Examiner provides the grader training necessary to ensure that all candidates receive the same equal and fair treatment in the examination process. They work closely with the National Office in all aspects of the process from the time a candidate applies until the completion of the accreditation process. The Chief Examiner also provides guidance and direction to the Regional Examiners, particularly to ensure objectivity and fairness on behalf of all candidates for accreditation and to ensure that candidate confidentiality is upheld through the signing of a Confidentiality Agreement.

4. **Local Accreditation Chairs** are APRs from within Local Societies who are available to provide the necessary information and guidance at the local level. These individuals serve as the local bridge between the candidate and the Regional Examiners, who for the purpose of ensuring professional objectivity, should refrain from contact with the candidates on matters directly related to the written or oral examination. Responsibilities include having regular and ongoing contact with candidates throughout the process, and would involve such tasks as:

- hosting accreditation readiness information sessions
- encouraging practitioners to participate in the process
- answering questions about the process at various stages once a candidate has applied
- assisting the candidate in working through the selection of work sample topics
- ensuring that candidates receive copies of previous examinations for study purposes, along with copies of the grading guidelines, and examples of high-marking successful work samples (all are available on the CPRS website, under the Accreditation tab).
- keeping in contact with other accredited practitioners who are willing to provide feedback to candidates prior to submitting their work samples
- communicating with candidates in the months leading up to the exam
- arranging for suitable examination facilities, in conjunction with the Regional Examiners and the National Office
- notifying candidates of the location, time, date, etc. of oral and written examinations.

5. Regional Examiners are responsible for the co-ordination of the examination process at the regional level. They ensure that the process is coordinated, oversee the logistics of the process and ensure that the examinations are carried out as per prescribed procedure. They also ensure the return of completed exams to the National Office for grading. The Regional Examiners also administer and may participate in the grading of the oral examination.

6. CPRS National Office acts as the focal point for dissemination of all communications to candidates, from application, acknowledgement, acceptance into the process, submission of work samples, and results of the process. The National Office co-ordinates the receipt of work samples, sending them to graders, receiving the samples back and recording the results and returning the work samples to the candidates at the end of the process. Please note that National Office does not copy work samples. The National Office co-ordinates the distribution and collection of exams, and the tabulation of marks for work sample, written and oral exams results. The National Office also serves as liaison for inquiries regarding accreditation and ensures that inquiries are channeled to the appropriate persons at the Local Society level. The National Office is also responsible for advising local Accreditation Chairs and Regional Examiners of the final results for candidates in their jurisdiction.

7. The Deputy Presiding Officer (Eligibility) determines eligibility of candidates to the program and ensures that only persons qualified are able to participate in the accreditation process. He/she assesses candidates' experience and determines to what degree, if any, work prior to becoming a Member of CPRS qualifies for "time served" in the five-year experience window. He/she also reviews the work sample overviews and provides feedback to candidates on whether their work sample project meets the requirements of scope and ownership.

8. Accreditation Examination Development Committee works with the National Council on Accreditation to develop questions for the accreditation exams. This committee encompasses accredited practitioners from all regions, who collectively possess expertise in a broad range of public relations work (i.e. corporate, not for profit, government, agency and the education community). This committee is responsible for ensuring that the written examination is fair, representative of the profession and that it contains a balance of questions to test not only the candidate's grasp of theory, but more importantly, their ability to demonstrate their practical expertise.

9. The Liaison to Accreditation Chairs on the National Council on Accreditation provides the link between the Accreditation Council and the local Society Accreditation Chairs.

HELPING OUT

Accreditation is the flagship program sponsored by the Canadian Public Relations Society. By volunteering to help with the administration of the process, accredited Members make a valuable contribution to the future of professional communications practice while remaining connected to the program in whose credibility they have a major stake. In addition, they benefit from a special professional development opportunity, participating in discussions about accreditation itself and various aspects of current public relations practice.

