

PUBLIC RELATIONS, BA

Public relations is a proactive, strategic function that strives to mesh the interests of an organization and its publics. Public relations professionals build and maintain those relationships that are essential to the organization's success — or failure — by applying research skills, visual thinking, strategic planning and effective writing.

Success requires a passion for learning about public relations. This program will lead students in developing skills necessary for creating persuasive messages and the means to expose those messages to the intended audience. This includes the ability to conduct research to measure program needs, develop program quantifiable objectives and focused strategies, implement state-of-the-art tactics and master the tools to measure a program's return on investment. Students of public relations will develop and hone critical and creative thinking skills.

Requirements

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have met all University, College, major and minor requirements.

Students seeking to major in public relations may pursue one of the following options:

- *Public relations major (37 hours)*: prepares students for careers as account executives, brand managers, publicists, client services managers, community affairs specialists, etc.
- *Digital communication concentration (37 hours)*: prepares students for careers as social media managers, digital marketing specialists, digital communication managers, etc.

Core Curriculum and General Education Requirements

Code and Title	Hours
Freshman Composition (FC)	
EN 101 English Composition I	3
EN 102 English Composition II	3
Computer Science (C) or Foreign Language (FL) sequence	
CIS 250 Intro to Design Software ⁴	3
CIS 260 Intro to Research ⁴	3
Humanities (HU) and Fine Arts (FA)	
COM 123 Public Speaking ³	3
Select three hours in Fine Arts (FA)	3
Select six hours in Literature (L)	6
Natural Science (N) and Mathematics (MA)	
Select eight hours in Natural Science (N)	8
Select three to four hours in MATH 110 or higher	3-4
History (HI) and Social/Behavioral Sciences (SB)	
Select three hours in History (HI)	3
Select six hours in Social/Behavioral Sciences ¹	6
Select three hours in History or Social/Behavioral Sciences	3
Writing (W)²	6
Total Hours	53-54

Footnotes

- ¹ Three SB core hours are satisfied by MC 101 Intro To Mass Communic. APR 231 Intro Public Relations can satisfy the other three SB core hours, if not taking APR 241 Intro to Ad and PR instead. Both MC 101 and APR 231 require at least a C-.
- ² Must earn at least a C- in writing core classes. *Writing core for PR majors without a concentration (two of the three following classes)*: JCM 303 News Writing and Reporting, APR 303 Public Relations Strategy and APR 332 Public Relations Writing; *writing core for the digital communication concentration*: APR 303 Public Relations Strategy and APR 333 Digital Writing and Strategy.
- ³ Must earn at least a C- in COM 123 Public Speaking.
- ⁴ Must earn at least C- in CIS 250 Intro to Design Software and CIS 260 Intro to Research.

Public Relations Major

All courses in the public relations major and their prerequisites require at least a C-. Be sure to check course prerequisites to ensure timely progress through the public relations major coursework. [Click here for the comprehensive public relations major handout.](#)

Code and Title	Hours
Foundation Courses:	
MC 101 Intro To Mass Communic	3
JCM 103 Mechanics of Media Writing	1
APR 231 or Intro Public Relations	3
APR 241 Intro to Ad and PR	
APR 280 Intro to Audience Analysis	3
APR 290 Intro to Channels and Msg	3
APR 300 or Basic Principles of Design	3
APR 325 Social and Digital Media	
APR 303 Public Relations Strategy	3
Intermediate Courses:	
JCM 303 News Writing and Reporting	3
APR 332 Public Relations Writing	3
Two APR 400-level or MC 400-level electives	6
Capstone Courses:	
One course chosen from MC 401, APR 451, APR 452 or APR 453	3
APR 433 Public Relations Campaigns	3
Total Hours	37

Minors for Students Majoring in Public Relations

The A+PR department requires each of its students to complete a minor. C&IS students may choose to select any minor outside of the College. Within the College, no overlap of major and minor classes is permitted. Public relations students minor in such diverse areas as communication studies, general business, political science, art, psychology, history, mathematics, cultural studies, and languages such as Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Spanish. A minor is not required if the student pursues a second major.

A+PR Department Requirements

Students are asked to make special note of the following Department of Advertising and Public Relations requirements.

Student Responsibility

As an A+PR student, you are here to become a leader — to shape the future of global advertising and public relations in a socially conscious manner. You are here to do the extraordinary, not just what is expected. The faculty expects you to be passionate about your work, fluent in your discipline and engaged as a learner. We are your partners in these endeavors.

It is the student's responsibility to understand the requirements for the advertising major or minor and to seek the advice of their assigned advisor when choosing coursework. Public relations students receive advisor assignments from Tisch Student Services & External Relations soon after they declare the public relations major via DegreeWorks or they may go to 190 Phifer or email tischstudentserv@ua.edu to request one.

Prerequisites

A number of courses within and outside the department require other courses as prerequisites. A student who registers for any course without satisfying the proper prerequisites will be required to drop the course. Before registering, students are advised to review course descriptions for prerequisites and other requirements.

Minimum Grade Requirement

A grade of C- or higher is required in all courses counted in the public relations major or minor. In addition, grades of C- or higher must be earned in all required external courses, including those established as prerequisites for courses in the public relations major or minor and those required directly in the major or minor. In keeping with University policy, when a course is taken more than one time, each enrollment will be counted in the cumulative hours attempted and used in computation of the grade point average, but only the final enrollment may count as credit toward the degree.

Minimum Grade Point Average

A 2.0 or higher overall grade point average is required of all students who have earned 45 hours or more of college credit and wish to transfer into the college. A student must have an overall grade point average of 2.0 or higher in order to register for any 300-level or higher-numbered course in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations.

Digital Communication Concentration

The 15-hour digital communication concentration will prepare students for public relations careers in the digital communication industry. **All courses in the digital communication concentration and the public relations major and their prerequisites require at least a C-.** Be sure to check course prerequisites to ensure timely progress through the digital communication concentration and public relations major. [Click here for the comprehensive public relations major handout, which contains more details about this concentration.](#)

Digital Communication Concentration Courses		Hours
APR 300	Basic Principles of Design	3
APR 325	Social and Digital Media	3
APR 333	Digital Writing and Strategy	3
APR 430	Advanced Digital Marketing	3
One APR 400-level or MC 400-level elective		3
Total Hours		15

PR Major Core Courses		Hours
MC 101	Intro To Mass Communic	3
JCM 103	Mechanics of Media Writing	1
APR 231 or APR 241	Intro Public Relations Intro to Ad and PR	3
APR 280	Intro to Audience Analysis	3
APR 290	Intro to Channels and Msg	3
APR 303	Public Relations Strategy	3
Two capstone courses:		
One course chosen from MC 401, APR 451, APR 452 or APR 453		3
APR 433	Public Relations Campaigns	3
Total Hours		22

Graduates find employment at public relations and advertising agencies, the public relations or promotional departments of businesses, industries and government agencies, and with traditional and nontraditional media outlets.

Types of Jobs Accepted

Our graduates work as account executive assistants, brand ambassadors, brand managers, client services managers, social media managers, community affairs specialists, company event planners, publicists and digital marketing specialists.

Jobs of Experienced Alumni

Owners, presidents & CEOs of public relations agencies, vice president—corporate communication, shareholder relations, media relations, professors, account executives, etc.

Learn more about opportunities in this field at the Career Center