The National Council on Accreditation welcomes any current APR to support the accreditation process by volunteering and applying for one of the following roles:

- Chief Examiner
- Examination Development Team

- Local Accreditation Chair (an APR chosen by the Local Society)
- Regional Examiner for these regions:
    - B.C.
    - Prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba)
    - Ontario
    - Québec
    - Atlantic
- grader (no limit on the number of positions or term of appointment)

Job descriptions are available for most of these positions from the National Office.

GRADER ORIENTATION

A paramount objective in administering the accreditation process is to ensure objectivity, consistency and fairness in the evaluation of candidates across the country. Any current CPRS Member who has held their APR designation for over 5 years is invited to attend grader orientation and become a grader.

All accreditation volunteers involved in the accreditation process must sign a Confidentiality and Privacy Declaration to protect all candidates' personal and professional information that they may encounter throughout the accreditation program.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GUIDE FOR ACCREDITATION CHAIRS OF MEMBER SOCIETIES

INTRODUCTION

Attaining accreditation is an important milestone in the career of a professional public relations practitioner. It recognizes personal achievement, experience, and competence in the field and, as such, is an important measure of success and self-awareness. The accreditation process is a serious, professional endeavour and must be managed in this manner. Candidates must realize the full experience and rewards of pursuing this recognition. For this reason, this chapter has been prepared especially for the Presiding Officers and Accreditation Chairs. It will assist in developing effective accreditation programs within the societies so they can offer the guidance, advice, instruction, and reinforcement required to support their public relations colleagues. Both candidates and Accreditation Chairs should realize that:

- the APR (Accredited, Public Relations) designation is recognition of effective public relations capabilities and current Membership in CPRS;
- the accreditation program is the Society's contribution toward developing and maintaining high professional standards of its Members; and
- achieving accreditation status is a source of self-satisfaction for CPRS Members and fosters greater recognition of their professional stature among peers, employers and clients.

The primary objective of the Accreditation Chair is to encourage eligible Members with the appropriate qualifications to undertake the accreditation process. Some Members may be ready and eager to accept the challenge. Others may be hesitant and need reassurance. The success of the accreditation process, as with any public relations program, begins with identifying and analyzing your local situation.

It is important that Members understand the true purpose of the accreditation process. Accreditation is a personal challenge - an odyssey that helps them realize their professional strengths, abilities, and growth. It must be stressed there is certainly no need to fear the process, or the thought of facing examinations.

An important factor in reassuring a candidate is to emphasize that the accreditation process is confidential. Until candidates are actually in the examination room, they may not know the identity of other candidates. The results of the work samples, the written examinations, and the oral interviews are known only by those doing the evaluation, the Chief Examiner, Regional Examiner and the CPRS National Office.

THE MEMBER SOCIETY'S ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Local Accreditation Chairs must be accredited Members of CPRS. Members should consider their position on the committee as a 12-month assignment and develop an action program as soon as possible. Members should keep in mind that candidates sit for examinations in late October of the following year.

The Member Society's Accreditation Chair should begin each year by identifying, with the assistance of the National Office, local Members who appear to be eligible during the next accreditation period. They should be contacted and asked if they have any questions about the accreditation process and if they are interested in pursuing accreditation.

The number of eligible Members and their individual needs determine the extent of the Accreditation Chair’s activities. These may include an introductory information session to which all eligible Members are invited, follow-up training sessions and individual counseling sessions or follow-up calls.

The general information session should be organized as early as possible so that candidates have time to consider the process - its requirements and commitment. In planning this information session, the Accreditation Chair and committee members should prepare to discuss:

- the strict confidentiality of each candidate's application;
- the CPRS accreditation process;
- the application and prequalification process - completing the form, providing references, preparing the work sample overview, etc.;
- the written and oral examination content - using previous examination questions as examples;
- the content, approach, subject matter and format of the work sample; and
- books, periodicals and abstracts which may be of value in preparing for the examinations.

Suitable work samples of former candidates who have received accreditation may be obtained online or from the CPRS resource centre located at Mount Royal University in Calgary: https://library.mtroyal.ca/friendly.php?s=publicrelations/cprscollection

Accreditation Chairs should be prepared to assist anyone who makes the decision to apply. Prior to annual December 1 deadline for applications, the Accreditation Chair should assist interested members with their applications and references, if asked. Between December and April, candidates may request help with preparing the work sample. From May to September, a study group may be organized to prepare for examinations in the fall. Study sessions should cover these basic requirements:

- a successful study schedule *(see Chapter Two);*
- study material *(see Reading List);*
- the responsibilities of examiners; and
- what to expect from the written and oral examinations.

Accreditation Chairs may request help from National Office for resources or support.

CHAPTER NINE

ACCREDITATION SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The question of readiness comes up repeatedly as public relations practitioners and educators grapple with the demands of busy jobs while trying to maintain work/life balance. Yet at some point in time, most of us want to see how our skills measure up on a national scale. That's usually when we begin to wonder about pursuit of the APR designation and ask the question "Am I ready?"

To help you do a self-assessment, the Council has prepared the check list below. Beyond the first five must-haves, the more check marks you can make, the closer you are to readiness to proceed with the process. Once you determine you are ready to proceed, the Council has put in place a variety of supports to help you apply and be successful.

AM I READY?

	I must have a minimum of five years public relations practical work (and/or teaching) experience where I have been exposed to a broad range of communications activities.
	I must have the ability to communicate well both orally and in writing in one of Canada's two official languages.
	I must be able to write clearly and concisely in plain language and demonstrate that I am competent in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
	I must have a solid theoretical working knowledge of communications principles; including but not limited to: the RACE formula, communications planning, linking goals and objectives to outcomes, media relations, crisis communications, stakeholder identification
	I must have taken on progressively more responsible roles on behalf of my employer and/or clients; have had experience in planning, guiding and directing projects, activities and/or people toward the fulfillment of strategic objectives; and in developing the strategies themselves.
	I am comfortable in a setting when tasked to draw on my experience and best practices to evaluate challenging situations, and where I am called upon to provide my counsel and insights on

	matters of a strategic nature as they relate to the organization(s) I work with or for.
	I have been able to hone my skills as a public relations generalist through my work and volunteer experience.
	I have experience dealing with a broad range of issues, publics and situations.
	If I am an educator, I have taken on a leadership role to develop and/or to improve program/course curriculum, delivery and assessment.
	I have reviewed the suggested reading list on the CPRS Accreditation web site. I am familiar with the Accreditation Handbook.
	I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of public relations theories.
	I can cite examples from my work or volunteer activities of how I might apply a theoretical challenge.
	I have earned a reputation as a “go to” practitioner among my peers, and my view or guidance is often sought by others due to my ability to think strategically, act calmly in crisis situations, or come up with practical solutions to problems.
	I follow local, regional, national and international current events.
	I am able to think on my feet to formulate plausible, rational and insightful responses to ethics questions.
	I would welcome mentoring (formally or informally) by an accredited public relations practitioner who would willingly share his/her senior public relations experience and knowledge.
	If I am an educator, I encourage students to volunteer in the community and in the public relations profession. I lead them by example, being active in the community and in the profession as a volunteer.

	I believe attaining my APR is as important to me personally as it could be professionally; recognizing that it may not have a direct impact on my career development or financial remuneration.
	I am committed to participating in lifelong learning and involvement in the discipline, industry or profession, as it is very important to maintain the APR designation once I attain it.

Many APRs acknowledge that one of the most important aspects of their accomplishment in successfully completing the accreditation process was the mentoring they received from a senior practitioner. Many had the benefit of this through their employment and others found mentors through their local society activities or through working with their local accreditation chair. Still others reached out to CPRS members beyond their own Society who formally or informally provided guidance and direction.

If you would like to discuss your readiness or have other questions about the accreditation process, or would like to be connected to a mentor you may either contact your local accreditation chair, or call the CPRS national office at (416) 239-7034 or e-mail accreditation@cprs.ca

CHAPTER TEN

APR STUDY GUIDE FOR WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAMS[5]

The CPRS Accreditation website offers an array of resources to help candidates prepare for the written and oral exams, including a reading list (top 10 and more detailed inventory) and samples of previous written exams. As we emphasize in "The Preparation Process" section of the Accreditation Handbook (p. 13), your studies should concentrate on the principles of public relations and their practical application to present-day Canadian and international issues and real-life organizational situations. But this is a vast territory and the study process may be daunting. Where do you begin? What topics do you need to know to be able to apply theory to practice? How can you make all this material manageable?

This short guide has been developed to facilitate your preparation. The themes are clustered under major headings as well as the components of the RACE formula, in the form of text and questions that are fundamental to the subject. To help you formulate answers, locate the relevant reading(s) in our suggested list and/or access others you know or use, and then map the theory against your knowledge of current events and personal experience in the field. In each subject area, you should be thinking about applying your professional experience by citing examples to illustrate the theoretical concepts. The Handbook also provides foundational background related to the practice, the profession and ethical considerations.

Below are core categories of public relations knowledge with which APR candidates should be familiar to be able to handle questions in the written and oral exams comfortably and skillfully.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAM

Candidates should have knowledge of brand management in a wide range of contexts (e.g., financial, marketing,) as well as strong understanding of emerging issues, which will be examined both in the written and oral accreditation exams.

Candidates must also be aware that they will be evaluated in the oral exam on "professionalism" that can include body language, mannerisms and other visual cues of competence such as evidence of preparation, fact-based knowledge and expertise.

[5] CPRS thanks Carleen Carroll APR, FCPRS of the National Council on Accreditation for her work to update this Study Guide.

These aspects of professionalism impress upon the grading panel that they can envision the candidate providing strategic counsel and advice to senior leadership.

Candidates will also be questioned in the oral exam about their work sample, including lessons learned. Given it is the candidate's own work sample, s/he should be able to effectively prepare for this component of the exam.

Ultimately, candidates must be able to get their points across accurately, clearly, cohesively and concisely – both orally and in writing. High quality of writing (i.e., proper grammar, spelling, sentence construction) is the foundation of communication and the public relations profession.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: THE PRACTICE

When considering the practice of public relations, candidates should consider all components that can encompass the process of public relations including its definition, its vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, evaluation, stewardship and so on. Candidates should be able to define the core competencies at the root of the practice and demonstrate their professionalism through proficient oral and written communication. Additionally, candidates should be able to respond to what the social significance of public relations is and what socio-economic and political factors can influence the practice.

Candidates should also have a solid knowledge of the significance of the Barcelona Principles which relate to public relations measurement and the **Melbourne Mandate**, which focuses on organizational behaviour. From a Canadian perspective, candidates should have knowledge of the white paper **"THE ELEVATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS: A discussion paper on a profession's present – and its possible future" (Daniel Tisch, 2017). It can be accessed at** https://www.cprs.ca/Learn/Articles-White-Papers-Other-Documents/The-Elevation-of-Public-Relations

PUBLIC RELATIONS: THE PROFESSION

- How has the field of public relations evolved as a profession in Canada and abroad?
- How do professional organizations such as CPRS contribute to the advancement of the public relations profession?
- How does accreditation serve to advance the profession?

PUBLIC RELATIONS: CORE COMPETENCIES

Candidates should have a solid understanding of the core competencies at the root of the public relations profession. For example, they should understand the full range of possibilities within the profession and recognize the differences and similarities of public relations work within agencies, the private sector, the public sector and the not-for-profit sector, as well the variety of functions that can include community relations, government relations, media relations, employee relations and investor relations. Candidates should consider the following:

- How is the RACE formula integral to public relations?
- When considering environmental scanning, what value does public relations bring to this function that other areas of an organization cannot?
- What impact can public relations have on decision-making within the C-suite?
- How can the RACE formula be applied to event management so it is seen as a strategic function rather than organizing social activities?
- What are the distinctions between crisis and issue management?
- How are publicity and media relations related? What are the distinctions?
- Earned, owned, paid and shared media are tactics and outcomes that can be shared or blurred between marketing and public relations. Candidates should have an idea of what each is, and how these tactics and outcomes encompass disciplines such as media relations, community relations, investor relations and internal communication. Candidates should be able to discuss whether the blurring of lines between marketing and public relations is a good trend or not. Where do brand, brand management and reputation management fit into this mix?
- Is there a difference between communication/public relations and public affairs?
- How does public relations influence advocacy work?
- What are proactive and reactive communications? Candidates should be able to provide concrete examples of each.
- What are the barriers to effective communication?
- What communication channels can a public relations practitioner control? What channels cannot be controlled?
- How does rapidly-changing technology impact the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of public relations work? What are the challenges and benefits?
- How does Canada's diversity (socio-economic, cultural, gender identification) impact public relations work?

PUBLIC RELATIONS: THE RACE FORMULA IN PRACTICE

RESEARCH

Before considering tactics and tools to use as research methods when building a communication plan, candidates need to have a solid grounding in the ethical framework of public relations. Ethics theory and practice are integral to and part of the overall ethical considerations of the public relations practice. Candidates should be able to reflect on and to discuss the following:

- Why are ethical principles important in the practice of public relations?
- Why is building trusting relationships a key accountability of an ethical public relations practice?
- How do the CPRS Code of Professional Standards and Declaration of Principles promote ethical public relations practices?
- How should the Society enforce the Code?
- What are the key elements of ethical decision-making in public relations?
- What are the ethical responsibilities of a public relations practitioner who uses persuasion techniques to influence others?
- Would there ever be a situation where not applying ethical considerations can be justified?
- What are ethical considerations in public relations research?
- How can survey research be best used as a public relations tool?
- What are effective informal and formal research methods in public relations practice?
- What are best practices in public relations research?
- What are the values and drawbacks of qualitative research methods in public relations practice?
- What are the values and drawbacks of quantitative research methods in public relations practice?
- What are the pros and cons of research tools such as mail-in questionnaires, online surveys, telephone surveys and personal interviews?
- How can social media be used as a research tool?
- What are the various content analysis methods? What are the pros and cons of each?
- What types of research can be used to segment, categorize and prioritize target audiences?

ANALYSIS

- What makes an effective SWOT analysis?
- What are the key ingredients for an effective message?
- How are messages pre-tested and post-tested? What are the pros and cons?
- Can an audience be “general” for public relations purposes? What are the pros and cons?
- How are opinions and attitudes formed and expressed?
- What is organizational culture? How does it impact public relations work?
- What is the role of opinion leaders and “influencers”? How do they impact public relations?
- How can public opinion be predicted, determined and interpreted?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of social media on the public relations profession, including citizen journalism, democratization of communication and erosion of accountability?
- How have social media and the 24-hour news cycle impacted the practice?
- How are ethical principles relevant to managing social media?

- How do evolving social media influence ethical public relations behaviour, including privacy rights, transparency and democratization of communication?

COMMUNICATION

- What are the various approaches to public relations planning (e.g., management by objective, strategic)? What are their respective strengths and weaknesses?
- What makes a public relations program plan effective?
- Do technological advances help or hinder public relations program planning?
- What is the difference between a communication goal and a communication objective?
- What is the difference between an informational and a motivational (behavioural) objective?
- What is the difference between a communication strategy and a communication tactic?
- Can the CASL legislation have an impact on the type of communication tactics used in a public relations plan?
- How important is media planning in a public relations program?
- What are the respective strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats/tensions of the different media available today (the array of traditional and new media)?
- How can an organization effectively mitigate issues that result from “fake news”?
- Is there ever a circumstance where using “fake news” would be justified?
- How does geographic region influence a plan (e.g., urban vs. suburban vs. rural, western vs. eastern)?
- How can traditional and digital tactics be incorporated into an integrated framework?
- What are the essential elements of a sound budget?
- What role should a public relations practitioner play in the costing (budgeting) of the work or projects they are trying to implement?
- What are the challenges of budgeting for public relations programs?
- Is there such a thing as “no budget” for a communication plan (i.e., should human resources be considered part of the budget)?
- How do successful public relations practitioners gain buy-in for their proposed campaigns from their client(s) and/or employer?

EVALUATION

- What methods can be used to evaluate traditional tools such as a newsletter?
- What methods can be used to evaluate new tools such as Twitter?
- What are the limitations of traditional evaluation methods such as Media Rating Points?
- Do situations exist where evaluation is not possible?
- What is the role of stated goal(s) and objectives in evaluating public relations programs?
- How is evaluation of a campaign linked to planning?
- What is the difference between an output and an outcome?

- When considering communication planning, is changed behaviour the most desired outcome?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CANADIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY, INC. READING LIST

This reading list[6] includes recommendations by CPRS members and Canadian colleges and universities with public relations programs. If you would like to recommend a text for the reading list, please send an email to the CPRS National Office at accreditation@cprs.ca.

This list is provided as a guide to books and periodicals that contain a good selection of the prevailing ideas regarding public relations theory and practice. It does not cover or outline all the books or periodicals that constitute a public relations body of knowledge, nor is this its purpose. These publications are included because they contain the ideas that have contributed to our current understanding of public relations in terms of its origins and history, principles and practices. The focus is on current titles, with seminal works in the mix.

As you prepare for the accreditation examinations, your goal is **not** to attempt to read all these publications. The accreditation process is a measurement of your practical experience. The examinations are **not** about what or how much you have read, nor are examination questions drawn directly from these materials. Candidates will not be rewarded on the examinations for simply feeding back the ideas found in these publications. This is **not** a study guide. Instead, these materials present the foundational ideas from which you should form your own thoughts and opinions, and which you should test and evaluate through your practice. The examinations will offer you the opportunity to **demonstrate your knowledge of the key ideas** these materials contain and **your experience** in applying them.

English Textbooks, Critical and Contextual Works

ADLER, Ronald B., RODMAN, George and SÉVIGNY, Alexandre. Understanding Human Communication, Third Canadian Edition. Oxford University Press Canada, 2015

ANSELL, Jeff, with LEESON, Jeffrey. When the Headline Is You: An Insider's Guide to Handling the Media. Jossey-Bass, 2010

[6] CPRS thanks Lydia Boyko Ph.D., APR LM, for her work to update the English Reading List and Patrice Leroux M.A., ARP and Elizabeth Hirst MA, ARP, FSCRP LM for their work to update the French Reading List.

BELCH, George, BELCH, Michael and GUOLLA, Michael. Advertising & Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective, Fifth Canadian Edition. McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2015

BIVINS, Thomas. Public Relations Writing: The Essentials of Style and Format. Eighth Edition. McGraw-Hill, 2013

BIVINS, Thomas (Ed.) Mixed Media: Moral Distinctions in Advertising, Public Relations, and Journalism. Routledge, 2009

BONNER, Allan. The Bonner Business Series: Media Relations, Sextant Publishing, 2004

BREAKENRIDGE, Deirdre. PR 2.0: New Media, New Tools, New Audiences. Pearson Education, 2008

BROOKS, Leonard and SELLEY, David. Ethics & Governance: Developing and Maintaining an Ethical Corporate Culture, 4th Edition. Canadian Centre for Ethics & Corporate Policy, 2012

BURTON, Cathie and DRAKE, Alun. Hitting the Headlines in Europe. A Country-by-Country Guide to Effective Media Relations. Institute of Public Relations, 2004

CARDIN, Maryse and McMULLAN, Kylie. Canadian PR for the Real World. Pearson Canada Inc., 2015

CARNEY, William Wray and LYMER, Leah-Ann (Eds.) Fundamentals of Public Relations and Marketing Communications in Canada. The University of Alberta Press, 2015

CARNEY, William Wray. In the News - The Practice of Media Relations in Canada, Second Edition, The University of Alberta Press, 2008

CHIA, Joy and SYNNOTT, Gae. An Introduction to Public Relations: From Theory to Practice, Oxford University Press, 2009

COOMBS, W. Timothy. Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding. SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015

COOPER, John. Crisis Communications in Canada: A Practical Approach. Centennial College Press, 2007

CZARNECKI, Al. Crisis Communications: A Primer for Teams. iUniverse, Inc. Toronto, 2007

EVANS, Dave. Social Media Marketing: An Hour a Day, Second Edition. Wiley, 2012

GLENN, Ted. Professional Communications in the Public Sector: A Practical Guide. Canadian Scholars' Press, 2014

GRUNIG, James E., Ed. Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992

GRUNIG, James and GRUNIG, Larisa. Excellent Public Relations and Effective Organizations: A Study of Communication Management in Three Countries. Routledge, 2002

HAGLEY, T. Writing Winning Proposals: PR Cases. Pearson, 2005

HENDRIX, Jerry A. Public Relations Cases. Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2004

KENT, Michael. Public Relations Writing: A Rhetorical Approach. Pearson Education, 2011

LAVIGNE, Mark. Making Ink and Airtime: How to Conduct Proactive Media Relations in Canada. Hunter LaVigne Communications, Inc. 2007

LESLY, Philip. Lesley's Handbook of Public Relations and Communications. Fourth Edition, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1998

LINDEMANN, Walter. Guidelines and Standards for Measuring and Evaluating the Effectiveness of PR Programs and Activities. Institute for Public Relations, 2003

MARSH, Charles, GUTH, David and SHORT, Bonnie. Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising and More. Pearson Education, 2012

PAINE, Katie Delahaye. Measure What Matters, Online Tools for Understanding Customers, Social Media, Engagement, and Key Relationships. Wiley, 2011

PARSONS, Patricia. Ethics in Public Relations: A Practical Guide to the Dilemmas, Issues & Best Practice. Institute of Public Relations, 2004

PARSONS, Patricia. A Manager's Guide to PR Projects: A Practical Approach. Routledge, 2003

REGESTER, Michael and LARKIN, Judy. Risk Issues and Crisis Management in Public Relations: A Casebook of Best Practice. Kogan Page Publishers, 2008

SCHILLER, Ed. In the Spotlight: the Essential Guide to Giving Great Media Interviews. Yorkland Publishing, 2013

SCOTT, David M. The New Rules of Marketing & PR: How To Use Social media, Online Video, Mobile Applications, Blogs, News Releases & Viral Marketing To Reach Buyers Directly. Wiley, 2011

SCOTT, David M. Real-time Marketing & PR, Wiley, 2011

SMITH. Ronald D. Strategic Planning for Public Relations, Fourth Edition. Taylor & Francis, 2013

SOLIS, Brian and BREAKENRIDGE, Deirdre. Putting the Public Back in Public Relations: How Social Media Is Reinventing the Aging Business of PR. Pearson Education, 2009

SOMMERS, Susan. Building Media Relationships: How to Establish, Maintain, & Develop Long-term Relationships with the Media, Second Edition. Oxford University Press Canada, 2009

STACKS, Don W. Primer of Public Relations Research, Second Edition. The Guilford Press, 2011

THE CANADIAN PRESS. Caps and Spelling, 20th Edition. The Canadian Press, 2012

THE CANADIAN PRESS. Stylebook: A Guide for Writers and Editors, 17th Edition. The Canadian Press, 2013

VIVIAN, John and MAURIN, Peter. The Media of Mass Communication, Sixth Canadian Edition. Pearson Canada, 2012

WILCOX, Dennis L., CAMERON, Glen T. and REBER, Bryan H. Public Relations Strategies and Tactics, Eleventh Edition. Pearson, 2015

Periodicals and Miscellaneous Online Materials

Bulldog Reporter: News, Issues and Best Practices for PR and Corporate Communications. http://www.bulldogreporter.com/

Business for Social Responsibility. Overview of Corporate Social Responsibility www.bsr.org/

Canadian Centre for Ethics & Corporate Policy. Management Ethics Newsletter. www.ethicscentre.ca/

CPRS Accreditation Handbook, *CPRS Declaration of Principles* and the *Code of Professional Standards*, 2012

Institute for Public Relations. http://www.instituteforpr.org/

International Association of Business Communicators. https://www.iabc.com/

International Public Relations Association. IPRA Review. 50 Pine Grove, London, N20 BlA, United Kingdom (semi-annual) http://www.ipra.org/

Journal of Public Relations Research. http://www.journal-data.com/journal/journal-of-public-relations-research.html

McMaster: Journal of Professional Communication. https://escarpmentpress.org/jpc

Public Relations News. http://www.prnewsonline.com/

Public Relations Strategist. Public Relations Society of America. 33 Maiden Lane, New York, New York, 10038-5150, U.S.A. (quarterly) http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Location/#.VXuZ9kZqNcY

Public Relations Tactics, Public Relations Society of America, 33 Maiden Lane, New York, New York 10038-5150 U.S.A. (monthly) http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Location/#.VXuZ9kZqNcY

French Top Ten Reading List

BONNEVILLE, L., GROSJEAN, S., LAGACÉ, M., *Introduction aux méthodes de recherche en communication*, Gaëtan Morin Éditeur, Montréal, 2007.

BOILY, L., CHARTRAND, M. A., *Conjuguer avec les médias, les défis inédits du relationniste*, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2012.

CHAREST, F., LAVIGNE, A., MOUMOUNI, C., (Sous la direction de), *Médias sociaux et relations publiques*, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2015.

COSSETTE, Rita, *Éthique de la communication appliquée aux relations publiques*, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2013.

DUMAS, Michel, Les cabinets de relations publiques, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2014.

HEIDERICH, Didier, *Plan de gestion de crise. Organiser, gérer et communiquer en situation de crise*, Paris, Dunod, 2010.

IGALENS, J., DECAUDIN, J-M**.,** *La communication interne*, 3e édition, Dunod, 2013.

LIBAERT, Thierry, *Le plan de communication. Définir et organiser votre stratégie de communication*, Dunod, 4e édition, Paris, 2013.

MAISONNEUVE, D. *Les relations publiques dans une société en mouvance*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 4e édition, 2010.

TREMBLAY, Solange. *Développement durable et communication : au-delà des mots, pour un véritable engagement*, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2007, 284 p.

TOP 10 PUBLIC RELATIONS TEXTS

1. ANSELL, Jeff. When the Headline Is YOU - An Insider's Guide to Handling the Media

2. CARDIN, Maryse and McMULLAN, Kylie. Canadian PR for the Real World

3. CARNEY, William Wray and LYMER, Leah-Ann (Eds). Fundamentals of Public Relations and Marketing Communications in Canada

4. CARNEY, William Wray. In the News - The Practice of Media Relations in Canada

5. COOMBS, W. Timothy. Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding.

6. GRUNIG, James. Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management

7. MAISONNEUVE, D., Lamarche, J-F et St-Amand, Y. Les relations publiques dans une société en mouvance, 4e édition

8. STACKS, Don. W. Primer of Public Relations Research, Second Edition

9. SMITH, Ronald D. Strategic Planning for Public Relations, 4th Edition

10. WILCOX, Dennis, CAMERON Glen and REBER, Bryan. Public Relations Strategies and Tactics